

MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

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

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Jim Powell, Chair
Sharon Chamard, Vice Chair
Dick Armstrong
Don DeVoe
Jim Cieplak
Greg Pearce

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Terry Pena *

ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES

AIRPORT STAFF PRESENT

Paul Bowers, Airport Manager
Patrick McCormick, Merrill Field Finance Manager
Darlene Sivyer, 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 July 10, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.

4. AIRPORT MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Noise

Airport Manager Paul Bowers reported that the number of aircraft noise complaints has decreased. The new flight path protocol for helicopter operations has helped reduce noise over adjacent residential neighborhoods. Complaints related to fixed wing operations have declined as well.

B. Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations

Paul reported that Vehicle Pedestrian Deviations (VPDs) is an ongoing issue at Merrill Field. There has not been a significant change in the number of VPDs since July.

C. Leasing Update

Chuck Miller, Leaseholder Lot 7C, continues to work on the design aspect of the proposed aircraft painting facility. Chuck and Paul met with FAA personnel who indicated the FAA is on board with the aircraft/auto paint facility concept providing a fair market value lease rate is charged for the non-aviation portion of the lease lot. Chuck anticipates painting at least one, likely two, aircraft each month.

* excused absence

C. Leasing Update (continued)

The Janssen Hangars LLC project on Orca Street is progressing. The sides are up now on the building with four units; the roof will be in place soon.

D & D Airpark, new leaseholder for the former AeroTech Flight School lot, plans to build commercial hangar units at this location. Design concepts are under consideration and construction is anticipated for spring/summer 2015.

The Kontor Development lease expires June 30, 2015. Quonset hut buildings are currently on this lease lot located at 2113 Merrill Field Drive. Leaseholder Mark Renner has said he plans to have engineered development plans ready by December 31, 2014.

Sharon Chamard asked about the possibility of the aircraft/auto paint facility shifting to more of an auto painting operation than aircraft painting. Paul explained that a very large and expensive aircraft painting hangar is being designed and if it is a ruse to have an auto paint shop on the field, it is a very expensive one. If it appears that the main operation becomes an auto body paint shop, it will be addressed.

D. Project Updates

Master Plan, Phase 1, is nearly complete. Phase 2 will be underway in 2015.

The Security & Lighting Upgrade Phase 3 project will start up in 2015 and will be funded by FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grant funds. This phase will include security fencing upgrades which will include fence modifications that will approximate those in front of the air traffic control tower. Three-stranded barbed wire is anticipated atop the sections of chain link fencing. This security project will also include installation of fiber optic cable on the north side of the field along 5th Avenue, the addition of several high definition (HD) cameras and gate and lighting upgrades.

Paul explained the dynamic compaction process that will be used on the Taxiway Quebec Phase 4 project (and future Quebec Taxiway projects). Dick Armstrong asked that the compaction be scheduled from 6:00AM to 10PM: Paul responded that there will be timeline operational restrictions. It is anticipated that this TWY Q construction project will start in May, 2015. FAA entitlement funds will be used for this project.

MRI is proceeding with the planned acquisition of the City Electric property located on Orca Street. It is anticipated that application for AIP grant funds will be made in 2015.

E. User Group Meeting

The Airport Manager/Airport User meetings, held the first Wednesday of every quarter at the Airport Manager's Office, appear to be working well for airport users interested in communication with airport management. The next meeting is planned for October 1, 3:00PM – 5:00PM, then January 7, 2015.

F. Ongoing Bird Control

Paul noted the post-grasshopper seasonal change has eliminated the gull population on the field and brought migratory waterfowl. MRI has a contractual agreement with USDA Wildlife Services to patrol the airport during evening hours to haze the geese which keeps them from roosting overnight.

G. Other

Jim Powell commented that the number of rented tiedown spaces in municipal lots seems stable and asked what could be done to rent more spaces. Paul responded that the tiedown rates are not slated to be increased. Jim asked if a tiedown rate comparison has been done. Paul replied that a comparison has been done, and the municipal rates are competitive with rates established by leaseholders. Jim Cieplak asked Paul if he knows how many private tiedowns on the field are filled, and Rob Swenson asked if all the tiedowns with electric service are rented. Paul replied that is unaware of the leasehold tiedown status and all but a few electric tiedowns are rented. Rob recommended that MRI consider adding electric service to tiedowns to meet the demand. Greg Pearce also recommended filling the empty tiedown spaces with hangars or covered parking, and a general discussion about an airport marketing campaign followed. Paul committed to explore same.

Jim Powell asked that a "Campaign to Fill Spaces" topic be added to the November meeting agenda.

5. ORGANIZATION REPORTS

A. MRI Air Traffic Control Tower
No report.

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

A. Proposed 2015 Merrill Field Airport Operating & Capital Budget

Jim Powell noted that the draft budget documents have been made available to the Commissioners. Sharon Chamard made a motion to recommend the Municipal Assembly approve the Proposed 2015 Merrill Field Operating and Capital Budgets. Dick Armstrong seconded the motion.

A. Proposed 2015 Merrill Field Airport Operating & Capital Budget (continued)

Sharon commented that the projected revenue from parking fees is less than the current budget and asked Paul to address that revenue item. Paul responded that the lower amount reflects the recent trend of fewer aircraft on the field. Along those same lines, Dick Armstrong asked about the feasibility of increasing the number of vehicle parking spaces. Paul explained that some of the south roadside along Merrill Field Drive, across from ACE Hangars, is planned for conversion to vehicle parking spaces. Dick responded this is a win-win plan.

Jim Cieplak asked if the parking fees will be going up as the lease fees and rental amounts are proposed to increase. Paul referred Jim to the document footnotes that explain the methodology for the proposed lease and rental rate increases; there is not a planned increase in the parking rates. Greg Stoddard asked for an explanation of the budget term "ProForma"; a definition was provided (essentially projected year-end anticipated numbers). Dick asked if revenue generated from aviation fuel fees is based on fuel distribution information. Paul explained how the fuel fees are reported from distributors who deliver fuel to airport vendors. Dick asked that his opposition to the Municipal Enterprise Service Assessment (MESA) expense be noted.

Hearing no further questions or comments regarding the proposed operating and capital budgets, Jim Powell called for a vote. The Commission voted unanimously to support the Merrill Field Proposed 2015 Operating and Capital Budgets and approved the Commission Resolution recommending the Municipal Assembly approve the Merrill Field Airport Budgets. Paul thanked the Commission for their support.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AVIATION

Greg Stoddard asked how many flight training operations on the field were obligated to provide 'security awareness training'. No one at the meeting was aware of any Transportation Security Administration (TSA) required training applicable to MRI.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS

None.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.