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## Redevelopment authority looks to buy building

By Amy Zalar , Herald-Standard

**The Fayette County Redevelopment Authority took action Monday to secure a \$330,000 loan to purchase a building at 86 W. Main St. in Uniontown to use as headquarters, the monthly payments of which will cost less than the authority is now paying in rent.**

Executive Director Andrew French said the loan would be secured through Centra Bank, which will provide \$199,750 at closing for the purchase of the property. The amount equals 85 percent of the purchase price. French said the authority would be responsible for approximately \$43,894.25, minus the \$5,000 the authority already made in the form of a down payment.

French said the \$130,000 remaining would be used for renovations to the building. He said the interest rate would be at a fixed 4.45 percent rate for 10 years, and it would then go to prime minus 1.5 percent. The authority currently pays rent of \$3,138.75 a month at the current location at 45 E. Main St., Uniontown.

Authority member Jim Woleslagle said the authority would realize a saving of about \$600 a month with the new \$2,516 monthly mortgage payment.

"For the years to come, it is best to own," Woleslagle said.

Authority Chairman Ken Finney said the authority has been talking about purchasing its own building for "many moons."

French previously said the building was formerly the location of the Farwell printing business.

Board member Dee John said it would be better for the authority to have a Main Street entrance, instead of being "up in the sky" where the authority is now located.

In late 2005, the authority attempted to purchase the building where they have been located since 1980 from former owner J. David Ewing for a price of \$490,000. The authority currently occupies two upper floors of at 45 E. Main St.

However, Ewing sold the building to Stephanie Gentile, wife of attorney Charles Gentile, for \$500,000 after agreeing to sell the building to the authority.

French said the closing is tentatively set for Thursday, and he is anticipating a move by the end of August or beginning of September.

Under the current lease agreement, the authority must give the landlord 90 days notice before vacating the premises. French said he has had discussions with Gentile already.

French previously said the Farwell building contains 22,064 square feet, including 7,000 square feet on the first floor. He said even if a portion of the first floor is still rented to "Creation Station," which currently occupies the building, the authority offices would contain 5,000 square feet compared to the 3,400 square feet they now occupy.

French said plans are to relocate the 12 office employees now on two floors to the site, while leaving the five employees at the John Street weatherization office where they currently work.

He said the top two floors of the Farwell building used to contain about 15 apartments, but they haven't been occupied since about 1980. Also, he said the basement formerly housed the Slovak Club.

In other action, the authority approved a motion to apply to the Pennsylvania Infrastructure and Facilities Improvement Program on behalf of the Uniontown Hospital for the hospital's expansion and renovation project.

French said the authority is asking for about \$8.44 million over 20 years. French said the hospital is undertaking a \$44 million project.

If approved, the funding must be repaid by the hospital in the amount of \$422,000 a year for 20 years. The IFIP money is what French called "tax increment financing." French said the hospital expansion is expected to create 150 additional jobs, which will create more payroll taxes that will be paid into the IFIP program. He said it is a win for the state because the state gets the tax dollars and a win locally because the money comes back into the area via the grant program.

The program, administered through the state Department of Community and Economic Development, grants money to eligible

applicants, such as redevelopment authorities.

French said the hospital is using the same consultant, Delta Development, as the Fayette Crossing IFIP project.

In May 2007 the authority learned it would receive \$8.1 million in state grant money to assist the developer building the Wal-Mart Super Center project at the Fayette County Business Park.

The state cash, paid in the form of approximately \$813,000 per year for 10 years, is from the IFIP program. The money will be used to offset debt for infrastructure work - such as roads, water and sewerage - the private developer has incurred for the project.

A red banner advertisement for LifeLock. On the left, the LifeLock logo features a shield with a keyhole and the text "LifeLock Guarantee Your Good Name". Below the logo is a red "Enroll Now" button and the website "www.lifelock.com". The main text of the banner, in white, reads "4.2 million credit & debit records exposed & 1,800 fraud cases stem from grocery chain ID theft".

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