

WPCC officials surprised at high bids

Bids for two additions to Western Piedmont Community College buildings came in 31 percent higher than the amount available for construction.

Bids were opened Wednesday afternoon for construction of an additional 16,000 square feet to vocational education facilities at the college.

Base bids for the project totaled \$780,923, which is 31 percent higher than the \$542,950 architects have estimated is available for construction, according to Dr. Gordon C. Blank, WPCC President.

The amount is 29.7 percent higher than the total \$602,000 in funds for the total project, including architects' fees, legal fees and contingencies.

Apparent low bids included \$494,000, general contract, Burke Construction Co.; \$124,798, mechanical, Bs-9R Sheet Metal; \$105,000, plumbing, Burke Construction Co.; and \$57,125, electrical, Caldwell Electric.

The college has a 30-day period in which to award or decline the bids. Dr. Blank says the architects, Odell Associates Inc., are studying the bids and design and will make recommendations to the board of trustees and the building committee.

Dr. Blank says the college seems to have three choices: to redesign the project; to reduce the quality of the project; or to seek additional funds.

Original funding of the project came from the Appalachian Regional Commission, which must approve any

design changes. Dr. Blank says the college will have to request a waiver from the time limit for spending the ARC funds.

"We are disappointed at how high the bids came in, of course," Dr. Blank

says. "We are looking for additional funds."

These funds—"only possibilities at this point"—could come from state contingency funds or from the county.

Members of the board of trustees

were present for the bid opening and met Wednesday night to discuss the bids.

Thad M. Poteat is chairman of the board of trustees and J. Ray Childers is chairman of the building committee.