

Airport Commission Seeking "Seed Money" From City Of Carroll For Addition Of Air Ambulance Service



Members of the Carroll Airport Commission, Gene Vincent, Norman Hutcheson and Greg Siemann, spent nearly 45 minutes at Monday night's Carroll City Council meeting detailing a potential agreement for a medical flight service to be housed at the Carroll Airport. Vincent says Air Methods, of Greenwood Village, Colo., could place a helicopter in an existing hangar as soon as this month. By fall, they may have a full team of seven nurses, four pilots, two mechanics and a coordinator on sight 24/7. Siemann says Air Methods was considering Denison as a hub, but were advised to take a look at Carroll. The wide-ranging negotiations were kept confidential, but concerns were raised early on when the commission applied for a \$600,000 grant from the state of Iowa for hangar construction.

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The medical air company wants a two year trial, with an estimated minimum of 200 flights per year to enter into a permanent agreement. In the interim, they will bring in a four-bedroom modular home at their expense for staff to stay on site. The commission is to provide water and sewer services. Vincent says this necessitates seed money from the City of Carroll to fill that request and fix an existing sewer issue in the shop area.

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Hutcheson explains how the staffing at the airport is expected to work.

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If Air Methods elects to stay after the trial, they will construct their own hanger and move the residential building closer to that. There will be additional negotiations to address associated expenses for this at a later date. Vincent says the commission feels they can have everything ready to go by the first of August. In addition to the immediate sewer expense and the potential of an indeterminate amount in the future for long-term placement, the commission announced the receipt of a \$320,000 grant for work on a runway, taxiway and ramp, with a requirement of a 10 percent local match for eligibility. We will bring you more details on this in upcoming broadcasts.