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than the available funds on hand. For that reason, the project team is looking for ways to reduce costs before the airport goes out for bids for construction. The project team includes Architect Brian Edmison, Barry Stolz from Hanson Professional Services, and Airport Maintenance Superintendent Matt Colvin.

Collins delivered an update on the SRE project during the March 10 meeting of the Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners.

"The team is making strides but it's just a slow (process), trying to make sure we're frugal with our money," Collins said. "There's no pot of gold out there that (we can use), so we've got to build within our means here."

Currently, the airport's SRE structure is actually three separate buildings that were built together, located right in the center of the airport's Innovation Park development site. The original portion of the existing building was constructed in the mid-1970s, and is in poor condition. The plan now is to remove the entire old SRE three-building complex and to construct a new building at a different location on site.

Doing this will clear the way for development in Innovation Park, Collins said previously. Once the old building is removed, there will be several shovel ready sites available for ramp side aeronautical development, Collins said previously.

The majority of the cost of building the new SRE structure will be paid for using federal Bi-Partisan Infrastructure

Law funds. Specifically, 95% of the project will be paid for with federal funds, while 2 1/2% each will be covered by the State of Illinois and Mount Vernon Airport.

Collins said there is a total of roughly \$1 million available for the project. Current cost estimates, however, exceed that amount, which is why the project team is looking to cut costs, Collins said. The new structure will be a wood frame building with a metal exterior, and the estimated size is 136 by 72 feet.

One of the cost-cutting measures that the team has proposed is using asphalt millings for the drive-around areas at the new SRE building, instead of concrete or asphalt. The in-and-out entrances will still have to be concrete, but money could be saved using asphalt millings around the perimeter of the large building, Collins said. Asphalt milling is essentially ground-up asphalt, and the airport already has some of that on hand, Collins said.

"When the parking lot was milled and new asphalt was poured in, we always keep our millings," Collins said, later adding, "We have asphalt millings for the drive-around areas."

A firm time frame was not available for when the SRE building construction project will go out to bid.

Also on March 10, Collins updated the Airport Board on the Fixed Base Operations (FBO) revitalization project, which has now entered its third phase. An HVAC contractor is currently working in the FBO building. Once that work is finished, the airport may open up more areas in the structure to use for instructors' offices and a conference room. Currently, lack of space is an issue at the FBO facility, Collins said. Fixed Base Operations typically refers to fuel sales, aircraft maintenance, flight

instruction, and aircraft rentals.

"When it's nice, weather-wise, the building is maxed out," Collins said of the FBO building. "There's nowhere to have a one-on-one lesson or a post-flight briefing, so we need to find more space there. ... It's a revitalization and expansion. We're not building onto the building, we're trying to build within."

Other Airport Board actions on March 10 included:

- Collins reported to the board that the airport's new Cessna 172 Skyhawk plane has arrived and is being used for flight training. Collins is also working on building a new website, outlandflight.com, with a motto of "Resolve to Rise Above."

"We have six aircraft and just as many instructors," Collins said. "We're growing so it's really exciting."

- The board discussed the fact that the airport will serve as the Terminus host site for the 2026 Air Race Classic from June 25 to 28. It will likely be the largest event ever hosted by the local airport, as over 250 people are expected to attend over the four days.

"We're going to need everyone's help," Collins said. "We want to be on our game and show them the best that we have here. ... This is our shot to be ambassadors to people from across the nation."

- The board approved spending \$4,900 for an auto steer system for the airport's large mowing tractor. This GPS steering system is expected to save the airport 15% on diesel fuel annually, Collins said.

- Collins reported that the Air Evac Lifeteam project is officially finished. He also informed the board that the airport's six flight school planes flew a total of 134 hours in February.

3/17/24



SRE BUILDING PROJECT — Mount Vernon Outland Airport is seeking to cut costs before moving forward on a project to construct a new Snow Removal Equipment (SRE) building on site.

MV Airport eyes budget for new SRE building

Team working to cut costs before moving forward

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MOUNT VERNON — Mount Vernon Outland Airport is looking to cut costs before moving forward on a project to build a new Snow Removal Equipment (SRE) building on site.

According to Airport Director Chris Collins, the initial budget estimates for the project are higher

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