

Mt. Vernon Outland Airport examines project updates

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MT. VERNON — The design phase for a new hangar and adjoining ramp at Mt. Vernon Outland Airport is continuing, according to Manager Chris Collins.

Collins updated the Mt. Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners about that and other projects at Tuesday's meeting.

"We had a pre-design meeting with the state of Illinois and our project consultant and was briefed on the funding parameters of the ramp portion," Collins said.

He explained the airport would be able to use \$150,000 of its 2009 general aviation entitlement grant for the ramp, but that part of the project would have to go through the state bid letting process due to the many specifications it is required to meet.

The hangar building will be constructed through local contractors, Collins said.

"The board was worried that [the state bid letting] might mean increases in the cost which would exceed the costs in our 2014 bond issue," he said. "Last month, they authorized me to ask the state for help with any overages through grant funds from the IDOT's Division of Aeronautics."

On Monday, the state said the airport would be able to use its 2010 entitlement grant up to \$300,000.

Collins said, "The ramp may cost \$350,000. That's just an estimate, so we're still \$50,000 shy. The state said it would be able to program a portion of funds to make up the rest. We just don't want the project

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to be more than the bond issue. So far, it looks like good news."

The ramp project should be ready for state bid letting on June 1. Construction would then begin around Aug. 1 for completion for events at the airport this fall.

"For the building, we can start that process anytime since we've cleared everything," Collins said. "We're looking at about April or so to get going."

He added that the federal government has moved up the

perimeter fence project at the airport to occur in the coming months and well before its planned 2013 target.

That project will also go to state bid letting in June but the mandated size of the fence has been increased in size from six feet to 10 feet high.

"We've had a lot of discussion about it, and our board president is concerned about the appearance of the fence. We're trying everything we can to remind the feds to be lenient and understanding of the residents, especially our neighbors in Summersville," Collins said. "We just need to remind people that the government controls 95 percent of this facility."

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