

Mount Ayr Record New

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Lease marks progress for Heartland Energy

Grant letter will mean wind turbine plant can open

Another step toward the opening of the Heartland Energy Solutions plant in Mount Ayr came this week when the Mount Ayr city council finalized a lease for the former Mount Ayr Products plant with the new company.

In a special meeting held at the building the city owns and will lease to the new industry Monday night, the council gave its approval to the lease, though changes in the date of its beginning still need to be made.

The new plant in Mount Ayr will be manufacturing wind turbines and biofuel generators to produce electricity while working on research in other areas of energy solutions such as hydrogen.

Originally the lease was to begin on February 1, but a hitch in the paperwork for the \$300,000 federal block grant through the Iowa Department of Economic Development means the lease will not begin until April 1.

The grant was held up by the prototype wind turbine that will be installed at the new plant. There are rules that say a generator can not be installed too close to historic buildings and paperwork had to be done to prove that there was no conflict with a wind generator at the site.

The company is constrained

from moving ahead with many of its activities until the grant work is completed.

At the meeting Monday night it was noted that the city had insured the building for \$840,000 with a \$5,000 deductible. An addendum will be written to the contract for Heartland Energy Solutions to pick up the \$790 annual cost of the insurance.

Charles Sharp, chief operating officer for the new plant, noted that the company was setting up payment of all utilities for the new plant on a direct withdrawal basis so utility bills for the plant would not be overlooked.

The 10-year lease would have Heartland Energy Solutions purchase the building at the end of that period.

After the short discussion about the lease, the council approved the agreement. The company is waiting until it receives the official notice that the grant has been approved before it will sign the lease.

Company officials expressed appreciation for the help of the city, county and state in paving the way for a smooth transition into the building and the community.

Following the lease discussion, Heartland Energy Solutions officials showed the council the website it plans to launch as soon

as the grant work is complete, talked about their company and took council members on a tour of the facility.

Some equipment for the new plant is being moved into the building after the Mount Ayr Products equipment has been moved out and a new transformer is needed to help supply the energy for the light steel and sheet metal fabrication machines that will be used.

Although applications are not officially being taken yet, a number have been received by the company, which plans to have 109 people working at the plant within three years. It is hoped that many of the Mount Ayr Products and other former Dekko plant workers may be hired by the new firm.

Some of the work for the plant may also spill over and help other manufacturers in the area as well, it was noted.

A training grant has been received through Southwestern Community College to help train the new employees, it was noted.

Employees will be cross trained in the assembly, manufacturing and welding processes that the plant will need so people can be moved around the plant as needed.

One measure of how the plant

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