

Grant could help build new Pierce-Polk Fire House

Written by George Browning
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The fairgrounds' loss, could be a gain for the Pierce-Polk Volunteer Fire Department.

The commissioners decided at their regular meeting Feb. 5 there isn't enough time or funds to try and secure a \$400,000 Community Focus Fund Grant to help build a new building at the Washington County Fairgrounds.

"In talking with Cecila (Peredo, who is Community Development Specialist with River Hills EDD & RPC) I don't see that we have a choice," said county Commissioner David Brown. "It's too late for us to gather anything. Besides that, in order to get a grant of that type, we would have to figure out some type of scheduling program to keep the building busy five days a week and I don't think we are at that point yet.

"I think we can work on it this year and try to approach this again next year, but right now, I don't see us being able to keep it busy.

That decision opened the door for either the Pierce and Polk townships or the PP Volunteer Fire Department to be sub-recipients for the grant.

How that works is the county will apply for the grant, but one of the above-mentioned entities would be the recipients should the grant be awarded.

Peredo said they are still working on who exactly the sub-recipient will be.

Brown made the motion to support Pierce-Polk as the sub-recipient and Commissioner Phillip Marshall seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Peredo said she will have to act quickly. She said they must go through land acquisition, an income survey, an environmental review, a public hearing and architect information must be gathered by March 22.

The deadline to have everything completed is May 31.

Should the grant be awarded, whoever the sub-recipient is will be required to come up with matching funds.

The need for a new fire department is long overdue for PPVFD.

Neither of the two current buildings are big enough to house modern day fire equipment.

Peredo said it is too early to discuss exact details of the project, but said they will be released as they become clearer.