

Outland Airport runway testing under way

Weight-limit verification should allow for higher publishes capacity

BY TIM JOHNSON

SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MT. VERNON — Mt. Vernon Outland Airport is undergoing runway capacity testing that will allow the airport to sell itself as a base location for larger planes.

At Tuesday's Airport Authority meeting, Manager Chris Collins reported that testing firm Applied Research Associates will report back to him in about six weeks on the strength of core samples taken from an airport runway and taxi ramp last week.

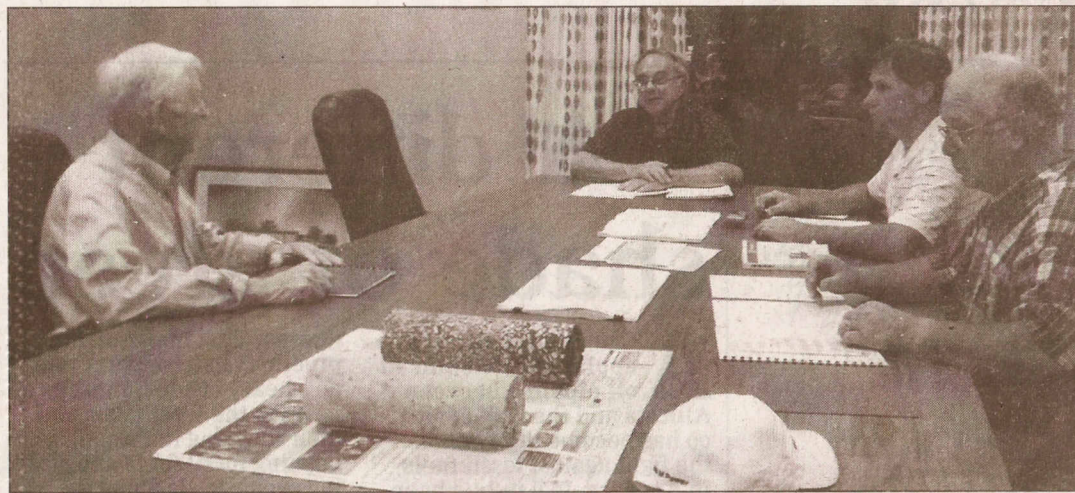
The airport is wooing a potential

user interested in making the airport a home base for a large aircraft, but management must first secure a rating proving the airport's main runway and taxiways can withstand the weight.

The airport's theoretical weight capacities, which are set conservatively, are not high enough for the plane in question. A verification will allow the airport to publish a higher limit, Collins said. It will also be a proactive step toward meeting new classification requirements from the Federal Aviation Administration coming down the pike.

"Most U.S. airport authorities will now be required to issue a [Pavement Classification Number] for their eligible runways within three years," Collins said. "So

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Sentinel Photo/TIM JOHNSON

AIRPORT AUTHORITY — Members of the Mt. Vernon Airport Authority discuss projects underway at Tuesday's monthly meeting.

Airport:

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we're on the cutting edge of technology here and the forefront of what everybody else is going to have to do in the future."

The airport authority approved a bid last month for \$13,360 to begin the testing, and on Tuesday Collins requested and received approval for \$7,300 more for

further work.

Collins also updated the board on the airport's fencing project, which will begin construction Monday. The \$1.2 million, 5-mile fence will be almost entirely paid for with federal funds, though the airport will pay \$31,725 of the cost.

The fence will surround the airport completely, leaving no gaps for animals to wander onto the airport property and pose a risk to planes taking off and landing.

Work is expected to be completed in about three

months.

IN OTHER BUSINESS:

- The board approved a bid of \$21,256 from The Insurance Store for property and equipment insurance for the next year;

- And approved a bid of \$750 to provide free lunches at the 15th Annual EAA Little Egypt Fly-In and Veterans Reunion on Saturday. A dedication ceremony will be held at 11 a.m. for the airport's new Jefferson County Heroes Memorial, which is all but completed.

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