

MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 6, 2014
Anchorage Fire Training Center
1150 Airport Heights Road, Building "C" Room 4A
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Jim Powell, Chair
Dick Armstrong
Greg Pearce
Sharon Chamard
Terry Pena

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Jim Cieplak *
Don DeVoe, Vice Chair*

ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES

MRI ATCT – Brian Ochs, Manager

AIRPORT STAFF PRESENT

Paul Bowers, Airport Manager
Alex Jumao-as, Assistant Airport Manager
Linda Luebke, Acting Commission Secretary (343-6303)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Jim Powell, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

2. SELF INTRODUCTIONS

Jim asked all attendees to introduce themselves. Paul also gave a short introduction about MRI's first UAA intern, Lindsey Loewen, a USAF veteran who is set to graduate in May 2015 with a Bachelors degree in Aviation Management from UAA. Paul also introduced Lars Gleitsmann owner of Better Aircraft Fabric, who was invited to give a short presentation of his innovative product at the end of the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the November 7, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.

4. AIRPORT MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Noise

Paul reported noise complaints have dropped off dramatically since implementing a revised standard protocol for all rotorcraft touch & go operations to emphasize using RWY 34 only when wind is out of the north and, if practical, landing long between TWY Romeo and TWY Quebec intersections. Rotorcraft are using steeper ascent and descent angles to the degree practicable, and all flight instructors have been asked to discuss glide paths and expeditious travel over residential areas with their students. Terry Pena inquired if using Bryant airfield has helped reduce complaints? Brian Ochs responded he didn't think so, but we will find out.

* excused absence

B. Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations

Paul reported in 2013 Merrill Field was No. 2 in the nation for VPD's (on a VPD per operation ratio), even though we are very proactive in prevention. So far in 2014 we have had two VPDs. He emphasized part of the problem at MRI is there is no separation between the apron edge and taxiways, effectively making the taxiway a taxi-lane. To increase awareness of the TWY edge line, MRI MX is now snow-clearing and sweeping along the TWY facing aprons to expose the edge line. Terry Pena asked if more signage would help; Paul said additional signage as well as other options are being evaluated for upcoming projects.

C. Leasing Update

Paul shared comments received from FAA about Lot 7C Leaseholder Chuck Miller's proposed aircraft painting facility. There was general discussion of the many aspects to work through, including amending the lease to include different rates for non aviation use; types, sizes and how many aircraft would be painted versus vehicles; and screening of vehicles awaiting repair from both 5th Avenue and the air-side. All agreed an aircraft painting facility would be helpful for MRI.

Paul noted the Aero Tech lease property had been purchased; the paperwork is in the municipal manager's office for signature. The new lessee is D & D Airpark, LLC (Bill Dunbar).

It was also noted the existing lease of Kontor Development LLC at Lot 7, Block 3 expires June 30, 2015 and that this lease will not be renewed or extended for the existing Quonset hut construction. The airport manager has formally advised the current leaseholder that he must initiate further development plans for this site or the lease site will go out to public bid. Regardless, the leaseholder will be required to remove the Quonset buildings and remediate the site.

Paul also noted George Janssen is planning construction of a two-building hangar facility (9 individual units, in a 5/4 configuration), on Lot 5A, Block 1 on the west side of RWY 34. While they are still trying to resolve some permit issues, construction is planned to begin this spring. Sharon inquired to which direction the airplanes were going to exit the hangars? Paul noted the 5 unit hangar will back up to Orca St and the 4 unit will face the 5 unit building, with ingress / egress to/from RWY 16/34.

The commission was also advised there are two parcels of land, Potelcom and City Electric, which still need to be acquired under a willing seller/willing buyer protocol to complete the full length development of Taxiway Bravo. Currently, the owner of City Electric properties has expressed an interest in selling and MRI is proceeding accordingly.

D. Project Updates

Regarding Security Improvements Phase 2, Alex thanked Commissioners Jim Powel, Don DeVoe and Terry Pena for coming to the office to view the newly installed high definition camera system. Part of the project includes conversion of the new vehicle gate software program as the manufacturer is no longer providing technical support for the old, outdated program. The new system is still being tweaked, and the camera website is planned to become viewable by leaseholders and the public by the end of month. MRI will be contacting leaseholders for login and password information. This improved system should better enable gate problem and activity monitoring.

