

Airport board discusses restaurant space

No official proposals have been turned in

BY JOSH JONES
SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MT. VERNON — The Mt. Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners heard an update on the current situation regarding the open restaurant space during Tuesday's meeting.

Chris Collins, Mt. Vernon Outland Airport Director, said that initially he heard from three interested parties.

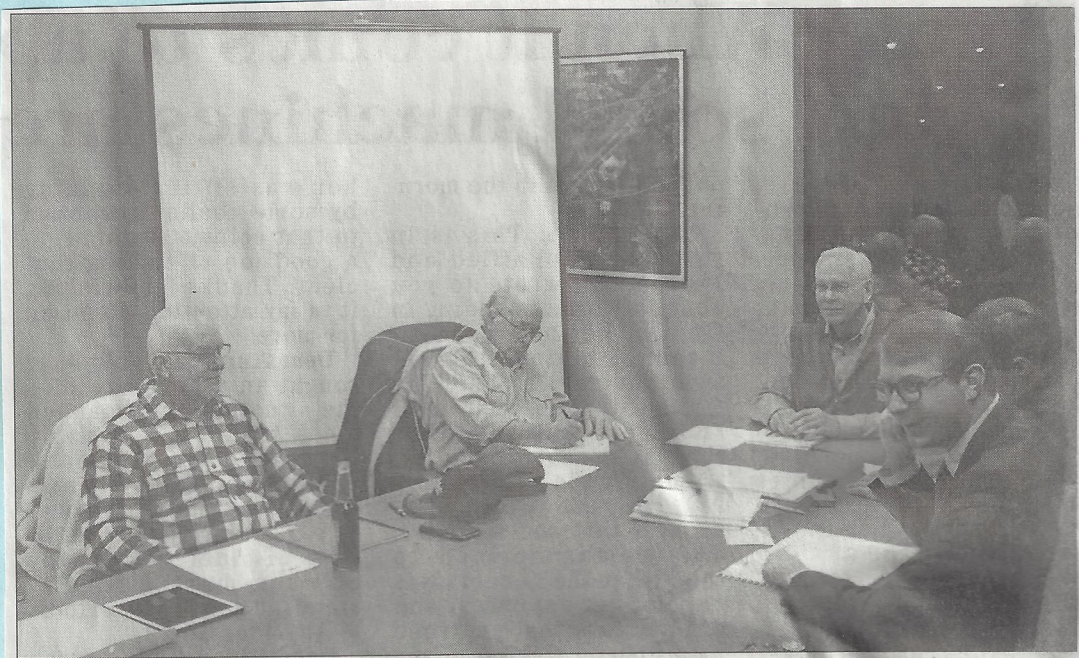
"I wish I had better news for you. We had three interested parties that have come and looked at the facilities," Collins said. "We had two additional entities contact the airport, that wanted the specs, but didn't visit."

Collins said that he did follow up with the three original interested parties.

"So, we were hopeful that the three original would submit proposals but I hadn't seen anything by yesterday morning. So, I telephoned all three of them," Collins said. "One of them declined, they were just too busy with other locations, and the other two I had been talking to all day today. They both want more time to study numbers."

According to Sentinel archives, Wilkey's Cafe officially closed on Oct. 21 after about 10 years of serving at the airport. The closure occurred after Donnie G. Wilkey of Belle Rive, the owner and operator of Wilkey's Cafe, passed away on Aug. 22. The family-owned business

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Sentinel Photo/JOSH JONES

RESTAURANT DISCUSSED — The Mt. Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners received an update Tuesday concerning the open restaurant space at the airport. They are currently waiting for any interested parties to submit proposals. *11-15-18*

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opened at the airport in the spring of 2011, but it also had a previous stint at the airport in the late 1990s. The business originated in Belle Rive in the early 1950s.

Commissioner Ryan Wellmaker discussed the possibility of the airport casting a wider net using social media.

"Number one, it is free and number two, it might get more of an outreach as well," Wellmaker said.

Since nothing official has been submitted, the names of the interested parties are not

being released.

"I have no proposal for you to look at, no recommendation, the only thing I can do is ask for more time and keep working with these other two, if not look for somebody else," said Collins.

Board Chairman Gary Chesney commented on the situation.

"I think reaching farther if we can find others is a good idea and we will talk about it again next month," Chesney said. "We would like for it to be quicker, but we will work with them. We understand people wanting to look at the numbers pretty close before putting their money into it."

Collins encouraged interested businesses and individ-

uals looking to open a restaurant to contact Mt. Vernon Outland Airport.

IN OTHER BUSINESS:

- The board approved an engineering agreement between Hanson Professional Services and the airport for a road paving project.

- The board recognized the efforts Leroy Hughes who had been bringing the ARFF training area to various airports both within and outside the state so firefighters can train. Several others were also recognized for their contributions.

- The airport hangar revitalization is expected to be completed soon.

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