

LEADER-HERALD – 8/11/2015

The Fulton County Board of Supervisors on Monday awarded more than \$1.8 million in contracts for the second construction phase of the Tryon Technology Park project.

Action by the board followed recommendations Monday by the board's Finance Committee, which discussed the next phase of the project in detail.

"The construction time for this [part of the] project is 330 days," county Planning Director James Mraz told the committee.

A portion of the project is being offset by a \$180,000 Empire State Development Corp. grant. The county, as well as the Fulton County Industrial Development Agency – owner of the 515-acre Tryon site in the towns of Perth and Johnstown – are converting the park into parcels for commercial development. The park's first tenant is Empire State Health Solutions, which is occupying a 20-acre piece of Tryon to manufacture medical marijuana.

The county originally received a \$2 million grant from the Empire State Development Corp. to pay for the first phase, which included 2,500 feet of new road, 3,500 feet of new water line and 600 feet of new sanitary sewer line. The second phase of Tryon work includes disconnecting the waterline servicing Tryon from the elevated water storage tank at the state's Hale Creek Correctional Facility, constructing a new water-pumping station at Tryon, constructing a new 300,000-gallon elevated water storage tank at Tryon, and dismantling an existing ground-mounted water storage tank.

"It's more expensive to use the existing tank than get a new one," Mraz said. Supervisors on Monday awarded a \$1.78 million bid to W.M. Schultz Construction of Ballston Spa for the second phase infrastructure improvements at Tryon. Costs of overall construction will actually increase to about \$2 million, with such costs as contingency allowances. The county fund balance will be appropriated for the project.

County Budget Director Alice Kuntzsch told supervisors the county has to use the fund balance, and not 2016 capital plan funding, for the second phase because state law says such contracts need an obligation and not a future set-aside. "You have to obligate that money," Kuntzsch said. "You need to put that money behind it."

The board also authorized a \$60,720 agreement with C.T. Male Associates of Latham for construction inspection services for the project. Engineers from C.T. Male Associates originally estimated the second phase of Tryon construction would cost about \$1 million, although the low bid came in much higher, at nearly \$1.8 million.

Finance Committee members asked C.T. Male engineer Chad Kortz what happened with the estimate. He said the tank manufacturer came in with prices higher than expected, in part because the price of steel is high. "We usually don't have that problem," Kortz said.

Supervisors also passed a resolution "congratulating" Empire State Health Solutions on its recent successful licensing from the state Department of Health.

“ESHS’s new pharmaceutical manufacturing facility is the first business to locate at the Tryon Technology Park as it launches this new technology to benefit patients across the state,” the resolution read. “The occasion of this successful licensure initiates a new partnership between county government, the Fulton County IDA and Empire State Health Solutions to foster its one-of-a-kind medical model that provides the safest medications to the patients of New York.”