

.MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, July 7, 2016
Anchorage Fire Training Center
1140 Airport Heights Road, Building "A" Room 3
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Jim Powell, Chair
Sharon Chamard, Vice Chair
Don DeVoe
Jamie Patterson-Simes
Terry Pena
Greg Pearce

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Jim Cieplak *

ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES

AIRPORT STAFF PRESENT

Paul Bowers A.A.E., Airport Manager
Patrick McCormick, Finance Officer
Darlene Sivyler, Commission Secretary (343-6303)

1. CALL TO ORDER
Commission Chair Jim Powell called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.
2. SELF INTRODUCTIONS
Jim asked all attendees to introduce themselves.
3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
Minutes of the May 5, 2016 meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.
4. AIRPORT MANAGER'S REPORT
Airport Manager Paul Bowers provided a report on the following topics.
 - A. Noise
Paul noted that noise complaints are primarily due to rotorcraft operations, and considering new ATCT controllers (MRI is a training tower), new flight instructors, and new pilots, noise complaints will likely be ongoing.
 - B. Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations (VPD)
Paul reported there have been four VPDs year to date.
 - C. User Group Meeting
MRI User Group Meetings are held with the airport manger the first Wednesday of each calendar quarter, 3:00 – 5:00PM at the Airport Manager's Office. Meeting topics are attendee directed and there is no official agenda. 23 people attended the last MRI User Group Meeting which was held yesterday, July 6. The main topic of discussion was ATC procedures, Cartee airspace and TFRs. There was also an open exchange between ATC controllers and pilots, hopefully to result in a better understanding of respective positions. Vandalism and security were also discussed, and Paul provided an update on increased security measures at MRI. The next scheduled User Group Meeting is October 5.

* excused absence

- D. Ongoing Bird Control
MRI Maintenance sprayed insecticide and dandelion control on the field this summer, which has essentially eliminated the grasshopper attracted seagull congregation on field. Jamie Patterson-Simes asked that when airport maintenance is taking seagulls, they not shoot near her business, SkyTrek Alaska, as the shots startle her students. Ravens remain a problem on the field.
- E. Crack Sealing
Airfield wide crack sealing on runways, taxiways and multiple apron surfaces is ongoing.
- F. Leasing Update
- The 16,400sf **Chaz Aircraft Painting** facility, located between the ATCT and Wings of Freedom hangar, is nearing completion. The hangar door is being installed today and interior work is progressing. Over 25 aircraft are on a waitlist for painting when the facility is completed.
 - Materials for a 60' X 80' hangar are on site at the **Jay Hawk** lot. Lessee Tim Karlovich anticipates construction this fall.
 - **A&W Services** is constructing a 14,555sf hangar on their lease lot with construction ongoing through the summer. The structure is made up in part of Insulated Concrete Form walls with integral rebar, providing R48 insulation and a 45DB sound reduction. Lake Clark Air will be leasing the large hangar unit on the north end of the building and six hangars are incorporated within the remaining structure.
 - The new, under-construction hangar facility on the **North Edge** lot will essentially triple the size of the current hangar. The foundations are poured and building erection should begin soon.
 - A Notice of Intent to Terminate Lease was issued on May 10, 2016 to **Kontor Development LLC**. Specific, promised, on-site development progress requirements of the new lease were not met, the most significant being timely submittal of approved building plans. The leaseholder has appealed the Intent to Terminate Lease; all are awaiting the Municipal Hearing Officer decision.
- G. Project Updates
The **Security & Lighting Upgrade Phase 3 Project** is well underway, including reducing the width of Taxiway Kilo on the north side of Runway 7-25 (to effectively mirror the south side). To accomplish this work, RWY 25 is scheduled to be closed July 18 – 23 during the 10:30PM to 7:00AM timeframe. The black palisade style fence along 5th Avenue has been upgraded with an outward curved top (similar to the section of fencing in front of the ATCT), and three-strand barbed wire has been added atop the chain link fencing that abuts 5th Avenue. An MRI-parochial fiber optic cable to support security camera and gate data transfer is being installed. Fiber optic cable trenching runs from UAA north to Stoddard's, then west to Alyeska Helicopters and is located inside the MRI perimeter fence (GCI also installed a com-line fiber in this trench while it was open). To prevent equipment scarring on the 5th Avenue side of the concrete fence base, a black rub-rail will be installed and a mural painting project on the concrete barrier is being pursued/coordinated with community councils and local schools. To-be-installed MRI vehicle gate operators on both sides of each vehicle access gate will have positive ingress/egress procedures. Sharon Chamard asked when the mural is expected to be done. Paul replied that it is unknown, but he hopes to have it started this summer, although it could very well be a multi-year process.

The **Taxiway Q Dynamic Compaction Phase 5 Project** area includes compaction of the landfill underlayment of portions of TWY Q and Golf apron, continuing eastward from where the Phase 4 project finished in 2015. Mass X has begun work and has taken off a portion of the top layer of fill that covers the landfill. The project entails removing the asphalt, compacting the landfill underlayment, backfilling and repaving. During the dynamic compaction process, an Anchorage Daily Times newspaper published on Monday, March 30, **1964** was found, and except for frayed edges is intact and legible. Accounts of the 9.2 magnitude earthquake that occurred on Good Friday 1964, three days before this newspaper was printed, are detailed under the banner "104 FEARED DEAD IN QUAKE AREA."

The **Runway 5/23 Lighting Project** will be done this fall. This will provide runway lights and a lighted windsock on the MRI gravel/ski runway.

The **Taxiway Bravo Project** will include construction of the missing segments between Taxiways Mike and Quebec to complete the northern half of the taxiway. TWY B will remain uncontrolled; likely timing for construction by the MOA Street Maintenance Dept. will be later this summer.

