



A mighty wind

A storm with wind gusts of up to 80 mph severely damaged the roof of Valley View Baptist Church in Flora on Sunday. Although the entire roof will need replacing, church members are thankful that a shingle roof underneath the metal one provided a measure of protection to the inside of the building. There are still leaks, however, and subsequent rain has not helped matters. The congregation thanks those from the community who stopped to help with the clean-up of all the debris. Photo provided

Airport board is making plans

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Delphi Municipal Airport Board members met Wednesday night to dream about future plans in a special meeting at the Sportsman Inn near Monticello. According to board treasurer Kyle Germond, who led the meeting in the absence of president Andy Cougill, the meeting was not for formal business procedures. Plans were discussed for activities that will happen at the airport while some plans discussed, leaned toward future possibilities.

Projects in the works include a runway extension of the current 2,891x60 foot runway to 4,000 feet. Completion is scheduled for 2010. Germond said the shorter runway "is hampering us for development."

The airport will soon possess weather equipment and wireless Internet service for pilots and airport patrons' use. It was noted the improved services would encourage pilots to stop, purchase fuel and plan for future flights. A large flat-screen monitor, situated in a window facing outside to the

runway, will display wind direction and speed which would be visible for pilots while on the runway landing and departing.

The doors to the terminal building will be locked with combination locks at night for security. However, pilots will have 24-hour coded-access to the equipment.

The board submitted projects to the state that will be funded if the airport receives economic recovery funds from the federal government. Among the projects are plans for 14 additional T-hangars, in two sets, and a new terminal building.

"If you build it, they will come," board vice president Terry Dill said.

Airport manager Brian Stirm explained one set of hangars would be built to the south of existing hangars. He said the city-owned airport would purchase more land for the second set of seven hangars. Stirm said land to the west of airport property would be developed for that purpose as well as for corporate hangars.

Stirm also advised that Swift Enterprises/Development, "if it happens," could

build a pilot plant, to manufacture and sell licenses for alternative aviation fuel, on the west side of the airport on yet-to-be acquired land. Swift officials announced last year a pilot plant was to be built on a site east of the airport, however those plans have not materialized.

Board members said an appraisal for \$9,000 per acre for 10 acres to the west was obtained. The city currently owns approximately 43 acres of airport land. Stirm said a research park could be developed to the west of the corporate hangars.

Dill said for the airport to be competitive with corporate industry, it would need a 4,000 to 5,000 foot runway and more hangars.

Stirm suggested the airport board build hangars and runway improvements to accommodate small jets. He said the Purdue University Airport only has 123 airplanes based there and is underutilized by industry and commercial enterprises.

The next airport board meeting will be March 26 at 7 p.m. in the terminal building at the airport on Division Line Rd.

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