

Progress on vet hall

Completion set for September

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / June 17, 2016

Construction of Jenny Lind Veterans Memorial District's new community hall should be completed by the first or second week of September.

Interior work is under way at the hall, located behind the existing hall at Daphne and Pine streets, and Board President Gary Tofanelli said the contract calls for completion by Sept. 1, but it may go over by a week or so.

Fire sprinklers were recently installed and had to be done before the bulk of interior work could begin, he explained.

Work is now progressing with the installation of the heating and air system, most of the plumbing has been completed and electrical work is under way.

"We're moving right along," Tofanelli added.

Sheet rocking is next on the list and then doors and plumbing fixtures will be installed.

While the interior work is invisible to the public, earthwork on the outside is scheduled to start next week. The mounds of dirt outside the building will be removed and an underground runoff water system will be set up.

The system will capture runoff water from the site and pump it up hill to help irrigate the park.

When completed, "this will be an absolute jewel for the area and able to accommodate around 300 people," Tofanelli said.

The main hall in the new building is roughly the size of the entire old building, which will be demolished to make way for a parking lot.

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.

Tofanelli said he is pleased local residents are making up the bulk of the workforce on the project.

The district received a construction loan of up to \$750,000 from Bank of Rio Vista to complete the project and is using reserves to make up the difference. When construction is completed, the construction loan will be converted into a 30-year conventional loan. The district will pay prime rate plus 2 percent on only the money it expended from the construction loan.

Completion of the hall has been a long time coming. The exterior shell went up about five years ago and interior framing was finished in the meantime.

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 50-plus-year-old existing hall.