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Redevelopment authority to seek state grant

By Paul Sunyak, Herald-Standard
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The Fayette County Redevelopment Authority has agreed to help Fayette County Community Action Agency Inc. apply for a \$500,000 state grant to renovate the former P.C. Yezbak Lumber Co. building for expanded office space.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, the authority board formally hired Andrew P. French as executive director, removing the interim title he's held since the retirement of former top administrator Raymond C. Polaski.

French, who spent six years as assistant executive director under Polaski, received a salary increase from \$55,476 to \$67,237. Polaski had earned a top-of-scale \$75,676. "I look forward ... to continuing the great traditions," said French.

Chairman Kenneth Finney said the board had screened resumes during a Feb. 17 executive session and interviewed three finalists at a Feb. 24 executive session, after which French received unanimous board support.

Regarding the Yezbak building in Uniontown, James Stark, executive director of Community Action, said his agency plans to renovate the North Beeson Boulevard structure and add a small addition, creating 17,000 square feet of office space.

Stark said the building would house Community Action's administrative offices, as well as its medical and dental clinics, on the first floor. He said the second floor would be rented to the workers' compensation office via a lease already negotiated with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

The redevelopment authority will submit a \$500,000 application to the Pennsylvania Redevelopment

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Personal Finance	Assistance Capital Program to assist Stark's agency with its "campus expansion project." Community
Weddings And More	Action already owns nearby property, including an existing building that houses a senior citizens' center.
Special Sections	In a separate matter, the authority board voted to submit its own \$2 million grant application to the same
Features	state agency to procure additional funding for the Fayette County Business Park. French said the authority
Weekend Events	has numerous options to provide the required local match, including the land value and the cost of highway
Entertainment	improvements underway or slated for the near future.
HSTV	French predicted that in the next four or five years, \$8 million to \$10 million worth of infrastructure
PA Lottery	improvements alone will occur in the park, including completion of the Matthew Drive extension off New
Calendars	Salem Road.
Directory	The board also rejected the lone bid for demolition of the Autenreith Building in Brownsville, which came
Local Interest	from Lycoming Supply Inc. of Williamsport and was unopened. When board member Paul Bortz Jr.
2004 Community Choice Awards	questioned why no local contractors bid on the job, French said possible problems include asbestos in floor
Websites	tile and the fact the building is situated over Dunlap Creek.
Contact Information	French said that since the authority plans to rebid the job, the Lycoming bid wasn't opened because doing
Interactive Media	so might have tipped off other bidders.
News 19	The board also voted to send French to a legislative conference in Washington, D.C., where he pledged to
Circulation	join the battle against President Bush's proposed budget cuts in programs that provide the authority's
The Greene County Messenger	lifeblood.
Visit Our Calkins Media Sites	French said that among the 150 domestic programs that Bush wants to eliminate are 15 that help the
	authority and residents of Fayette County, including the top-ranked Community Development Block Grant
	program for which the authority administers \$2 million a year.
	"These programs are not ineffective," said French, who cited clean drinking water, proper treatment of raw
	sewage, and housing rehabilitation and weatherization as ultimate benefits of such spending. "I think we
	need to make the case that these programs are needed."
	French said that when Uniontown and Connellsville are added to the mix - the authority administers CDBG
	money only for the county and its 11 entitlement townships - that program alone pumps \$3.5 million to \$4
	million a year into helping county residents.

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