

MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 3, 2020

VIA Teleconference - Microsoft TEAMS to listen in, to provide verbal comments or to ask ques-

tions, email merrillinfo@ci.anchorage.ak.us your name, phone number, and requested agenda

item(s) no later than 09:00am the day of the meeting . The subject line should read "MAAAC Phone

Testimony."

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Jamie Patterson-Simes, Chair

Dr. Sharon Chamard, Vice Chair

David Knutson

Terry Cartee

Chet Harris

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

None

AIRPORT STAFF PRESENT

Dr. Ralph Gibbs, MRI Airport Manager

Alex Jumao-as, MRI Asst. Airport Manager

Steve Kegler, MRI Maintenance

BreAnn Kim, MRI Service Administrator

Amy Garcia, MRI Finance Manager

Julie Hixenbaugh, Commission Secretary (343-6309)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commission Chair Jamie Patterson-Simes called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM.

2. SELF INTRODUCTIONS

Jamie asked all attendees to introduce themselves.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Approval of the July 9, 2020.

4. CHAIRPERSONS REPORT- None

5. AIRPORT MANAGER'S REPORT

- Noise

The airport manager emailed users on the field that he has received many complaints on low flying transitions over neighborhoods. There were no helicopter noise complaints.

Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviation (VPD)/Incursions

- There have been 8 VPD's since May. They have been all different and the manager's office is working on a path to decrease all VPD's. There have been no repeat offenders. The city uses the VPD's to gauge the airports success and we are working to get that changed to airport operations.

MRI AIP Projects Overview

- Alex reported that there are 3 projects proposed for the 2021 year from the Master Plan.
 - 1) Rehabilitate Runway 7-25. This rehabilitation includes grooving the surface to extend the life of the runway in order to prevent major deterioration. This project also includes the corresponding upgrade of the runway lights to LED and remarking the chevron touchdown markings at each runway, re-stripping of all the adjacent hold lines and runway numbers on all three runways due to the changes in the magnetic declination.
 - 2) Acquire Snow Removal Equipment (Motor Grader, Snow Truck with Plow, Snow Blower & Dump Truck) – The aged SRE that was purchased in 1990's has reached their life's expectancy. Merrill Field's SRE requirements are very demanding due to the quantities of snow received annually. The new replacement will enhance the safety of the aircraft's ground movement particularly during winter months when prompt removal of snow is critical to the airport's air traffic operations
 - 3) Acquire Land for Development (City Electric) – There are three remaining City Electric Properties (at 1421 E. 8th Ave & 1441 E. 8th Ave, & Lots 1 thru 6, Block 9C) which fit these criteria of ensuring airport land use compatibility that should be acquired while there is a willing seller-willing buyer capability. These three parcels are immediately south of the RWY 7 approach.

We should know by December or January which projects have been accepted by the FAA.

Alex will post the rest of the airport capital improvement plans (ACIP) on the website or send the information, for the years 2022 to 2025.

Chet Harris inquired when the acquisition of City Electric was happening and Jamie asked for the purchase price.

Alex said it was slated for 2021 at a cost of 3.5 million. There will be three property appraisals done, per FAA, so that it is all fair and just.

Chet Harris bought up concern about contamination because electric supplies are known to have significant contaminates. Terry Cartee wants to make sure the airport has no liability after the investigation. Alex stated that part of the acquisition

process is an environmental study to evaluate sub grade and below. There are three phases in sampling, 1) outcome of phase one, 2) more investigating and if contaminants are present there will be 3) remediation. If the seller is aware of the contamination they are obligated to pay for remediation.

Steve Rhodes asked about the previous purchased City Electric property 3 years ago. He asked if there were contaminants on that site. He said when it was put out to bid, the city was unwilling to accept responsibility for contamination. Alex stated the FAA environmental study cleared that property. Steve asked, if the new property could still be contaminated? Alex said it could, but was dependent on the investigation.

David Knutson suggested looking into the perspective purchaser agreement through ADEC for known contaminants of site, takes some liability away from purchaser, for due diligence. Alex said this will be included in the scope of the work.

6. ORGANIZATION REPORTS

- MRI ATCT – No report
- CAP –No report
- AOPA – No report

7. OLD BUSINESS

Cares Act Money

- Ralph shared that before he starts, he would like to say he follows all legal orders. My orders come from the FAA airports director, i.e., run the airport like a business, to make sure after cares money, that the airport is generating enough revenue that there will never be an increase in rates. City Hall directed the airport to give relief money to all leaseholders and tie-down customers because they expected to be directed by the assembly to find a way to legally use the FAA cares funds to improve our presentation to the community in Fairview.

The FSDO and airport director have asked MRI to apply as a Municipality to bring in as many of the Medallion simulators to preclude them from being shipped to the lower 48. There are eight of them left. Ralph was asked by NTSB roundtable to find a way to make sure those simulators didn't leave the state. MRI's short-term plan is to house them in a building next to ADSB.

Jamie asked who wanted the simulators kept in the state and if they have been inspected? Ralph said the request came from Juneau FSDO, Alyeska Helicopter, the safety group in Anchorage and the airport director. They can only be given to a government entity and are being stored in a hangar at the State Federal Property Disposition center.

