

# MT. VERNON & REGION

## Sale on eBay nets airport \$5,000

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MT. VERNON — A late bid on an online auction relieved the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport of an outdated piece of equipment and made them \$5,100 in the process.

The Mt. Vernon Airport Authority learned during its regularly scheduled meeting Tuesday night that a fire truck, recently replaced with a modern Air Rescue Fire Fighting/Rapid Intervention Vehicle, was sold through an eBay auction for more than \$5,000.

Airport manager Chris Collins said the bidding wars had stalled at \$3,700 until the final 20 minutes of the auction, when the price consistently rose.

The old fire truck, which had not generated interest of more than \$500 prior to the online auction, was sold to a Nebraska cattle farmer who plans to pick up the equipment after the first of the year, Collins said.

With the proceeds of the

sale of the old fire truck, the airport can now move forward with plans to implement a nitrogen recharging system at a cost of about \$3,600.

Collins explained the current system used to recharge the tanks of water, foam and chemical extinguishing materials is about a three-hour process and requires disassembly of the rear of the truck.

The new system using a compressed air boost pump will charge the tanks in about 30 minutes with the only labor being that of turning a valve, he said.

Collins had hoped to reach a cost-sharing agreement with the agencies that have access to the ARFF truck through mutual aid agreement but was not successful in his attempts.

Chairman Alan Hale favored purchasing the \$3,600 in equipment needed to construct the recharge system while approaching other agencies again with a request for shared cost on additional nitrogen tanks and the materi-

als to fill them.

Hale said he believed it was simply a process of allowing the city of Mt. Vernon and Jefferson County Fire Protection District the opportunity to allow for the additional costs in their individual budgets.

"Everybody has been receptive. I think the key to the whole program is to get it into their budget cycle," Hale said. "I don't think there is an unwilling partner. We just need get into the process."

All agencies involved in the mutual aid agreement will train and have access to the truck if needed.

"Those guys have the benefit of that truck, and they can use that truck," said Commissioner Mike Ancona. "The likelihood of that truck going out on a traffic accident or something overturned is greater than an airplane crash."

The airport recently purchased the nearly \$200,000 truck through money made available by federal and state agencies at no cost to the air-

port and a local match of about \$17,000, according to Sentinel archives.

Bid specifications are still being reviewed for the runway obstruction removal project, and the Airport Authority will continue to hold on the project pending final approval by the state.

Collins said he could not advise moving forward and jeopardizing any possible funding. The project is still expected to be completed by the end of March.

Hale and the board congratulated Air Evac on its recent honor as Base of the Year and issued certificates of appreciation to the Morning Sentinel, Mt. Vernon Register-News, Ancona and Commissioner Greg Martin for their individual input on the October Experimental Aircraft Association Fly-in.

The Fly-in included a veterans' reunion, Young Eagles flights, Air-Evac Superbase Open House and unofficial open house of SRT Aviation.

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