

Airport board approves fire station improvements

The improvements are running in conjunction with improvements by the Mt. Vernon Foreign Fire Insurance Board

BY JOSH JONES

SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MT. VERNON — The Mt. Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners approved moving forward with making improvements to Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Station/Fire Station Three.

The board accepted the low bid of \$9,500 from Bevis Construction for wall and window improvements at the Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Station. Airport Director Chris Collins explained that currently on the east and south sides of the station the window wall units date back to 1974.

"They are very grossly energy inefficient to the extent where there is no insulation at all in these walls and of course the windows are from 1974," Collins said.

Collins said that the scope of work includes insulated two by six stud walls with modern energy efficient windows. Collins discussed the issues firefighters at the station face with the three window wall areas.

"There was no insulation value whatsoever. So, in the winter the firefighters are cold inside there. It is hard to heat in the winter and cool in the summer," Collins said. "Back then energy was cheap so they didn't put any measures for conservation in these buildings like they do now."

Collins said that he was hoping to have the project completed by the end of September.

"I am just proud of the relationship the airport has with the City of Mt. Vernon and its firefighters," Col-

lins said. "That we can continue to make upgrades there at the station that we share and it is our first line of defense for anything east of the railroad tracks."

Mt. Vernon Fire Chief Kevin Sargent explained that the City of Mt. Vernon Foreign Fire Insurance Board is handling interior improvements of the station that are expected to be completed by the end of the year. The scope of work is modernization of the interior of the station, which has not been upgraded since 1967, when it was built. Sargent explained that the work done through the Foreign Fire Insurance Board is not through taxpayer funds and he discussed where the money came from.

"The Foreign Fire Insurance Board is made up of firefighters that are currently on the department and it is established by state statute that any insurance company outside of the state of Illinois that

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Submitted Photo

ARFF STATION — The Mt. Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners recently approved moving forward with making improvements to Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Fire Station Three. The improvements include upgrading windows and walls to make the station more energy efficient and comfortable for the firefighters.

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sells policy inside of the state of Illinois that two percent of that fund is given back to fire departments in that jurisdiction," Sargent said. "Say Progressive Insurance sells a policy in Mt. Vernon, then two percent of that policy is set aside for the use, maintenance and benefit of the fire department. It can be utilized for equipment, it can be utilized for improvements on the fire stations, all kinds of things."

Sargent said that over the past several years the foreign fire insurance fund has helped remodel the fire stations and

update them including station one and station four and now this year station three was the focus. He discussed the fire department's relationship with the airport.

"It is really important that the Airport Director Chris Collins and the Airport Authority Board has agreed to work with us on this project to help modernize the fire station and make the living conditions a little better for our guys working out there," Sargent said. "It just shows that over years with us helping them with their Part 139 Certification and manning that station and they are turning around and helping us throughout this process. It is a mutual relationship, it is great that we have that with our airport."

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