

City Council approves Arc Greenspace contract

By Mike Crowley Meadville Tribune

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Following Meadville City Council’s approval last week of a nearly \$400,000 bid, construction at The Arc Community Greenspace is expected to be completed by midsummer 2023.

Council members voted 4-0 to approve a \$398,260 bid from Dynasty Construction Unlimited Inc. of Corry. Deputy Mayor Larry McKnight was absent from the meeting.

Construction will include a performance stage, landscape beds, a storage structure, 11 benches and artwork atop the box culvert that carries Mill Run beneath the greenspace location at 953 Market St., where the former Meadville Club once stood. The project will also include lighting and installation of electrical service to the stage, according to Ashley Porter of Porter Consulting Engineers P.C., the city’s consulting engineer.

Since acquiring the property in 2018, The Arc of Crawford County has solicited community input on development of the site, sought funding through grants and other sources, and initiated development with art projects on adjacent buildings, installation of solar-powered charging station tables and more.

“Our primary goal is to create a community venue where Arc individuals and others from the Meadville community can safely gather and form natural relationships through collaborative participation in arts, culture, and community events,” the nonprofit stated in describing the project on its website.

The winning bid was the lowest of four. No city funds will go toward the project, but City Manager Maryann Menanno reminded council members that through an agreement between the city and The Arc, City Council is responsible for approving contracts related to the project.

Much of the funding for the project comes from state grant sources, including an award of \$115,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and two awards of \$25,000 through the Creative Communities Initiative (CCI) program of Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

The Arc itself will match the two CCI grants and provide an additional \$117,000 while the foundation that supports The Arc will contribute \$5,000. Another \$11,000 to support the project was donated to the foundation by Ashley Porter, who presented the bids to council. A private donor who was not identified also contributed \$50,000.

Awarding the bid this month will provide the contractor with enough time to obtain project elements with long lead times, according to Porter, and achieve the target completion date of June or July 2023.

“They can order them now,” Porter said, “and then be prepared for a spring start and groundbreaking.”

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