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Contractors eager for piece of action

BY LESLIE BIXLER
Staff writer

FREMONT -- About 30 people representing different companies who are interested in the new middle school project attended the contractor's open house Thursday.

The open house was from 4 to 4:30 p.m. at the Carr Lecture Lab on Cedar Street.

The different companies were mostly from Fremont, Clyde and Bellevue, with a few from out of town.

Before the general session began, Fremont Schools Superintendent Traci McCaudy told the contractors that the new middle school will be next to the high school.

"Our community is paying for 68 percent of the project and the Ohio Schools Facilities Commission is paying 32 percent," she said, noting the overall cost is estimated at \$29 million, but they are currently under that amount.

The new school, which is on schedule to be complete by the fall of 2011, will be 126,000 square feet.

Chris Moore, senior project manager for Touchstone, a Lima construction planning management firm, and Stephen Wilczynski, executive director of Fanning-Howey architect firm from Celina, were on hand to present bidding information to the contractors.

"We're wrapping up the drawings and ready for plan approval," Wilczynski said.

He showed drawings of the new building and then Moore talked about prime contracts, which will be issued for HVAC, plumbing, electrical, fire suppression, general trades and more.

Bid advertisements will be out in January and a pre-bid meeting is scheduled for Feb. 4. Bid openings will be Feb. 18 with construction beginning in April.

Moore said the only items that will be bid in 2011 will be loose furnishings, technology equipment and demolition.

He also showed the estimates for the different trades, with general trades being the highest at \$12 million.

"There are some fairly sizable contracts here," Moore said.

He also briefly discussed bid requirements, bonding, insurance, subcontract bidding and the bid award process among other unique programs for the contractors to be aware of. As for the award process, the school board will be looking into the experience, financial condition, management skills and facilities of the bidder among other aspects.

Moore also talked about LEED certification, which is a "green" building rating system and stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. He said the middle school is looking to get the highest level.



Chris Moore, the Senior Project Manager of Touchstone CPM, answers questions during a Fremont City Schools open house on Thursday to discuss the construction of the new middle school. (Jonathon Bird | News-Messenger)