



Commissioners award bid for sale of administration building



JEFF HORVATH, STAFF WRITER / PUBLISHED: JUNE 28, 2018

SCRANTON — Developer Charles Jefferson will likely add the six-story Lackawanna County Administration Building to his portfolio of downtown properties.

Commissioners voted unanimously Wednesday to award the bid for the sale of the building to the Allentown-based developer's firm, Jefferson-Werner LLC. Jefferson's \$1.62 million bid for the landmark structure at 200 Adams Ave. was the higher of two sealed bids the county opened earlier this month. The other, from Scranton-based DFM Properties, was \$1.4 million.

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It's unclear when Jefferson and the county will close on the sale, but the county will vacate the building later this year when it consolidates government operations into the former Globe Store on Wyoming Avenue. Jefferson-Werner's bid of \$1,621,000 came in \$321,000 over the county's mandatory minimum bid amount of \$1.3 million — the figure it budgeted this year for revenue from asset sales and the same amount it paid to buy the Globe building in 2016.

"I'm pretty happy," said Jefferson, who plans to put about 50 apartments and a first-floor restaurant space in the building. "I think it's an awesome building and I'm a big believer in the downtown."

The retrofitting of the administration building will realistically take about 18 months, said Jefferson, whose downtown projects include the Connell Building on North Washington Avenue and the former Samter's building at Penn and Lackawanna avenues, among others.

"I think is a momentous occasion," Commissioner Patrick O'Malley said Wednesday, praising the potential of the Globe project while noting the administration building will be placed in a tax-producing status. "This is a great day. I'm just so happy."

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