

# Airport Authority OKs energy contract

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MT. VERNON — The Mt. Vernon Airport Authority Board approved a new energy deal Tuesday that will save the airport 22 percent in energy costs over the next year.

Airport Manager Chris Collins said the contract, with Ameren Energy Marketing, will save the facility an estimated \$5,136 on a yearly basis. The deal was brokered by Global Energy Services, a company that helps small entities like the airport negotiate with energy companies to get lower bulk rates.

Two members of GES presented a similar proposal at the board's December meeting, but it was

tabled due to a provision calling for a penalty if the airport couldn't hold within 10 percent of a certain amount of energy used monthly. As Collins discovered, that was a good decision.

"I pulled all the [energy] records for the last two to three years, and we were all over the runway," he said. "We would have exceeded the 10 percent."

Collins and Board Commissioner Gary Chesney were selected to



Collins

investigate the potential for a new deal independent of GES, but learned that facilities that use as little energy as the airport does — about 350,000 kilowatt-hours yearly — rarely make enough in energy savings to justify the costs associated with signing a contract.

"What we found out was [that] entities, such as the airport, that don't do more than 500,000 kilowatt-hours [yearly] were really too small to even be considered," Collins said. "Had we gone the traditional route and solicited quotations from, say, 10 of these companies, our savings would have

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been eaten up in the review by the attorneys of the contracts."

Collins and Chesney then asked GES to seek another

energy company for its next proposal, but only Ameren had replied to GES' request for a bid on the airport's behalf. GES subsequently convinced Ameren to drop the percentage provision, and an altered proposal presented by GES Tuesday passed. Collins said he was

pleased with the contract as accepted by the board.

"Gary and I felt that the

Global Energy Services deal was ultimately a pretty good one," he said. 1-21-11