

MVAA Board hears State of the Airport

Record fuel sales and operations reported

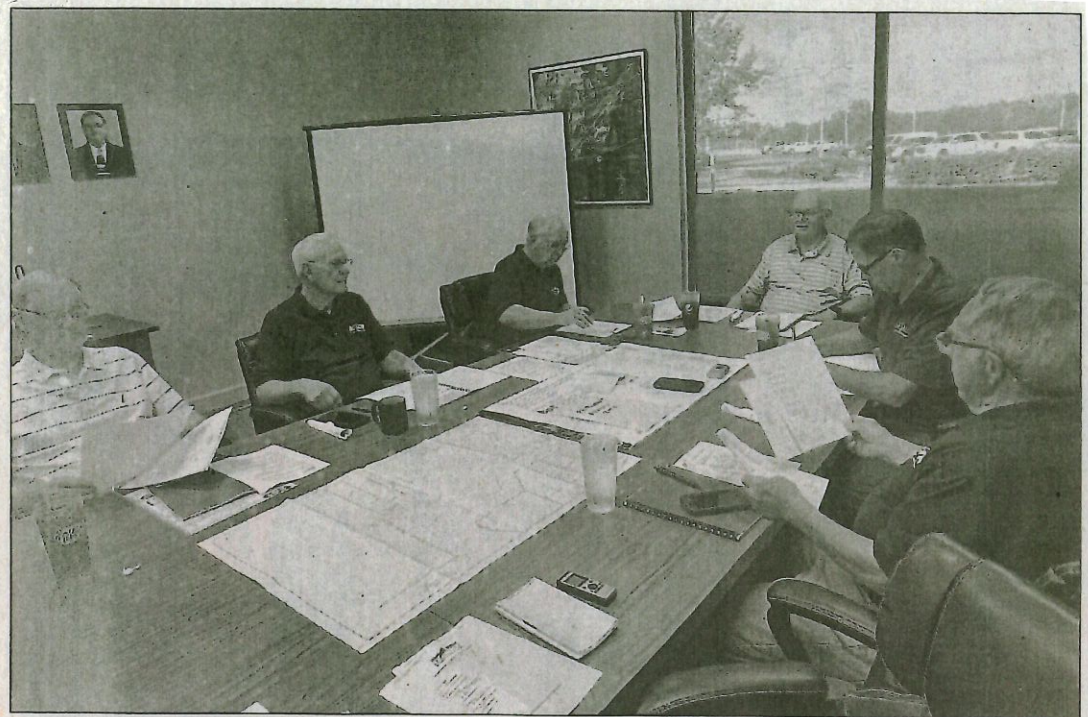
BY JOSH JONES
SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MOUNT VERNON — The Mount Vernon Airport Authority (MVAA) Board of Commissioners heard the State of the Airport report for fiscal year 22-23, which marked a record year, during Tuesday's meeting.

The report stated that calendar year 2022 was a record year in terms of total operations, jet operations and Corporate Aircraft Association (CAA) stops at Mount Vernon Outland Airport. There were 28,845 total aircraft operations, a 7.5% increase over the previous year. There were 360 jet operations, 52 more than the previous record set in 2011. There were 256 CAA stops, solidly ahead of the 2021 number of 150. The airport credits events such as the Midwest LSA Expo and the Air Race Classic as well as Bonnie Cafe traffic, flight training and more.

Fiscal year 22/23 was also a record year for fuel sales as nearly 140,000 gallons of aviation fuel was sold. The 139,991 gallons is a new record in the modern era (post 2000). CAA member aircraft, those only

Please see **Airport**, Page 6A



Sentinel Photo/JOSH JONES

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Airport:

Continued from Page 1A

stopping for quick turn fuel services, accounted for approximately 28% of total annual sales.

Mount Vernon Outland Airport Director Chris Collins shared his thoughts on the record numbers.

"Those numbers excite me, it proves that the philosophy is working with combining a good price for product with the infrastructure and the services that we provide is working," Collins said. "Everyone has bought in from the line service staff that meets the visitors to the restaurant servers. It is working and the numbers are proving that."

The report also recognized the county allocating American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The airport remains grateful to the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors for the airport being included in the county ARPA project allocation. The airport was granted \$192,850 from the county to replace over 1,000 feet of 50 plus year old cast iron force main sewer line. Combined with the electrical portion of the Innovation Park utility upgrade

(funded by the airport), all Innovation Park utilities have now been addressed and the Innovation Park area is ready for tenant development.

"I am still excited about the ARPA project. It really helped and it wasn't just any project, it is a project that is going to help us lure some additional tenancy in the future," Collins said.

The report also highlighted the U.S. Army Golden Knights holding a Tandem Camp, Local Aviation Educator and owner of Safe Aviation Educators Leland Widick being honored with the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award, the completion of asphalt surfacing on the airport's perimeter access road, Mount Vernon Outland Airport being named best stop during the Air Race Classic, Lt. Colonel Steve Willis (USAF, Retired) was inducted into the Illinois Aviation Hall of Fame Class of 2022 and EAA Chapter 1155 won the 2022 Spirit of Flight Award.

"The airport has been on a course of steady rise these last three to four years. For me I have been doing this for over 15 years so it has been a long ride for me and it is really exciting to see the airport being this successful," said MVAA Board Chairman

Mike Ancona. "It just really feels good to see, because it serves Mount Vernon so well and it hasn't always been that way. For me I am just proud to be a part of it."

IN OTHER BUSINESS:

- Bids are due May 18 for the Air Evac Joint Base Jefferson project.

- The MVAA Board reorganized leadership as Mike Ancona was elected as Chairman, Gary Chesney as Vice Chairman, Greg Martin as Treasurer and Carey Lipps as Secretary.

- Bonnie Cafe at the airport is planning for a major remodel. While no firm time frame was available, people are highly encouraged to stay updated on the "Bonnie cafe — Mount Vernon il — 100 aviation drive mt vernon" Facebook page.

- The board approved \$14,000 for an electrical engineer with Hanson Professional Services Inc. to review the airport's electrical infrastructure and provide options and recommendations for back-up power.

- Aviation Programs Director/Flight Instructor Jay Grafton flew 63 hours for 91% of his salary in April. In May Grafton has so far flown for 17.4 hours, 25% of his salary. The wind has been a noted factor in May. jjones@morningsentinel.com

Prices were chosen as the cheapest rates from GasBuddy Friday morning
Prices in US Dollars

REGIONAL GAS PRICES

CARLYLE.....	\$3.49
CENTRALIA.....	\$3.75
GREENVILLE.....	\$3.49
MT. VERNON.....	\$3.59
NASHVILLE.....	\$3.69
SALEM.....	\$3.64
VANDALIA.....	\$3.65