

Building at vets hall ready for last stretch

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / Friday, February 26, 2016

Construction is expected to start soon to complete the Jenny Lind Veterans memorial District's new community hall.

The board met Monday evening and formally accepted the loan from the Bank of Rio Vista, said Board President Gary Tofanelli.

The final paperwork should be signed within the next week or two and trigger the release of funds for construction, he added.

The board earlier this year accepted a negotiated low bid of \$856,500 from Lee-Way Construction out of Angels Camp to complete the project. Acceptance of the bid was contingent upon securing the bank loan for the work.

The construction loan from the Bank of Rio Vista is up to \$750,000 with the district using funds from its reserves before tapping into the loan, Tofanelli explained. When construction is completed, the construction loan will be converted into a 30-year conventional loan.

Work could begin by mid-March or even sooner, Tofanelli said, depending upon when the final paperwork is completed, signing of contracts and when the contractor is ready to proceed.

"Weather permitting, we anticipate work being done within 90 days," the board president said. "If the weather cooperates it will go quickly."

Weather should not interfere with the interior work, but it could have a bearing on removal of the old hall and related exterior work, such as paving.

Nearly all of the contractor's subcontractors will be local, Tofanelli said.

"We're very proud to say that we kept it local."

Much of the exterior work on the new hall at Daphne and Pine streets took place five years ago. The shell is up and interior framing and a stage have been completed.

The new hall is located behind the existing 50-plus-year-old veterans building and is more than three times larger than the old hall.

Plans for the new hall call for a commercial-grade kitchen, multiple meeting rooms, larger stage area for theatrical events, along with a larger capacity for community and private events.

In addition, the modern building solves handicap-access, heating and air-conditioning issues associated with the old hall.

The board has selected Frank Garza to replace Michael Wietrick as the district's general manager. Wietrick is moving out of the district. Garza and Tofanelli are on the district's construction committee and will sign the final paperwork with the bank and oversee the project.