

10May21

Hi members, friends, and interested parties,

VISION UPDATE – For more than a decade, LSSC has been working toward their “Vision for the Future”. While it’s been painfully slow at times, and we’ve even suffered some set-backs, we’ve kept the focus on the future and progress continued to be made. This has been made possible by support from dedicated Boards, club members, local community, DNR, and others, over the years.

We received an email from Lori Burford, our DNR contact for the new range facilities, on Thu, 29Apr21. Things have been happening fast; some good & some not so good. The good news is that the future has finally arrived; the time for action is here. The not so good news is that costs are now projected to exceed estimates.

Construction bidding ended Wed, 28Apr. Three contractors submitted timely bids; all are over budget. Two factors seem to account for the majority of the projected cost overruns. First, we’ve all seen how costs for many items, including construction materials, has been rising steeply in recent months. Second, and somewhat unexpectedly, was an MDOT mandate that the entry road must be widened. To effect this requires wetlands mitigation which can be quite costly.

In any case, the bottom line appears to be that costs are projected to exceed budget by \$120k - \$200k; a sizeable shortfall in funding. With the 1:10 ratio from the Pittman-Robertson grant, the cash required to cover this would be \$12k - \$20k. In her email, Lori asked if LSSC could help. The short answer is yes, that’s why we’ve held fund raisers and conserved cash over the years.

Just to refresh your memories, the Pittman-Robertson Act is a Federal program that places an excise tax on firearms, ammunition and the like. This money is then put back to the States in the form of grants to be used for things like hunter safety, shooting range development, etc. The States have to put up “matching funds” in the form of a ratio to Federal funds received. In 2019, the P-R grant funding ratio was changed from 1:4 to 1:10; a highly favorable change. That ratio is somewhat political so it’s subject to change again and could be lowered. So, now is the time to act! At the current 1:10 ratio it would take 12k to 20k to cover the shortfall; for every \$1,000 donated, the project sees \$10,000! To illustrate and fully appreciate the ratio change, at the older 1:4 ratio it would have taken 30k to 50k respectively to cover the same shortfall.

Timing on this was critical. Lori Burford, our DNR contact, needed to know the Board’s decision by May 5, or earlier if possible. She has paperwork to complete and deadlines to meet before a construction contract can be issued.

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

The approval of Resolution 2021-2 allowed me to call a Special Board Meeting via email to deal with this crisis in a timely manner. It’s highly unlikely that an in-person meeting could have been arranged in the short time frame necessary. Without timely funding from LSSC, the opportunity would be missed and the project would be back to cutting features in the facilities and/or creating further delays up to cancellation. None of this is satisfactory to LSSC (or, to her credit, to Lori).

I was able to get the details summarized for the Board to review, and opened the meeting on Sat, 1May21. The ultimate motion before the Board was: “Shall the Board authorize an expenditure of \$25,000 to the DNR toward our new indoor and/or outdoor facilities?” The bump up from \$20k to \$25k allows for some furnishing and, hopefully, a little extra cushion. Remember that with the P-R 1:10 ratio, that \$25,000 will let the project see an extra quarter of a million (\$250,000) dollars; a hard to beat, impressive, return on our investment. The meeting was open for two hours and the Board voted unanimously “yes”, in favor of the motion. A check has been sent to the DNR.

A special thanks to all who have made this possible; your support is deeply appreciated!

DONATION RELATED

As explained earlier, the P-R 1:10 ratio is quite attractive. Consequently, in addition to the LSSC check, we have received, to date, additional donations totaling approximately \$10k. That \$10,000 will let the project see an additional \$100,000 beyond the above! Timing on these funds is not as critical as the funding mentioned above and will be sent upon the DNR's request. Until then, we are open for more; each one (1) dollar of donation received generates nine (9) more dollars for the project; so, \$10 total.

All LSSC related funds left over, if any, from Phase 1 construction (the indoor range & club facilities) will be used for the next Phases (outdoor ranges).