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- Special to the Daily Leader

The Seward County Community College/Area Technical School Board of Trustees met Monday to approve plans for proposed changes to facilities and programs at the Area Technical School and the college's long-range strategic plan.

The board approved proposed modifications at the area technical school facilities, as presented by Dr. Bud Smithson, director. The proposal would allow similar programs to be located in closer proximity and maximize use of current floor space and facility design.

The new Natural Gas Compressor Services Program will be housed in the existing carpentry area. The compressor program requires a thicker floor and drainage for petroleum products and the current carpentry lab, which was originally the diesel lab at the technical school, has a joint wash bay with machine tool and a closer classroom. This change would also place the compressor program closer to similar programs, such as Machine Tool Technology, Automotive Technology and Diesel Technology.

Dale Reed, associate dean of educational services, informed the board that the college is still looking for an instructor for the gas compressor program.

The Construction Trades Technology program would be moved to the HVAC lab where these two programs can work together in training students. Students can work together for construction and HVAC installation projects by using the large lab area.

An additional plan is to expand the welding program by relocating the Auto Business

Management program. The college would remove the wall between Welding and Auto Business to create a more safe and functioning welding facility. The lab would allow for increased project and manufacturing activities within the program.

The Auto Business Management program and store would move to the existing bookstore and conference room, placing the program into a more appropriate “retail” location with adjoined classroom and inventory storage. The relocation of the ABM program would increase the visibility of the program and allow for a learning lab for other marketing and business students enrolled at the college.

The college would move the vending machines to the cafeteria area and create a program display as well. This is intended to create an increased awareness of the programs, activities and student achievements at the ATS while improving the arrangements in the student lounge.

The final plan would use empty classrooms for conference rooms, convert the kitchen to a deli, fast food and snack area for students and provide furniture upgrades for the computer lab.

The board also approved the low bid from Knudsen Enterprises of Liberal in the amount of \$164,875 to rehabilitate and repair restrooms at the Area Technical School. The renovated restrooms in the lab and classroom areas will meet federal disability access requirements. The college will use funds through the state Postsecondary Educational Institution (PEI) bond program.

The board also approved the bid from SimplexGrinnel of Wichita in the amount of \$110,000 to upgrade the fire alarm system at the Area Technical School. The college will use PEI funds as well to fund the upgrade.

The board directed the administration to apply for year three of PEI Bonds issued by the state of Kansas in an amount not to exceed \$400,000 for deferred maintenance projects. Projects include retrofitting instructional areas at the area technical school; remodeling the current board room with up-to-date technology; providing new carpeting for administrative areas, including the boardroom in the Hobbie Academic building; and replacing pneumatic controls and blower drives to increase effectiveness and energy efficiency of the heating and air conditioning units.

The board adopted the 2010-17 strategic plan and directed the administration to publish and distribute the plan. The components of the plan include Creating Awareness, Workforce Development, Student Learning, Employee Development, Diversity and Technology.

Dr. Duane Dunn, SCCC/ATS president, said the plan is flexible enough so additional ideas can be added to the plan. Each category has an administrative office that will be responsible for executing the different parts of the plan.

Jo Ann Sharp, board president, remarked that the Strategic Plan seems to work effectively with the action projects of the Academic Quality Improvement Program of the Higher Learning Commission that governs the accreditation of the college.

Al Shank Jr. of Al Shank Insurance of Liberal presented the renewal premiums for the overall insurance coverage for the college. He recommended the college stay with Employees Mutual for overall coverage. In 2010, the premiums will be \$248,627, down from \$267,367 in 2009. The overall insurance coverage includes property, inland marine, general liability, business automobile, crime, workers compensation, umbrella liability and linebacker.

Dunn commended the employees at the college for their attention to safety, campus cleanliness and repairs, and the faculty commitment to creating safe instructional labs and classrooms. The reduction in accident claims was largely responsible for realizing the lowered insurance premiums.

In other action, the board:

- o Approved summer operating hours from May 28-July 30, 7 a.m.-6 p.m., Monday through Thursday;

- o Approved the purchase of an upgrade to the Interactive Distance Learning equipment from Cyttek Media Systems of Topeka in the amount of \$43,999.33 for the allied health programs

using Carl Perkins grant money; and

o Approved the purchase of refurbished autoclave in the amount of \$21,313 from Service-Rite Medical of Great Bend for the Natural Science, Mathematics and Physical Education Division.

Spring classes begin Monday, Jan. 11. Campus will be closed on Monday, Jan. 18, in recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

The next board meeting is Monday, Feb. 1, in the board room.

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