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# Park district dives into pool work

## Construction to begin despite outstanding grant

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Construction is scheduled to start next week on a \$9.5 million indoor pool at Hinkston Park after Waukegan Park District officials decided to move forward with the project despite \$2.5 million in grant money remaining in limbo due to the state's budget impasse.

Park district executive director Greg Petry said Tuesday that a groundbreaking ceremony has been slated for Tuesday on the north side of the park's field house. Petry also announced that a timetable shows the 22,300-square-foot facility open in autumn 2016.

"You might even see construction fencing going up over there by the end of this week," added Petry, saying that earthwork is scheduled

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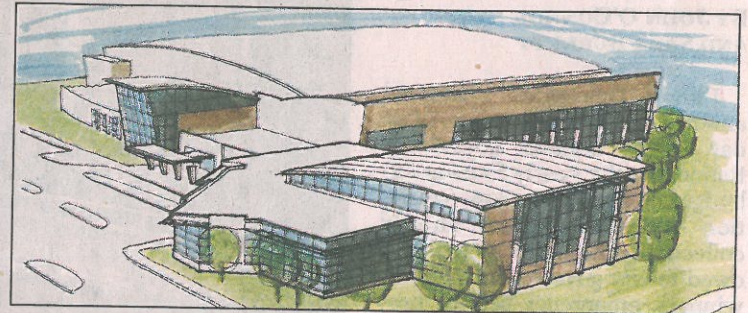
to run through the remainder of the 2015 construction season before precast concrete forms start to go in place early next year.

The progress comes after a spring and summer in which the park district waited to see if Gov. Bruce Rauner's administration would lift a freeze on Park and Recreational Facility Construction grants issued through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Suspension of the grants was announced in mid-March and has remained in place as Springfield continues to be locked in a stalemate over a budget for a fiscal year that began on July 1.

Petry said this week that park district administrators and board members hoped the state budget would be resolved by summer. But even with the grant assistance still on hold into fall, the decision was made to start the pool project with revenue from a capital-improvement fund generated by the district's 1997 referendum.

"We were at a crossroads where we didn't want to miss this construction season to get started," Petry said. "We wanted to stay on schedule to open in the fall of 2016."

The park district board has been taking steps toward the project since late last fall, when then-Gov. Pat Quinn came to Waukegan the weekend before election day to announce the



WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

Designs for the Hinkston Park Field House in Waukegan show an eight-lane lap pool as part of a \$9.5 million project.

PARC grant.

In January, the park board voted unanimously to award a construction-management contract to Waukegan-based Stuckey Construction Co. Minutes from that meeting record that a Stuckey official pledged to "to hire as many local contractors as possible and (reach) out to the minority business community for hiring minority contractors."

In April, a public meeting at the Hinkston Park Field House featured updated designs from Aurora-based PHN Architects that call for the facility to include an eight-lane, 25-yard and competition-ready main pool and a 910-square-foot kids pool. In addition, a 1,350-square-foot therapy pool set at 90 degrees will be separated from the main pool by a glass partition.

Elsewhere on the Hinkston Park property, a 150-space parking lot will be added to the

property's east side, while an overflow lot with 50 to 60 spaces will be installed on the northeast corner. An existing walking/running path through the wooded park will also be altered to make the loop four laps to a mile rather than the current three.

At an Oct. 13 meeting, the board approved bids for initial earth work, parking lot construction and purchase of precast concrete. According to a timeline announced by the district this week, construction will stop at some point this winter to await delivery of the concrete, which is expected to be installed with cranes starting in February.

Under that schedule, officials said, the projected opening date for the facility would be mid-September to early October of next year.

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