Senators To Investigate Mamtek Project

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — State senators said Monday they planned to investigate a so-far unfulfilled central Missouri project that was to use public incentives and employ several hundred people to manufacture artificial sweetener.

The project by Mamtek U.S. Inc. was backed by $39 million in industrial development bonds issued by Moberly to finance the construction of a factory. The state offered more than $17 million worth of incentives and the company was to get $8 million in private investment. But the plant remains under construction, Mamtek has laid off its employees and the company missed its first bond payment.

State officials have said Mamtek did not receive any state funds.

Missouri senators said that the planned to examine state government's role in the project, particularly how it was handled by the Department of Economic Development. The Senate Committee on Government Accountability was to conduct the probe.

Republican Sen. Kurt Schaefer, whose district includes Moberly, said it was important to learn what happened to protect other communities in the future.

Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster said last that week that he was investigating to determine whether any civil or criminal laws were violated. Koster said he would assist the Randolph County prosecutor and that the review had started immediately.

Meanwhile, the Columbia Daily Tribune reported Monday (http://bit.ly/rhmGys) that principal investors in Mamtek have formed a new company and told local officials that they plan to complete the factory project.

The Moberly Area Economic Development Corp. said the city received a written commitment from American Sucralose Manufacturing Inc. to make up the missed bond payment and "cure deficiencies and undertake completion of the project under city supervision."

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