

UW-FV gets green light for new arts building

Winnebago OKs county's share of theater project

The Post-Crescent

OSHKOSH — The University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley got the green light Tuesday for its long-sought communication arts and theater building.

The Winnebago County Board approved 35-2 to

chip in \$5.3 million of the more than \$12 million total projected costs for the new building on the two-year campus in Menasha.

UW-Fox Valley Dean Jim Perry today thanked project supporters, including the supervisors who voted in favor.

Perry said while he expected approval, he did not expect such a wide margin.

"There was enormous support, and I think that was in response to the tremendous effort in the community to convince them that it's the right time and the right thing to do," he said.

More than 30 supporters for the theater filled the public gallery at the Oshkosh meeting Tuesday and applauded when the project was approved.

The \$5.3 million from



Perry

Winnebago County was necessary for the project to begin. Outagamie County supervisors in November approved their county's \$5.3 million share of the project.

The state committed just over \$1.3 million for movable equipment such

as desks and chairs. The UW-Fox Foundation will begin a fundraising campaign to raise the last \$2 million.

Winnebago and Outagamie counties are jointly responsible for UW-Fox Valley's buildings and maintenance, an arrangement that required college administrators and supporters to double their lobbying efforts.

The new building, which

would include a 339-seat auditorium, classroom space, a concession booth, offices, storage areas and restrooms, will replace the university's 45-year-old Fine Arts Center, where a maximum of 290 spectators sit on folding chairs and gymnasium risers.

UW-Fox Valley officials first broached the idea for a new facility in 1977.

The Oshkosh Northwestern contributed to this report.