The runway lighting vault project is well underway. Seven current voltage regulators for the RWY and apron lights and the NavAids have been installed as replacements to the aged regulators that serviced the RWY/TWY/Apron lights when the old FAA Tower was still atop the airport admin building; the new regulators are currently operational.

D. Project Updates (continued)

Remaining work for this project is the installation of the new standby generator this coming spring, 2014.

Anticipated summer projects will include:

- Dynamic compaction project along Taxiway Quebec
- Airport Master Plan, Phase 2
- City Electric property acquisition
- (Hopefully) Security Improvements Phase 3, which will be a continuation of fiber optic cable installation on the north side of the airport. The long term plan is to hard-wire all the security vehicle gates and cameras (along 5th Avenue fence line) rather than using wireless (as is now the case at several locations) due to bandwidth issues.

Alex asked consultant HDR Laurie Cummings to report on the on going MRI Airport Master Plan Phase-1 update. Laurie stated the Master Plan Project is proceeding; they had just finished the 30-day comment period and are addressing each of those now. The Phase 1 report will be ready soon. Alex asked for a presentation from HDR at the next commission meeting. Laurie said they will be having another advisory plan meeting in April. She encouraged interested parties to visit www.merrillfieldmasterplan.com for current updates and provide comments.

E. Proposed User Group Meetings

MRI's first quarterly Merrill Field User Group meeting with the airport manager was held January 8, with eight attendees. Meeting was well received by all, with discussions about security, gates, snow removal, airport operations, VPDs etc. This will be an open meeting invitation to tenants and users: next meeting is planned for April 2 at 3:00 PM, MRI Admin office conference room, 800 MFD. All comments are welcome and appreciated, positive and negative.

F. Other

Disaster Drill Training: Merrill Field is conducting a "no wheels rolling" airfield emergency/disaster drill Monday, March 10 and a "wheels rolling" airfield emergency drill Wednesday, March 26. The drill will include AFD, APD, FAA Air Traffic Control Tower, FAA Airports Division observer and Merrill Field Staff. A simulated aircraft crash on the north-south runway (16-34) is planned. The intent is to coordinate this drill and timing with Merrill Field air service providers to minimize schedule disruptions. This drill will coincide with "Alaska Shield" – the 50th anniversary of Alaska's 1964 earthquake.

5. ORGANIZATION REPORTS

A. MRI Air Traffic Control Tower

Brian Ochs, Tower Manager, thanked the airport for readjusting the newly installed apron LED lights so they do not visually impair the controllers.

A new emergency response Letter of Agreement (LOA) has been completed between MRI, AFD, APD and ATCT, and a special LOA with Erickson Air-Crane (formerly Evergreen Helicopters) has been completed.

A replacement MRI Obstacle Departure Procedure (ODP) has been requested to go direct BGQ; it currently goes direct TED, which can effectively shut down MRI during IFR conditions under new ATC rules. May 4th date is a hoped for implementation of new Special VFR procedures.

- B. UAA Aviation Technology Division
No report.
- C. Elmendorf Airfield Operations
No report.
- D. Lake Hood Seaplane Base
No report.
- E. Bryant Army Airfield
No report.

6. SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS
No report.

7. OLD BUSINESS AND UNFINISHED ACTION
None

8. NEW BUSINESS
None

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AVIATION

The airport manager suggested it could be informative for a MRI aviation business to highlight and promote itself for a 5 minute or so period near the end of each commission meeting; Commission members agreed. So for future MAAAC meetings, any MRI tenants who would like to tell the MAAAC and community what they do, please contact the airport manager's office at 343-6303, and we will schedule them on a first come - first served basis.

Paul then introduced Lars Gleitsmann, owner of Better Aircraft Fabric, who gave a presentation on Oratex, the German-made aircraft fabric he is selling, which is: paintable but color impregnated so as to never needs painting; requires no solvents, no paint, no stench, no exposure to toxic chemicals of any kind; and is lighter weight, stronger, better quality and comparable-or-less in cost than any other aircraft fabric on the market. The fabric is currently being used in the EAA environment as it does not yet have FAA approval (which is expected within the next 3-6 months). This product is viewable at www.betteraircraftfabric.com .

Lars is also EAA Director of Government Affairs and also made several comments on behalf of local EAA members regarding the positive and negative issues of MRI cameras, the need for more wattage from the electrical outlets, and noted the gates are cumbersome to use in icy conditions.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS
None

11. ADJOURNMENT
The meeting adjourned at 1:16 p.m.