

# Southwest Montana Veteran's Home Update #71

By Mike Lawson

Greetings once again to you, the Veterans/Counties/Communities of SW MT who are the organizers and supporters of the SW MT Veteran's Home.

It is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2020, as I am writing this. The news of our President, the First Lady and many of his staff, getting Coronavirus was a shock to America and points to the fact that any of us can get it, no matter who we are. Wearing masks and social distancing is now at the fore front of what we can do, to help prevent us getting it or giving it to one another. Hopefully, we will follow these safety guidelines for the sake of each other and especially the elderly family members, we so dearly love. Our prayers go out to the President and all of our people, across this great land we call America, who have this terrible Covid-19. For the love of your families and neighbors, please be safe for them, as well as yourself.

Our SW MT Vet Home is at the point that one sub-contractor getting their part done, so the next sub-contractor can move in and do their part, is critical. There's been some hick-ups (delays) which has caused some stoppages, which really affect the completion date for a particular building. Some of these are caused by getting material delivered late, or having material having to be back-ordered, due to this Covid-19 situation the country is experiencing. Some is caused by contractors such as the NW Power not being able to get on the jobsite to get the gas lines installed to the buildings, early enough. The floor-layers, sheet rockers, tile-layers and painters need heat for the installation processes they do, especially now that fall is here, and the temperatures are dropping. Another issue was the electricians getting pulled off the job, for a week, to finish another job, their contractor was committed to finish. The tile-layers were pulled off this job, for about a week, to tile a job in LoLo that their contractor was committed to get done. These are all things that the General Contractor is faced with and tries to head off, before it really nails them in the rear end. All these things have a certain amount of legitimacy to them, for a lot of reasons, but as things are coming together, for the different finishing aspects, of this our Vet Home, it can be a nail biter. Cory Markovich and his Construction Site Superintendent Mike Ascherman are working through these issues and coordinating, to have smoother work transitions between the sub-contractors take place, in getting the finish work done on time. Liaison Mark Gollinger and I did a walk-through and, in spite of everything, saw some neat finishing touches, especially work done by General Foreman John Kotka's Carpenters. Mike Ascherman and John Kotka gave me a good run down on what happened this past week and what's expected to be accomplished the week we're in. A lot of outside site work happening, that I'll mention later in this article.

## Construction Updates:

**Community Center:— Interior:** Electricians are working on hooking up the Mechanical Systems, which will enable the heating systems to be fired up once the gas is hooked into the building. This should be happening at the end of this week. Once the electricians are finished, then the acoustical ceiling tiles can be installed in the t-bar ceiling metal framework. John said this will be a relatively quick process. On our walk-through we visited with the floor-layers who just came back on the job and are laying carpet/floor-tiles. John was able to get them some temporary heat, in the one section of the building they're working in. The Plumbers are waiting for some back-ordered sinks to come in, so they can finish hooking up the bathroom utilities.

**Exterior:** The gas line is tied to the building but not hooked up. Expected to be at the end of this week. The curb and 5' sidewalk, coming to and going away from this building is mostly poured. A

handicapped cement parking section, close to the entrance was poured. Some 3' sections of sidewalk going from the building to the 5' sidewalk/curb section have yet to be formed and poured.

**Cottage #1:— Interior:** Walking through this Cottage is a treat, in seeing so many of the finishing processes being completed or very close to being completed. One of these is seeing most of the toilets and sinks installed in the west resident wing. The only thing not completing these bathrooms is the overhead man-lift rail going from where the resident bed will be, into the bathroom, where it can split to either the shower or to the toilet. ARJO will probably be on site with-in the next few weeks to complete this installation. The Plumbers also were doing trim-out work. The Fire Sprinklers are all trimmed out. The carpenters are waiting on three doors/hardware to come in, to install, as well as insulation strips and door-seals. These can't be done until the cement-finishers get the 3' sidewalks, from the exterior doors to the curb and 5' sidewalk, formed and poured. The electricians are busy hooking up power to all the mechanical systems, so when both the gas and electricity are turned on, the electrical/heating systems can be fired up. The present plan is for this to be done in both the Community Center and Cottage #1, by a "specialty outfit" out of Missoula, during the week of October 12<sup>th</sup>. The gas line is to the building and should be hooked into the building gas system, by the close of this week. Once the heating is in place, the floor-layers can then, lay their flooring. The tile work is complete in all the resident rooms, but they still need to lay tile around the fireplace and kitchen back-splash area.

