

Polytechnic spending support falls short

Band council stalls on decision to commit \$4.5 in Rama dollars to new Six Nations Polytechnic building

By Paul Baswick

OHSWEKEN — Band council failed Monday to commit \$4.5 million from the community's Rama purse for the construction of a new Six Nations Polytechnic building, opting instead to defer a decision on spending until Oct. 30.

The funding request, presented at Monday's general finance meeting by Six Nations Polytechnic executive director Linda Staats and board chair Ron Thomas, was put on hold after council accepted an amendment in a six-to-five vote to re-examine the request at the end of the month.

Refusal of an immediate financial commitment came as some councillors insisted they first have time to review the business plan for the proposed facility submitted by the Polytechnic delegation that night, while other councillors objected to allocating Rama funds out-

side the framework of a community trust board.

The Polytechnic delegation asked that half of the requested \$4.5 million be provided as a grant by council, and that the balance be issued by council as an interest-free loan repayable over a thirty-year period.

Although an overwhelming majority of councillors voiced support for providing funding for the proposed Polytechnic facility, there wasn't a clear consensus on when or how that commitment should be made.

"I think that it's only right to give council a chance to look at this plan," said Chief Wellington Staats.

"I think some council members would like to see it before a motion is put forward."

Linda Staats told council the information laid out in the business plan had already been presented to

council in June. She stressed the need for council to act quickly on a spending decision.

"We have growing pains. We're bulging right now," she said of Polytechnic's current facilities on Fourth Line Road.