

Mt. Vernon Airport Authority  
Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners  
Held October 14, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

Present: Gary Chesney	Chairman
Eddie Lee	Vice Chairman
Mike Ancona	Treasurer

Staff: Chris Collins

Absent: Gary Chesney	Chairman
Ryan Wellmaker	Secretary
Marty Cox	Commissioner

Guests: Corey Harper, Jeff Haarmann, and Rob Wielt

**PUBLIC INPUT**

There being no comments from the public, Chairman Chesney moved forward with the meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Collins introduced Mr. Corey Harper, Mr. Jeff Haarman, and Mr. Rob Wielt. Since everyone in attendance was familiar with Affordable Gas and Electric's Jeff Haarman and Rob Wielt, Mr. Collins explained how Mr. Harper came to Mt. Vernon. Mr. Collins noted he and Mr. Harper met at the Illinois Public Airport Association Conference in Galena, Illinois recently. Mr. Harper was a presenter at the conference providing an overview of solar installations at airports. Mr. Collins turned the floor over to Mr. Harper. Mr. Harper's stated his background is in airport engineering having worked as a consultant for Indianapolis International Airport during that airport's solar farm construction project – the largest in the nation. After the project was completed, Mr. Harper began working for the solar company CTS (a subsidiary of Veregy) that installed the solar farm. Mr. Harper specializes in working with airports to identify energy saving and energy generating solutions. Mr. Harris further defined his expertise as turning FAA regulatory/requirements into kilowatt hours. Mr. Harper noted his company has 19 current airport solar projects ongoing across the Midwest.

A long discussion ensued between Mr. Harper, Mr. Haarmann, Mr. Collins, and the Commissioners about solar farming, net metering, power purchase agreements, airfield and building lighting upgrades, parking lot light upgrades, and energy conservation measures. Locations for a possible solar system were discussed with sites suggested, ruled out for various reasons, or approved pending studies. Next up in the discussion was net metering vs solar farming. Mr. Collins recommended a net metering system due to that solution being more favorable to the FAA. All seemed to be in agreement with Mr. Collins as net metering would simplify and speed up any solar projects.

Once a large solar farm was ruled out in favor of net metering, the discussion focused on the Koziara Terminal. As discussed previously, the two largest consumers of energy are the airfield lighting grid and the Koziara Terminal. The planned upgrade to LED lighting in 2023/2024 moves any net metering solar system for that specific meter into the future. Mr. Collins felt strongly that because no roof penetrations were necessary, the building's space frame truss design, and the large cantilevers around the building perimeter, a roof mounted net metering solar system would most likely offset the total electrical energy consumption of the Koziara Terminal. Mr. Harper and Mr. Haarmann were in agreement that a total energy audit should be completed prior to any design of any solar system. Upgrades to lighting, additional energy conservation and other upgrades would lessen the building's consumption thereby lowering the area of any system and lessening its installation costs. Both CTS Group and Affordable Gas and Electric could conduct an energy study.

Mr. Collins stated a roof replacement project on the Koziara Terminal is being considered for the next capital development plan. Mr. Harper suggested a total building solution project be considered after the results of the energy audit. The project could include the following: roof replacement, lighting upgrade, additional conservation (insulation, windows, etc), and a net metering solar installation. Discussion ensued about financing of a project of this scope. Mr. Harper and Mr. Haarman expressed their desire to help the airport securing financing once such a project materialized. Both companies agreed a project of this nature would be long term and should be funded through operations, not a one-time capital expense.

Mr. Collins and the Commissioners thanked Mr. Harper, Mr. Haarman, and Mr. Wielt for coming to the airport. All agreed there is much more research required before proceeding at this time.

There being no Executive Session items, no additional Other Business items, and no further items for discussion on the Agenda, motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Upon roll call vote, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.