

Airport gives update on ongoing projects

Fixed Based Operations building addition bids higher than expected

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MOUNT VERNON — The Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners received updates regarding ongoing projects during Tuesday's meeting.

Airport Director Chris Collins said that the board discussed Joint Base Jefferson. According to Sentinel archives, the base will house aircraft and crews from both Air Evac Lifeteam 11, currently located on Aviation Drive, and Air Evac Lifeteam 172, temporarily located at 100 Firebaugh Drive. The base is to be constructed at 500 Firebaugh Drive in the airport's Innovation Park. The new location not only provides safer arrivals and departures during VFR (Visual Flight Rules) conditions, but meets all requirements for IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) approaches during poor weather conditions.

Earlier this month, the board received three bids on the project with the lowest bid being \$2,362,000 from Johannes Construction. This amount was well above the airport's projections and it was decided that changes would be made and the project would be rebid with hopes of reaching the airport's budgeted \$1.8 million.

"We are going to end up rebidding it. So Brian (Edmison, architect) is working on the plans for the rebid. We have included various value engineered options including making the hangar a little bit smaller, the aircraft ramp smaller, the floor heat has been removed and replaced by the standard radiant heat system that most buildings have," Collins said. "There is a whole bunch of stuff in there to try and get us closer to that budget of \$1.8 million, which is what Air Evac desires."

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Collins said that they also received higher than expected bids for the upcoming Fixed Based Operations (FBO) building addition project. Sentinel archives state that the board began to look at the addition after noticing how much traffic they were getting from pilots. Collins said that the FBO building acts as a "front door" for pilots to Mount Vernon and Southern Illinois and is a first impression to many pilots.

"The low bid was submitted by Bevis Construction at \$232,000 and the second bid that was received was MKE Construction at \$307,000," Collins said.

"We have no choice but to go back to the drawing board."

Collins said that the addition is 768 square feet, which equals out to \$302 a square foot. He said that the airport's budget for the project was between \$133,000 and \$150,000.

"It is just unrealistic, I can't imagine anyone that would pay that," Collins said.

Collins said that removing the automatic doors would save the airport

around \$35,000.

"That gets us below \$200,000, but even that is too costly," Collins said.

IN OTHER BUSINESS:

- The airport has been meeting with Sentinel Emergency Solutions to design a new Air Rescue Firefighting Truck. The estimate is for the airport to receive the truck between 18 months and two years.

- Preparations are continuing for the Bonnie Cafe renovation project. The restaurant is planned to be fully closed starting July 5 for seven to 10 days.

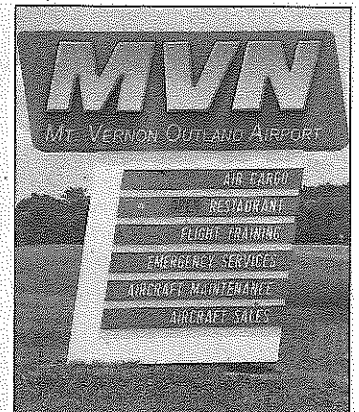
- Collins spoke on the Koziara Terminal parking lot rehabilitation project. Round Table Design has been doing survey work of the parking lot and Holcomb Foundation Engineering was taking core samples on Wednesday.

- The airport demolished an old house that was on the northwest portion of the property across the street from Green Hills Golf Club.

- The landscaping around the airport's entry sign is nearly complete.

- The board approved the tentative annual budget and appropriations for the 23/24 fiscal year. In revenues the Personal Property Replacement Tax was at \$450,000. Total revenues were listed at \$782,680 with \$296,857 in cash on hand. Expenditures totaled \$781,180 with an estimated \$298,357 in cash on hand for April 30, 2024.

- The board approved an insurance renewal for



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AIRPORT PROJECTS — The Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners received updates regarding various ongoing projects during Tuesday's meeting.

health, vision and dental at an increase of \$154 per month from Todd Piper and Aetna Insurance.

- The board is looking at its options for repainting a corporate hangar roof.

- Working with Affordable Gas & Electric the board approved renewing its electric rate at 6.959 cents per kilowatt hour from Constellation, which will begin in August. The board is also looking at installing solar power on top of their t-hangar roofs through a power purchase agreement, where an outside company will install, manage and sell the electricity back to the airport.

- Flight Instructor Jay Grafton flew for 77.3 hours in May, which is 112% of his salary, and currently has 21 students. **6-17-23**
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