

Roads, mall financing on supervisors' radar

Bids to be sought for annual paving

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The DeSoto Board of Supervisors will hear a request on Monday from county road manager Andy Swims to seek bids for this year's list of streets and roads for asphalt overlay.

"It's time for the annual contract," said County Administrator Vanessa Lynchard.

She said project funding will draw from the line-item budget of \$2 million for contract paving, and there are additional sources.

Also, the five-member county governing board will consider authorizing board attorney Tony Nowak to review documents regarding a tax increment financing plan with the city of Southaven regarding the Outlet Shops of the Mid-South project to occupy 32.5 acres at Church Road and Airways east of Interstate 55.

Last May, city and county officials laid groundwork for the \$50 million-\$60 million mall project with approval of a \$15 million, 15-year tax increment financing plan under which bonds will be issued to pay for infrastructure, including water, sewer and road improvements. Southaven aldermen in January extended the time period for the finance plan to 20 years; the amount remains at \$15 million.

"We don't expect any vote or action on the agreement itself on

See MALL, ZDSA

Monday," Supervisor Mark Gardner of Southaven, board president, said Friday. "We're not rushing in; we're taking our time and getting more information."

The TIF plan was origi-

nally adopted by Southaven in 2004 for the DeSoto Pointe retail project, but it was stalled by the recession and slow recovery and never got off the ground.

The supervisors also plan to get a general obligation bond update from Lynchard and financial consultant Demery Grubbs with Government Consultants Inc. in Jackson.

The board is in the process leading up to issuance of \$11.5 million in bonds for facilities management, including acquisition of buildings and property; on the consent agenda is authority to hire the **Butler, Snow** law firm to prepare disclosure statements in connection with the bonds.

Gardner said the county hasn't released specific projects because of property acquisition issues and concern about prices being inflated before a county purchase. He said appraisals are ongoing but expects the county soon to list what's planned for new or upgraded facilities — all without any tax increase.

Also, supervisors will consider a document to authorize re-funding (refinancing) outstanding debt at a substantial savings. At the board's Feb. 4 meeting, Grubbs said there was an opportunity in the market regarding 2007 and 2009 bonds, with about \$340,000 in rate savings possible on one bond issue alone.

"We're looking at everything that makes sense and

will save the taxpayers' money," said Gardner.

In other matters, the supervisors will hear a request from human resources director Janna Rogers to approve three insurance agreements affecting county employees: Cigna Life Assistance Program, Cigna plan and rate confirmation agreement, and Telehealth accord.

The board also is considering agreements for the sale of surplus county vehicles and computer equipment to DeSoto County Schools for nominal value.

On the separate Planning Department agenda, director Ted Garrod will present a 2012 Zoning Map update to the supervisors, along with a 2012 "year in review" report and details on progress toward a final draft of the Interstate 69/I-269 International Trade Corridor study. A public comment session on draft options is scheduled for March 22 at the Landers Center in Southaven. Supervisors expect to receive in June the final blueprint to guide development along the corridor.

To fill a Planning Commission vacancy, Gardner said he expects to submit the name of Tom Bradley, a Southaven attorney, for appointment by the board.

The supervisors are to meet at 9 a.m. in their third-floor hearing room at the County Administration Building at 365 Lusher St. in Hernando.

