

Airport construction takes flight

With hangar project complete, work can start on new operation center

Published: February 28, 2008

by **Carla Knapp**

Pharos-Tribune associate editor

Finished ahead of schedule and under budget, the new T-hangar at the Logansport-Cass County Airport is a modern, fully enclosed building that will undoubtedly attract some additional business for the airport.

However, it is only the first step in a plan to completely renovate the facility by the end of next year.

Airport manager Tim Dalton expressed his excitement about the completion of this first phase of construction.

“It adds so much to the airport,” he said, adding that each of the six units in the new building have already been leased out. “The hangar will really increase activity.”

The hangar, the first construction project fully funded by the Logansport-Cass County Airport Authority in 35 years, was inspected last Thursday and the building tenants will begin moving in this week. Dalton said two of the tenants are upgrading from other hangar space at the airport while four others are coming in from other areas.

Dalton said the project got off to a slow start, so he was pleased that it finished ahead of schedule. He said the main delay was in the delivery of structural steel for the building, which didn't arrive until Jan. 14. Construction, which was handled by Steinberger Construction, was completed on Feb. 20 — a full 20 days ahead of schedule.

Working with Dalton and the airport authority, Steinberger was also able to implement some design changes that helped in cutting costs, said Dalton. Though the contract amount was \$575,000, the company finished more than \$40,000 under budget.



SITE PLANS: Plans for the new operation center are on display in the office at the Logansport-Cass County Airport. Airport manager Tim Dalton says the airport board will award a contract this week, and he expects construction to begin in early May. **Pharos-Tribune photo by Arnold Ernest/**



NEW CONSTRUCTION: Tim Dalton, manager of the Logansport-Cass County Airport, stands outside the recently completed T-hangar. The building inspection took place last Thursday, and tenants will begin moving in this week. **Pharos-Tribune photo by Arnold Ernest**

Unlike the older hangars at the airport, the building offers several amenities aimed at protecting modern planes and their state-of-the-art avionics equipment. The exterior of the building is completely insulated and each unit is fully enclosed to offer additional security. The hangars also have radiant-heat capabilities, which tenants can use at their own expense.

The hangar also has two smaller units available that can be used for additional equipment storage or converted for office use.

With the first step now complete in what is expected to be a \$1.9 million overhaul, which will be funded through bonds

secured by the airport authority, Dalton is already looking ahead to the next projects, including a new operation center and a runway addition.

Bids for the operation center project were accepted at the last airport authority meeting and it will hold a special meeting at 3 p.m. today to award the contract. Dalton said he expects to break ground on the new facility in early May and hopes to move into the space by November.

Space will be the biggest change for the operation center, which was designed by Butler, Fairman and Seufert Engineering. Housed inside a clean, two-story building that has been in the works for nearly a year, Dalton said the center will include a larger lobby, conference rooms, offices and flight plan area on the first floor. The second floor will include updated pilot facilities, including a lounge, rest area, showers and a larger flight training area. Additionally, there will be an 80-foot by 85-foot attached hangar for corporate aircraft.

Dalton said the current operation center, built in 1971, was small and outdated. As with the new hangar, he is hoping that updating the facility will help to attract business to the airport.

“When you look at the building, this is one of the gateways that people see when they’re coming into Cass County,” he said. “We want to project a progressive image not only of the airport but of the community as a whole.”

The 5,000-foot runway extension will be the third phase of the construction, but Dalton said the FAA had yet to approve the project or the funding. Initial discussions indicate the project will probably be approved, he said, and he expects to hear from the FAA in about 30 days.

Still, Dalton said construction on the new runway will likely not begin until October and the earliest completion date would be 2009.

“Hopefully by this time next year the airport will have a different look and a different feel,” he said. “We’re hoping to draw different users to the airport and hopefully draw new faces to the community.”