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Inn construction set to begin

by KATIE DUNN • Staff Writer

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WISE — Restoration efforts at the Wise Inn are still slated to begin this summer.

The Wise County Industrial Development Authority on Tuesday unanimously approved advertising for sealed bids for the project's construction. Bids will be received on June 13 in the main dining room of the existing inn.

Following the meeting, Carl Snodgrass, executive director of the IDA, said ideally bids will be evaluated and a contract awarded two weeks from this date. He anticipates construction will begin in July.

The project, which includes renovating the existing 23,246-square-foot inn and constructing a new two-story, 23,427-square-foot addition, is expected to finish by July 2013.

The cost estimate for the project is \$11.6 million, though Snodgrass said the authority will have a better idea of the actual budget once bids are received.

The authority also on Tuesday approved paying Thompson & Litton of Wise — the firm providing architectural and engineering services for the project — \$42,000 to assist with the bidding process.

Design plans for the inn have not changed substantially since receiving approval from the authority last November, but members on Tuesday did agree to submit a change order to completely enclose the inn's front porch.

Following the meeting, Snodgrass said enclosing the porch will shield patrons from traffic noise on Main Street, as well as dust and other undesirable factors that could make sitting on the porch less enjoyable.

Snodgrass said he is anxious to get the project underway, noting that it has been a lengthy effort to reach this point.

The authority first acquired the inn almost five years ago on Dec. 27, 2007.

For more information on the bidding process, contact Thompson & Litton in Wise by writing P.O. Box 1307, Wise, Va. 24293-1307 or contacting Vi Sturgill at 276/328-2161.

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