

# Airport to become emergency logistics base

*Airport Director Chris Collins currently in negotiations with Illinois Emergency Management Agency*

**BY EMILY ROTH**

SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

**MT. VERNON** — The Mt. Vernon Outland Airport is currently in the works to become an Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) logistics base in the event of an emergency.

During Tuesday's Mt. Vernon Outland Airport Authority Board of Commissioners meeting, Airport Director Chris Collins informed the board of his meetings with various EMA agencies.

"The premise is we would be a logistics base for a natural disaster," stated Collins. "Of course we've all known that we're consid-

ered to do that anyway with our being north of the New Madrid Fault area and here at an intersection of two interstates. And of course working with the National Guard and the Air Guard ... and with all the fencing and all the hangars, it seems like a natural fit."

In the event of an emergency, the state of Illinois may move resources appropriate to the event to logistics bases. According to the IEMA website, the state, in conjunction with local emergency management agencies aim to pre-

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identify potential bases whenever possible before a disaster strikes. Airports are considered ideal bases for incoming resources.

"I've been meeting with local IEMA guys and state guys, I've probably had three meetings so far and this agreement was handed to me about two weeks ago," added Collins. "What I'd like to do is establish a committee and invite Commissioner [Eddie]

Lee on it with me in talking with legal counsel. Commissioner Lee has extensive knowledge and background in this and has served in this role at a previous location. We've already went through this agreement quite a bit and I have it on a CD where I can change it so my instructions were to get it to where it's acceptable to us and then send it to them and we'll continue negotiations."

The motion to continue negotiations toward the approval of the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport as an IEMA logistics base was approved with a unanimous vote, save for Commissioner Lee who

abstained.

Logistics bases are required to have adequate capabilities to store both hot and climate controlled resources for a limited time-frame. In the event of an emergency, the state will deliver life essential commodities and supplies to victims of a major disaster or catastrophic event. Life essential commodities and supplies may include, but are not limited to water, heater meals or MREs (meal, ready-to-eat), tarps, blankets, infant supplies, and medical supplies.

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eroth@morningsentinel.com