

Airport continues to address restaurant space

One change includes removal of the front wall area

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MT. VERNON — Recently Mt. Vernon Outland Airport Director Chris Collins gave an update on the current situation regarding the open restaurant space at the airport.

According to Sentinel archives,

the space became open after Wilkey's Cafe officially closed on Oct. 21, 2018, after about 10 years of serving at the airport. Since then the airport has met with various individuals who have considered operating in the space, but nothing official has been announced. Collins discussed the current situation regarding finding someone to use that space.

"We had a prospect come out Tuesday for a second meeting," Collins said. "There has been no yes or no to it. We are kind of in a holding

pattern with that one.

"Probably, if we don't hear anything in the next week or so, we will start another campaign to find an operator," Collins said.

Collins noted the many challenges with finding an operator. These challenges include being on the east side of town, which Collins noted could be a positive because there it provides them the opportunity to serve people nearby. Another challenge has been the

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Submitted Photo

WALL REMOVAL — Mt. Vernon Outland Airport is currently planning to remove the wall that separates the front lobby and the restaurant space. The work is planned to be conducted in-house with hopes to be completed by spring.

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winter season, which Collins explained is almost over. He also noted the benefits to the space.

"The best part about this is that it is such a large venue, that it transcends more than just a restaurant," Collins said. "You also have catering possibilities, you can have banquets, weddings. The right operator can make it as

big or small as they want it. It can be a simple small operation or you can serve 500 people a day if you wanted to."

Collins noted that the airport is also planning on making an aesthetic change to the space by removing the front wall, which separates the restaurant area and the front lobby.

"When you come inside the lobby, when you look to the right, there is a big wall with four windows," Collins said. "This building was not designed that way, this

building had kind of an open lobby concept."

The wall was not originally there when the airport was first built, but was installed in 1992.

"When I took the job in 2005 that was one of my goals someday was to take this building back to the way it used to look," Collins said. "It is a no cost project, it is simply the maintenance guys and I will do it."

Collins said the hope is to have the wall removed by spring.

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