

Update given on airport projects

Perimeter access road project moves forward

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MOUNT VERNON — The Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners heard an update this week on various ongoing projects at Mount Vernon Outland Airport.

Airport Director Chris Collins first spoke about the perimeter access road project. According to Sentinel archives, the project involves the rehabilitation of the interior perimeter service roads by placing asphalt. The road will be paved and will be 16 foot wide and eight inches thick. The road is used for public access during the airport's annual Salute to Freedom and is utilized for airport operations.

"It is going to start on Monday and we have 29 calendar days on the project, but I don't think the contractor is going to need all of that to do that work," Collins said. "They should be done and out by the end of August."

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Collins said that he is excited to see this project move forward as the roads are deteriorating and there is a lot of traffic from the west campus of the airport to the east campus of the airport. The roads are in such a state that airport personnel will sometimes use the taxiways to commute.

"It is not a perfect situation, because there is always a risk of having what is called a vehicle pedestrian deviation," Collins said. "Once the roadway is paved then that takes that traffic off of the taxiway. So it is going to make things safer for our operations personnel."

Chris Collins



Another issue is the damage the road has caused to airport vehicles including the airport's new fuel trucks.

"Both of our trucks are new essentially and we have been exposing those new trucks to those poor road conditions and that has deteriorating effects on seals and components on the trucks," Collins said. "The jet truck has already sprayed leaks. These are three inch lines and they are not easy to repair."

Southern Illinois Asphalt is the company that was awarded the bid for the project. The local cost of the project is \$18,011.56, the federal share is \$403,102.33 and the state share was \$18,011.56 for a total project cost of \$439,125.45.

Collins said the perimeter access road project is going to play an important part in the further capitalization of the airport.

"Innovation Park is going to have a western component and an eastern component and that roadway is going to serve the tenants that could find themselves new homes in the eastern component, including relocation of our maintenance building," Collins said. "This is just part of our long range planning."

Collins said the work regarding the Innovation Park electric utility update project should have concluded by the end of this past week. Sentinel archives state the airport accepted a bid of \$62,800

regarding the relocation of a transformer that is inside the fence and in the way of future development.

"In the fall, when the sewer portion is done, then Innovation Park west will have all the utilities in place for all the future development to come," Collins said.

As for the Innovation Park sewer utility project, Collins said that they are expecting the project to be delayed.

"That project is probably going to begin in mid to late September, because there is a delay in getting the materials," Collins said.

The project is estimated to cost approximately \$192,850 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. JK Trotter & Sons was the only bidder for the project.

"We are excited to have the job being done local, it is great to have a local contractor to do the work," Collins said.

Collins said he has reached out to the corporate office for Air Evac Lifeteam regarding the finalization of the permanent base. He said that the agreement has been reviewed by the company's internal legal team and is now being reviewed by an outside company that Air Evac hired.

"This is a pretty complex project to where we are doing a design build and a finance and lease situation. It is not as simple as sending a lease agreement to them and they say yes and approve," Collins said. "We are bidding the project, we are obtaining an interest rate and a payment schedule. There is just a lot to it. ... It is still moving forward and hopefully we will be there soon."

Collins said the runway lighting project hit a setback as no bids were received for the June Illinois Department of Transportation letting. According to Sentinel archives, the MVAA has been planning a major lighting replacement project that includes replacing lights on the primary runway, the cross runway and the taxiways at the airport. The project was initially estimated at \$1.96 million, with a \$98,000 local share.

"The airport's consultant did some digging to determine why there were no bids submitted and contractors expressed that the calendar dates that were

included in the bid specification, that they didn't feel comfortable that they had enough days to complete the work," Collins said. "And then there were some contractors that have great reputations and great work experience that were excluded by IDOT because they had too much work that exceeded their bonding limitations."

Collins said that more days have been put into the project which will appear on the IDOT Aug. 5 letting.

"So hopefully on Aug. 5 we will have some bids," Collins said.

IN OTHER BUSINESS:

- The board recognized the successes of being rated the best stop for the Air Race Classic as well as the success of this year's Salute to Freedom program.

- A new freezer unit for the Bonnie Cafe was shipped to the wrong location and damaged. A trailer unit is being used until the equipment can be inspected and shipped to the airport. The unit is expected to be delivered in two weeks.

- The board selected Aetna for its health insurance. The agreement is an additional \$2.19 from the previous plan and unlike the previous plan includes dental and vision. The cost is now \$893.44 a month per employee.

- The board approved using excess Personal Property Replacement Tax revenue to make payments regarding its recently purchased aircraft. Grant funds are planned to be utilized in the future.

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PROJECT UPDATES —

The Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners recently heard an update on various ongoing projects at Mount Vernon Outland Airport. The perimeter access road project is expected to start on Monday and will improve the interior road at the airport that has deteriorated.