

GOCO grant sought for track

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

Holyoke is hoping that the third time is a charm as Great Outdoors Colorado grant funds are being sought for the Holyoke Track Project.

An informational meeting was held Tuesday, Feb. 5, with school Superintendent Bret Miles providing information about the grant process for the all-weather track.

A rough draft of the grant was due Feb. 8, with feedback to be provided prior to the March 1 final grant application deadline.

Miles told the group gathered Tuesday night that this will be the third attempt for GOCO grant funding for the track project. "We're attempting this time with a great deal of optimism," he added.

Last August, GOCO funded nine of the 47 projects which were submitted, and Holyoke's was ranked No. 10 by a mere half point. Miles said since that time, the Holyoke Track Project has had a tremendous jump in its score—up 17 points.

Preliminary grant awards will be given in mid-May, with final grant awards to be announced in early June.

Miles said the timing of the GOCO cycle cuts the timing short to have the project with lighting for the football field ready to go for the 2013 football season.

However, he said the design piece will be completed before funding is awarded so if the grant is approved in June, work can begin immediately.

While it's a tight timeline, Miles said he's been assured they could have the lighting completed and ready for the football season.

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Total project cost is set for \$462,092, with a GOCO grant of \$350,000 being requested.

Other financing includes \$62,500 from Heginbotham Trust, \$7,500 from Leland Trust, \$11,717 from track committee from funds earned as far back as 2008, \$5,375 from Re-1J Education Foundation and \$25,000 from Holyoke School District.

Miles said they're 100 percent secured with the cash in the proposal, which is very unusual.

Project costs totaling \$460,856 include a post-tensioned concrete base, a black latex surface, high jump area, two long jump/triple jump lanes, pole vault runway, Musco lighting and design fee/performance bond.

Miles said, with additional financial support, the project could involve a polyurethane, basemat/structural spray that would have more life and stay softer in cold weather than the black latex surface. This would involve a \$43,245 upgrade.

Miles and athletic director Sandra Rahe have walked the current track with two companies to secure bid options.

"We feel so fortunate to have so many good partners," said Miles. He noted the Phillips County commissioners will actually be the grantee for the GOCO funds and have donated landfill space for the curb that will need to be taken out for the project.

Highline Electric will bring in an appropriate-sized crane for the lighting installation, and City Superintendent Mark Brown and his crew have experience assembling poles and more for the ball park lighting project.

Additionally, area school districts are signing letters of support, as they want to be able to run

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track meets on a good surface closer to home.

Miles explained that one of the most common failings of all-weather tracks is when water wears out an asphalt base. As a result, they've asked for bids for a post-tensioned concrete base to set the concrete harder. Projects using this type of base aren't having the issues those with asphalt bases are seeing.

Miles said the 30-day cure of the concrete is the biggest time element in the project.

Not only will this enhance the school's track program, the proposed all-weather track will be a community facility and will be open for all to enjoy.

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