

Authority to Open Bids on Wisecarver Dam in Franklin Township

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JEFFERSON -- Southwestern Pennsylvania Water Authority expects to award a contract next month to repair the dam at the Wisecarver Reservoir in Franklin Township.

The project had been advertised and a number of contractors have expressed interest in the project, authority engineer Randy Krause told the authority board Thursday.

The authority will open bids March 7 and the board could award a contract at its March 10 meeting, Krause said.

The authority drained the 18-acre reservoir in March to allow repairs to be made. The reservoir was partially drained about five years ago after an inspection revealed stone gabion placed on the downstream slope of the earthen dam had begun to move.

Repairing the dam will involve applying roller-compacted concrete to the downstream slope to protect it from being washed away in the event of an overflow.

Authority manager Joe Simatic also reported the state has awarded the authority another \$200,000 grant for the project. Other funding for the project includes a \$2.4 million H2O grant and \$125,000 from Alpha Natural Resources, which uses the reservoir as a back-up water supply.

The authority is developing plans to turn the 380-acre reservoir property into a park, an effort begun by an ad hoc committee that formed to consider supplementing the county's recreational opportunities following the loss of the lake at Ryerson Station State Park.

A plan, prepared by a consultant and a local committee, calls for the park to be developed primarily at the southern end of the reservoir property.

The park would include ball fields, children's play area, camping areas, recreation area, boat launch, pavilions, a walking trail, cross country trails and an environmental learning center.

In other business, Simatic reported the authority was recommended to receive a \$500,000 grant for the Washington-Amwell township line project from the Washington County local share committee, which distributes gaming revenue generated by The Meadows Racetrack & Casino.

The authority has \$6 million in grant money for the project, which will extend lines from Ruff Creek in Washington Township 4 miles north along Route 221 and 11 miles north along Route 19 into Amwell Township.

If it receives the \$500,000, the authority will still need about \$1.9 million for the project, money it hopes to receive through a Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority loan.

Simatic reported the authority was fined \$6,000 by the state as a result of an incident in which a sediment lagoon holding river water used in a backflow operation to clean a plant filter overflowed, dumping turbid water into the river.

The authority also agreed to replace an old water line on Huffman Street in Waynesburg before Waynesburg Borough resurfaces the road; and if accepted a \$214,173 Community Development Block Grant from the county to extend a water line on Kirby Road in Whiteley Township.