The project to renovate Blackham Coliseum on the University of Southwestern Louisiana campus moved closer to reality Wednesday when the Board of Liquidation of State Debts allocated $100,000 toward the renovation.

Total cost of the renovations will be approximately $611,725 with the remainder of the funds coming from money already allocated.

Weill Construction Company has been awarded the contract for a low bid and acceptance of their base bid and deductive alternate. Date for beginning the alterations has not been set but work is expected to start shortly.

David L. Perkins, AIA architect for the project, said that the remodelling and enlargement of the Coliseum will provide for a seating capacity of 7,500.

From an appearance standpoint, Perkins said, the building will no longer resemble a barn. The new roof will come off to the top of the existing windows at the gutter line. The new seating will extend outward from this point.

There will be a covered entry at the front of the building and two covered ticket offices with three windows each.

The view of the building will be that of pre-cast panels rather than the present roof line. The operable louvered windows will show between the panels.

A new type of steel column to support the roof will be used. Called "corten", the steel columns remain unpainted and a rich brown coating, caused by oxidation, results. The effect is that of bronze. The columns need never be painted.

The entire color scheme of the building is to be tied in with the color of the oxidized columns and will be in warm, attractive earth tones.

There will be 600,000 square feet of roofed area plus circulation and dressing room area in the renovated Coliseum. In addition to the new dressing and rest rooms, the existing ones will be renovated. There will be added lobby space for concession booths, etc.

The building will be completely re-lighted and heated. Forced cross ventilation will make for a much cooler building, Perkins said.

Construction should be completed in 365 days, the architect said.