An **RFP for the development of property at 819 Orca Street** (formerly City Electric) will be advertised by COB on July 11. The intent of the proposal is to promote airport activity. Sharon Chamard requested that someone from the Fairview community be on the proposal selection committee.

The **Merrill Field Airport Master Plan Phase 2 Project** is near completion. The final draft is being revised and will include narrative regarding the relocation of the Sitka Street public use area and the snow dump. The large threshold costs for these relocations, environmental concerns and requirements for a traffic plan would make proposed development of this airport property very unlikely in the near future, but the AMP narrative does provide a land use plan.

Busy Summer Construction: Paul noted that this summer ranks as the busiest construction season in Merrill Field history, both monetarily and in the number of projects on field. Future projects include Security Improvements Phase 4 which will upgrade gate operators and add cameras to the west side of the field, continued TWY Q dynamic compaction and reconstruction of the southern portion of Merrill Field Drive.

H. Security/Vandalism Update

As reported by many local media outlets, all tires of 87 aircraft were punctured during the early morning hours of June 2. All aircraft were tied down in fenced aprons Charlie South (CS) and Whiskey (W). To date, no one has been charged; however, it is estimated that between two and five people were involved in the vandalism. It is likely that the vandals came onto the field on foot, climbed over the CS fence, exited through the CS vehicle access gate then accessed the W apron by sliding under the south Golf Taxiway gate.

Paul explained that the current Security Improvement Project Phase 3 will add touch keypads to the inside of each gate so an airport user would need to enter the code or use a proximity card for lot access and egress. MRI has also contracted with Guardian Security for nighttime roving patrols through the airport and APD has also been asked to increase their patrols. Paul explained the complexities of security camera options; resolution is compromised with greater area coverage and resolution is improved if the field of view is narrowed.

Paul also noted that several businesses have offered assistance to the affected pilots: Delcourt Aviation in Fairbanks has offered still usable tires at no cost with free shipping to Anchorage, Alaskan Bushwheels is offering tires at cost, an online GoFundMe account has been established, the Alaska Safety Foundation has donated funds toward a reward for finding the persons who committed this act of vandalism, and this incident has been added to the Crime Stoppers program.

5. ORGANIZATION REPORTS

- A. MRI Air Traffic Control Tower
No report.
- B. UAA Aviation Technology Division
No report.
- C. Civil Air Patrol
No report.
- D. Elmendorf Airfield Operations
No report.
- E. Lake Hood Seaplane Base
No report.
- F. Bryant Army Airfield
No report.

6. SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS
None.

7. OLD BUSINESS AND UNFINISHED ACTION
None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of Officers

Jim Powell announced that two Commission positions that are subject to annual election, chair and vice chair. He also stated that he would be willing to continue as the commission chair should the group so choose. Terry Pena made a motion to nominate Jim for the position of chair; Don DeVoe seconded the motion. No other nominations were made; the Commission unanimously voted in favor of Jim continuing as chair.

Likewise, Vice Chair Sharon Chamard indicated she would be willing to serve another term as vice chair. Terry Pena made a motion to nominate Sharon for vice chair; Jim Powell seconded the motion. No other nominations were made and the Commission unanimously voted in favor of Sharon continuing as vice chair.

B. Preliminary 2017 Merrill Field Airport Operating & Capital Budget

Jim expressed his understanding that the Commission does not need to act on the proposed budget at this meeting and suggested any action be delayed until the next meeting in September.

A Draft 2017 Merrill Field Airport Operating and Capital Budget packet was given to each Commissioner by email and at the meeting. Paul provided a summary of the proposed budget and noted the following items have been added to the generally status quo budget: replacement pickup for the 1992 Chevy and additional contract services for nighttime roving security patrols. Paul also noted that the land lease rates are proposed to decrease from \$0.208 to \$0.207, based on the CPI adjustment process we follow.

Jamie Patterson-Simes inquired about snow plowing expenses. Paul explained that snow plowing services are contracted for MRI property on Orca Street and MRI maintenance is responsible for snow removal on the air field. Sharon asked what happens to Merrill Field's end-of-year income surplus. Paul responded that any income stays with Merrill Field and is used to fund future sponsor share grant requirements. He noted MRI is completely self-sufficient financially and there are no local tax dollars used to support the airport. Paul also gave a brief explanation of the budgeted Operating Reserve and Capital Improvements Sponsor Share Reserve.

Hearing no additional questions for Paul and having no further discussion, Jamie asked if the Commission could act on the preliminary budget now rather than waiting until September. Jim asked the group if there were any objections to Jamie's request; hearing none, Greg Pearce made a motion to support the Merrill Field Preliminary 2017 Operating and Capital Budgets and approve the Commission Resolution recommending the Municipal Assembly accept the MRI budgets. Jamie seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Paul thanked the Commission for their support.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AVIATION

Guy Hudson introduced himself as an MRI pilot who has over 50 years flying experience. He expressed his angst about problematic communication with the air traffic controllers and added that he has a distinct impression that pilots are hesitant to come to MRI for services because of the demanding attitude of the controllers. Guy stated that the ATCT should be an ambassador of the airport and should project a positive attitude to pilots, not demeaning them when radio transmissions need to be corrected. Jim noted that many of the controllers are in training and may be overanxious. Bill Quirk mentioned that the Airport Manager should also work to resolve this problem. Guy concluded by reminding pilots that if they receive inappropriate transmissions from the controllers, they can and should demand that the FAA audio recording be reviewed.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Jim mentioned that the Elmendorf Open House and Arctic Thunder Air Show will be held later this month, July 30 and 31. He encouraged all to participate.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

