



Sentinel File Photo

NEW PLANE — Mount Vernon Outland Airport is getting close to purchasing a new Cessna 172 Skyhawk to add to its fleet of flight training planes on site.

MV Airport close to buying new plane

If aircraft passes inspection, purchase will be completed

BY TRAVIS MORSE

TMORSE@MORNINGSENTINEL.COM

MOUNT VERNON — Mount Vernon Outland Airport is moving forward on the purchase of an additional Cessna 172 Skyhawk to add to its fleet of flight training planes on site.

On Tuesday, the Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners approved purchasing the new plane at a cost not to exceed \$199,900.

Next up, the local airport will provide a down payment in escrow and the plane will be flown from Kansas City to Mount Vernon so that the airport's mechanics can evaluate it. If the plane passes the inspection, then the airport will close on the purchase. If, however, the mechanics find something they don't like, the plane will be sent back minus the expense of having it flown to Mount Vernon, said Mount Vernon Airport Director Chris Collins.

"This one is a much nicer aircraft than the (ones we currently have) for flight training," Collins said of the new plane. "It is what's called a technologically advanced aircraft, meaning it has glass panel instrumentation instead of steam gauges. And the engine is low time, the air frame is low time, and the aircraft has new paint and new interior. It represents a huge leap forward for the airport and our training program."

Another plane is needed at the airport because of how popular the flight training program there has become, Collins said. In July, the facility's five training planes had 173 hours of flight time, and the total increased to 190 in August. In November, only half the month had suitable weather for flying but they still did 109 flight hours, Collins said.

"We've been doing about 150 flight hours a month," Collins said.

Currently, the airport's five planes include two Cessna 172 Skyhawks owned by the airport, and three light sport planes owned by R&L Aviation that the airport leases back. Those pursuing aviation as a career typically use the Skyhawks for training, while those who fly as a hobby use the light sport planes. In July, the two Skyhawks flew 132 hours for flight training, and in August they flew 129 hours, Sentinel archives state.

According to Collins, it's great news for the airport that the flight training program is in such high demand. Mount Vernon Airport's Facebook page shows that the facility has had numerous solo flights, as well as private, commercial, and sport pilot certifications in recent months. This demand has driven the need for an additional aircraft.

"We desperately need the third aircraft because for the two that are owned by the airport, scheduling can be difficult when the weather is nice," Collins said. "So hopefully we'll know something in a week or two whether (the purchase) will move forward or not. But we're doing things diligently."

Collins added that the airport wants to

SE PLANE/PAGE A3

PLANE

FROM PAGE A1

keep its positive momentum going with the flight training program.

"We have the equipment, the knowledgeable staff and instructors, and great infrastructure and a safe environment," Collins said. "If people are interested in becoming a pilot, they should come and see us."

OTHER AIRPORT BOARD ACTIONS TUESDAY INCLUDED:

- The board approved a USDA agreement related to wildlife monitoring at the airport.

- The board approved bidding out roughly 250

acres of farmland on the airport's property. The airport's current farm ground lease will expire at the end of the year. The airport is now looking for another farmer/client who would pay the airport a certain amount of rent per acre to grow crops on the land.

- The board heard updates on several projects, including the Air Evac Lifeteam base, the planned new Snow Removal Equipment (SRE) building,

and the airfield signage project.

- The board approved extending a lease agreement for one of the airport's local tenants, Frisco Aviation. That tenant operates five aircraft at the airport and has grown their business to the point where they are interested in leasing an entire hangar. The new lease was approved Tuesday so as of Jan. 1, Frisco Aviation will be leasing Hangar A-1100 at the airport.

12 / 13 / 25