

MV Airport Board appoints new chairman

Chesney has served on the board for 20 years

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MOUNT VERNON — The Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners recently appointed a new board chairman — Gary Chesney. Chesney replaces former

Chairman Mike Ancona who will now return to being a regular board member/commissioner.

Airport Director Chris Collins said that traditionally the board selects a new chairman every two or three years.

"We try to do term limits," Collins said. "No more than two or three years. Just something we've always done. Gary was the previous vice chairman so he just moved one slot up."

The leadership change occurred at the last

Airport Board meeting on Tuesday, May 12. The new officers of the board are now as follows: Gary Chesney (Chairman), Marty Cox (Vice Chairman), Carey Lipps (Secretary), and Greg Martin (Treasurer). There is also one additional commissioner serving on the board — Mike Ancona.

Chesney said Thursday that the board members all work very well together.

"The great part of serving on the Airport Board is that these commissioners all

come together with one thing in mind — to work with our small staff at our airport to move the airport (forward) to serve our community of Mount Vernon and all the communities of Jefferson County," Chesney said.

Chesney added that the commissioners enjoy seeing the airport used in a positive way by the community.

"We see the kids playing soccer, our Young Eagles flights, the growth of our

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flight training, and obviously all the people on the Fourth of July," Chesney said. "We like to see all these events for our community. We see more business and are growing each year. We enjoy working together and seeing that ... The staff of our airport does an amazing job for this community."

Collins praised both Ancona and Chesney for their long-time service to Mount Vernon Outland Airport. Ancona's most recent three-year stint as chairman wasn't the only time he served in that position.

"He's led the airport through a lot of growth and activity," Collins said of Ancona. "He's been part of this airport since he was a teenager, so he has a long history. I appreciate all he's

done. He's always there to offer advice, recommendations, suggestions."

Collins added that the new leadership team is made up of five very fine gentlemen.

He said Chesney, the new chairman, has served on the Airport Board for 20 years.

"And with all the energy issues that seem to plague this airport, it's comforting that Gary is serving on our board and is able to help with guidance and decisions," Collins said.

STATE OF THE AIRPORT

Also on May 12, the Airport Board reviewed the State of the Airport report for fiscal year 2025/2026. During that fiscal year, the airport saw record fuel sales of 212,913 gallons, a new record in the post-2000 era. The previous best of that era was around 168,000 gallons, Collins said.

According to the report, Corporate Aircraft Association

(CAA) member aircraft — those only stopping for quick-turn fuel services — accounted for about 25% of the total annual fuel sales in FY 2025/2026.

Also during that fiscal year, there were 27,857 total aircraft operations, up slightly from the prior year's 27,393. Furthermore, CAA stops increased to 470, up significantly from 296 in 2023. Another report highlight was 556 jet aircraft operations, a new record that solidly eclipsed the previous year's record of 404.

The State of the Airport report also covered flight training achievements during FY 2025/2026, which included eight Private Pilot Certificates, five Commercial Certificates, two Sport Pilot Certificates, and two Instrument Ratings. Also, 11 solo flight occurrences were celebrated, and a new comprehensive website dedicated to flight training

and aviation careers, OutlandFlight.com, was launched on April 1, 2026.

In addition, the report also mentioned that the United States Army Golden Knights returned to the airport last August to host a two-day Tandem Camp. Furthermore, the airport continued its role as a welcoming host for many community events, including Mt. Vernon Soccer Club, Run for the Wall, Salute to Freedom, Midwest Aviation Expo, KR National Gathering, Summersville Relays, and the LCPL J. Kyle Price Memorial Ride/Global War on Terror Wall of Remembrance.

"These events and activities, along with the Bonnie Cafe, place thousands of visitors from across the nation on the airport campus," the State of the Airport report states.

For more information, contact Mount Vernon Outland Airport. 5/26/26