

# Airport approves utility sewer upgrade bid

*Project previously approved for ARPA funds*

**BY JOSH JONES**

SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MOUNT VERNON — The Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners approved a bid for the sewer portion of the Innovation Park (Hangar 2) utility upgrade project during Tuesday's meeting.

According to Sentinel archives,

the project was estimated to cost approximately \$220,000 and would include replacing and relocating a 50 plus year old cast iron sewer pipe. The Jefferson County Board approved using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the project back in October. Airport Director Chris Collins spoke on the bid they received for the project.

"We received one bid from JK Trotter & Sons and that bid was \$151,350," Collins said. "When we add the engineering/design contract, administration and oversight,

that project is now going to cost \$192,850."

Collins said that the bid amount they received was great news.

"We had asked for \$220,000 from the county, for the ARPA funds. The bid that Trotter sent was 12.4% below



**Chris Collins**

the original engineer's estimate," Collins said. "When you add everything together, that \$192,850 is approximately \$27,000 less than the amount I asked for at the county board."

According to Collins, the pipe was installed in the late 1960s. He said all the sewage from the airport flows out of the lift station and through the cast iron pipe under the main runway of the airport to Mount Vernon's infrastructure, located on Airport Road. Collins said that the pipe will also be relocated.

"The old one has some 45 (degree fittings) in it and didn't make a direct B line for airport road," Collins said. "This new one will go straight across and have only one 45 degree fitting in it, where it makes its angle to intersect the city."

Collins said that this project makes a pathway for the Innovation Park (Hangar Two) project.

"This makes a pathway for that to be easier done. Because the old system would have been underneath

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the new aircraft ramp, which we don't like to do that," Collins said. "Now it is going to have its own pathway with no ramp space over the top of it."

Collins said with the airport funded electric utility project nearly complete and when the sewer project is completed, three of the four spots in Innovation Park will be shovel ready.

"The fourth spot is currently occupied by the maintenance building," Collins said. "The long term thinking is our maintenance building will be relocated and that will give us four nice spots to advertise for businesses that would want to be located to the Mount Vernon Airport."

Jefferson County Board Chairman Cliff Lindemann said he is glad to see that the project has come under what was previously projected. He said that the airport will provide the county with bills/paperwork and the county will disperse the funds as needed.



**Cliff Lindemann**

"I am happy, I am excited that the airport is moving forward with this project, because it does mean some future growth out there at the airport and I know that there are hangars and things coming in. I don't know if it will provide any more jobs in the future, but it is opening up the door for expansion," Lindemann said.

Collins said he believes this is a win-win for the airport and the county.

"Our project is lower than estimated and that presents another \$27,450 for the county to apply to another project," Collins said. "It is great partnering with the county on this project."

According to Sentinel archives, the county has received approximately \$7.3 million in ARPA funds. The federal plan seeks to help various Americans in a variety of different ways throughout the country in response



Sentinel File Photo

**UTILITY PROJECT —** The Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners approved a bid for the sewer portion of the Innovation Park (Hangar 2) utility upgrade project during Tuesday's meeting. The total project cost is \$192,850 and it was approved for American Rescue Plan Act funds back in October.

to COVID-19. Due to wanting to take a more conservative approach, the county board agreed to freeze approving any additional ARPA requests until this month. Lindemann shared his thoughts on looking at additional ARPA requests.

"We have received the rest of the money that we were told we were going to get from the government," Lindemann said. "We are going to look at what is left out there as far as what has been requested and try to prioritize what we feel like are the best spending of the money in order to do the greatest good for the county or for the courthouse. ... I am ready to get moving forward with this, I would like to get the money designated to where it needs to go. We put out an Aug. 1 deadline for requests so that we could go ahead and move forward."

### IN OTHER AIRPORT BUSINESS:

- The recent EAA Young Eagles Rally flew 147 children.
- The board approved the tentative budget ordinance.
- The board approved meeting minutes.
- The contestants of the 45th Annual Air Race Classic are expected to stop/pass by Mount Vernon Outland Airport Wednesday afternoon and all of Thursday.

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