**Exterior:** The outside entry-way columns were sided and the the outside handrail connecting these columns was installed.

**Cottage #2:— Interior:** Attic insulation installed. The Plumber's were working on the heating zones/rough-in. Sheetrock taping will be in full force this week, with painting to follow. John's carpenters will be ready to move into this Cottage, next week, so it's important these two processes get completed by then, to prevent a hold-up in them moving in.

**Exterior:** Siding Crew were wrapping the Entry-Way Columns.

**Cottage #3:— Interior:** The Carpenters really shined in getting so much finish work done in this Cottage. The Coffered Ceiling Crown Molding was completed. Most of the doors were hung, trimmed out, with the hardware installed. Most of the window casing and trim was completed. Fireplace trimmed out. Two Panic doors and enclosures installed as well as Fire-doors/closures for the Janitor, Electrical and Dryer Rooms. The cabinet crew out of Great Falls will be installing Counter Tops this week. The fire sprinkler system was trimmed out and the attic insulation completed.

**Exterior: Nothing**

**Cottage #4:— Interior:** The sheetmetal folks were tying in their louvers/directional controls from their ductwork to the HVAC Systems. The Mechanical insulation is also in progress. The drywall taping and and metal ceiling framing has started.

**Exterior:** The siding process continues and is looking very good.

**Cottage #5:—Interior:** Electricians are installing a lot of conduit and electrical boxes as part of their rough-in work. The Plumbers are running copper pipe to the bathrooms as well as waste and sewer PVC plastic drain pipe. As more of the work gets done in the other Cottages, more of the work-force will be assigned to this location.

**Exterior:** Nothing

**Outside Site Work:** This work is very visible for any of you to drive by and see from your vehicles or from the “Viewing Hooch”. The NW gas crews were busy getting the gas line ditches dug and then getting the yellow-gas-lines buried. On the Southside of the Vet Home site, a main gas line was run from Blacktail Loop Road, on up in front of Cottage #1,#2,#3,#4 and #5. A gas line for each of the Cottages was tied into this main gas line and then tied into each building. Another main gas line was run, from the Blacktail Loop Rd., on the Northside of the Vet Home site, up in front of the Community Center Building to the Electrical Vault Building area. A gas line will be connected from this main line to the Community Center and the Maintenance Building. The hope is to see the gas connected/turned-on into this CC building and Cottage #1, by next week, so the start-up folk can do their magic in making these buildings fully functional. The gas termination tie-ins, located underneath Blacktail Loop Road will be tied in, once the road is dug up for that to take place, another neat twist in our Vet Home story is that the Butte Silver Bow Road Department is widening the road from Highland View Drive to our Vet Home site. They have already widened and rolled gravel on the sides with the expectation of paving it once the aforementioned gas-lines are tied in and the compaction-bury process is complete. Zemlijak Excavating continues to be all over this site doing various jobs. The storm drain catch-basin looks to be mostly complete. He continues to do prep-work for the cement finishers sidewalks and doing the gravel prep-work for “Hoffman Construction” to lay asphalt, which they did pave about half of the paving on Saturday.

The Southwest Montana Veteran Foundation Meeting will have taken place on Monday and the Governor will tour the Vet Home site on Thursday, with myself being the tour guide. This place is impressive and really sells itself.

I'll leave you for now with a please be careful and follow the mask and distance guidelines for yourself and those around you. Our numbers are really going up which is more then frightening.

Until next time. Take Care