

PLANNING BEGINS FOR MOSES LAKE AIR SHOW

January 30, 2019 at 5:00 am | By CHARLES H. FEATHERSTONE Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — The planners of the upcoming air show in Moses Lake have some big ambitions.

“This is the first one,” said Rich Mueller, the director of the Grant County International Airport (GCIA). “And we want to make it a good show.”

Mueller also wants to make it a show people will visit Moses Lake for, like the Oshkosh Air Show in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, which takes place in a little city of 66,000 people and draws in more than half a million visitors.

Mueller spoke Tuesday afternoon in the GCIA terminal to a group representing air show organizers, local government, major companies and Columbia Basin Job Corps to look for ways local residents can become involved in the planning and organizing of the event, which is scheduled to take place on June 14 and 15, the weekend of Father’s Day.

According to Terry Quick, the president of Entco International, a company which specializes in organizing and marketing air shows, five months is not a lot of time to market and advertise a major air show, even in a community where there’s a lot of interest in having one.

“The airfield is actually quite well known, so there’s a lot of interest in this airfield,” Quick said.

The proposed show would not just include planes sitting on the runway on display, but also aerial acrobatic and stunt acts. And, of course, it would also include the classic car show.

“There would be aircraft on the ground, but also the show happening in the sky,” Mueller said.

However, both Quick and John Smutny of Air Boss One, a company which manages the actual flying portion of an air show, said it would be difficult to get any military jet acrobatic teams such as The Blue Angels or The Thunderbirds in on such short notice.

“Jet teams have a two-year cycle,” Smutny said. “The air show here will need to get some traction.”

Quick added that Moses Lake organizers already have bids from a half-dozen or so acrobatic teams, including military groups from the U.S. and Canada, looking to perform here in June.

Organizers are looking for volunteers to help with everything from setting up to taking tickets to helping to clean up after it is all over.

While this would not be the first air show in Moses Lake — the port sponsored small static displays of aircraft in 2015 and 2016 — it would be the first air show to include flying acts in several decades.

“The last air show we had here I was 10 years old,” said Port Commissioner Darrin Jackson. “This has been a goal of mine, and a way we can show off the airport.”

“Ten was a long time ago,” Jackson added.