

# Local officials have high hopes for Smith Reynolds

By Wesley Young  
JOURNAL REPORTER

New director, whose first day will be Monday, has extensive experience in airport management

Officials hope that the newly named director of Smith Reynolds Airport will help the airport become an economic asset for the city and county, the chairman of the Airport Commission of Forsyth County said yesterday.

Mark Davidson, an airport and aviation consultant, will focus on bringing jobs to the airport, said Tom McKim, the chairman of the Airport Commission of Forsyth County.

"We want him to focus with a lot of precision on getting our hangar complex at 4001 Liberty St. occupied and creating jobs at the airport," McKim said. "He has got a broad-based experience in economic-development activity," Davidson's first day will be Monday.

McKim said that one of Davidson's accomplishments was the conversion to civilian use of an airport that was a former military base. At Smith Reynolds, local officials are hoping to breathe new life

into an airport that formerly had regular passenger aircraft service, and more recently was the home of now-bankrupt Pace Airlines.

Davidson has been working for Airport Business Solutions in Jacksonville, Fla. His experience also includes serving as aviation director at Eagle County Regional Airport in Gypsum, Colo., and as airport manager for Cecil Field in Jacksonville. McKim said that Davidson has also been a flight instructor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Florida.

Davidson will make \$95,000 a year as director of Smith Reynolds, McKim said.

Larry Scantlin, the former director at Smith Reynolds, left his job at the airport in August after the airport board decided to put a greater focus on the economic potential of the airport.

Officials from Forsyth County and Winston-Salem have talked about how Smith Reynolds can help the local economy, especially

## Airport

Continued From Page A6

of the effort, local officials think that Smith Reynolds can play an important supporting role.

Forsyth County Commissioner Ted Kaplan — who serves on the airport commission — called Davidson's selection a good move. He said the airport commission received nearly 100 applications for the job, with Davidson among

a smaller number invited in for interviews.

"He has a history of economic development on airport sites, and that is something that is sorely needed at Smith Reynolds Airport," Kaplan said. "That is something we have not had for decades."

wyoung@wsjournal.com  
727-7369

5/8/10

See Airport, Page A7