

Airport to purchase winterizing equipment

Mt. Vernon Outland Airport will buy equipment to build a de-icer as well as a snow-melting liquid for runway

BY EMILY ROTH

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MT. VERNON — After a unanimous vote from the Mt. Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners during their regular meeting Tuesday night, the airport will be purchasing snow removal equipment to ensure the runway is ready for winter.

"The reason I'm interested in this is we really have no means of deicing the runway in the event of an ice storm," said Airport Director Chris Collins. "You're probably thinking 'how many times has that happened here?' It's happened twice on my watch since I've been here, 10 years, and it's not an easy feeling when the runway's closed out there because it's iced over and there's nothing that we can do."

The estimated budget for the snow removal equipment which would be bought and then built by airport staff is \$1,200, with the money taken from the capital projects fund. The runway would be coated with de-icer down the center for 50 feet, with the fluid then running down the sides of the runway to melt the ice or snow.

"This stuff is easily storable," stated Collins, "it will last multiple seasons, and ... this is not something where we say 'hey, we've got it, let's put it on the runway, we

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LOOK THROUGH THE NUMBERS — Members of the Mt. Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners look through the treasurer's report during their Tuesday meeting. The budget was also consulted as Airport Director Chris Collins discussed the purchase of snow removal equipment.

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have ice.' This is only if we have a cargo opportunity or one of our tenants has to go out or the military is coming in. It's not a good feeling to be sitting here enclosed due to ice and ... that opportunity that would have come here goes to somewhere else that's doing this. So I would like to

take a shot at building this system and having it on hand."

Collins advised the board that the deicing liquid would cost more than the equipment, and he expects to spend approximately \$4,400. "I'm looking at this like it's a commodity like fuel," Collins told the board, "the fluids would be purchased out of flightline [funds] and if we have to use it, then we charge the operator that made us use it."

Board Chairman Mike Ancona expressed concerns

regarding deicing being a liability for the airport. "If you look at people who have public facilities and public places, [they are told] don't try to de-ice it because when you try to get rid of the ice and someone slips and falls that you were supposed to fix it."

Collins stated that in the event of an ice storm he would take a reading on the runway to gauge its safety and fully inform a pilot of any conditions.

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