Jamie visited all the flight schools on the field. Land and Sea has a simulator, it is offered free to their students and have it available to rent for \$30 an hour. Angel has a full motion simulator that's available for \$25 per hour. UAA has one available for the public at \$48 per hour.

Jamie asked about the desktop simulator and who's going to be using them. She doesn't see a demand for them other than the helicopter company. All the other flight schools already have their own simulators. Ralph did say that there are some desktop simulators that are in this group of eight but there's also a precision flight control full motion multi engine simulator, with dual controls used to teach CFI. There are 2 Fly-Its, helicopter sims, in trailers and a seaplane simulator. If the NTSB round table does not accurately reflect the demand by the community then the obligation that MRI has in acquiring these simulators is 18 months. If they don't become profitable, they can be sold.

Jamie asked if there are plans to build a new building and the idea to move the Managers Office over to Orca Street? She said it will need to have more vetting done, especially moving the office from a centralized location on the airport away from the maintenance. Ralph would like to build a new building with ample parking for all businesses on the Orca side of the airport and to cultivate more revenue and grow the aviation community. The motivation behind moving the manager's office and leasing it, is to get out of the FBO management that is happening now with the Charlie Transient parking. Ralph does realize the move to Orca street might not be an ideal location for the manager's office at this time.

Jamie asked what is meant by being an FBO manager? Ralph explained that there are part 135 and part 91 charter companies using Charlie Transient, airport managers lobby and restrooms as their own, staying less than six hours at no charge.

Chet thought that the development on the west edge of the airport is a good idea but, is this the right time to be doing it. He inquired if this development is in our Master Plan. Yes, that development is in the 2016 Master Plan (MP) and was approved by the FAA, Alex reported. It lists all the developments around the airport. The MP is current for 10 years. Ralph stated that the funds to purchase City Electric would be from AIP grants and the only funding coming from the airport coffers would be covered by Cares Act money coming from our operational funds. In other words, the match would come from the Cares money.

Ralph referring to Chet's point about, is it the right time? We've been struggling ever since the land exchange money was consumed. The right time is now because we are 100% covered by the FAA, no match funds for the next four years to achieved self-sustainment. The FAA gave all 18 million to us as operations funds to cover operational expenses with the commitment to allow us to convert at a later date to development. Any project is going to be funded at 100% with no match in that exchange. The FAA has not yet decided how they're going to do that but when we decide to start using cares for development, it will be with a zero match.

Jamie asked if the acquisition of City Electric would be from an AIP grant and MRI matching funds would come from the Cares Act coffer. She is concerned that it falls under development not operational funds and doesn't want to get saddled with paying it back if it was used incorrectly.

Ralph clarified we can Cares funds for AIP matches. The rules for using the Cares operation funding is that we can use it for anything that we use our other operational funds for. The source for the match for any of our AIP grants come from our operation account. He has asked this question so many different ways and keeps getting the same answer. We can spend the cares operation funds for anything that you can spend your current operation funds on, such as AIP matches.

Ralph has a meeting on Friday with the Launch Alaska they want to invest in seven high tech startups in the City Electric area. They have contracted a grant writer to put in for a grant to do an economic development survey of the underutilized part of the airport next to ADSB, including City Electric. They are after a grant to do research and they just asked me to lend my name as being supportive. He included the city manager and his team to look at what they're proposing. They want an Assembly Memo/Assembly Resolution acknowledging that the city wants to partner with them for this grant. Assembly Memorandums (AM) and Assembly Resolutions (AR) are assembly documents of support and approval. Jamie asked what would happen if they don't get the grant for the study? Ralph said it will be back to the drawing board.

Sharon Chamard, thanked Ralph for the information and background behind the acquisition of the simulators and the timeline for them to be profitable. She does question the profitability given the availability other simulators at a lower cost. Sharon would like Ralph to look into finding an arrangement for someone to maintain and run them. She said the property is commercial but would like to see a mixed development such as a coffee shop. She was glad to hear that the assembly is directing the beautification of the interface between the airport and Fairview. She would like the community council to be involved in the development plans. Sharon questioned the move of the manager's office to Fairview. Ralph answered, a coffee shop would be a great development but will have to be leased out at a non-aeronautical rate.

Jamie brought up the question on expanding the footprint of the airport managers office and leasing out part of it. And start charging for transient parking, get rid of the first six hours free. Ralph agreed and said that we will need assembly approval for that, it is a codified charge.

Jane Dale shared her research on the SIMS from Medallion Foundation. The Alaska Aircraft Carriers Association (AACA) board members looked into acquiring them but they suggested to steer away from acquiring them. They are old and no longer have a maintenance package from the manufacturer. However, there is great interest in the Fly-It helicopter simulator. She has concerns about investing in a new building to

house the simulators and believes it will be contentious among the aviation community. Jamie has used the simulators and the biggest draw to use them was being free and an instructor for guidance. She reiterated that they take many hours of maintenance to keep them up to date and running. She stated when the Medallion Foundation was disbanded the SIMS were put away in unlabeled boxes. The SIMS were offered free of use because of the money they received from the FAA.

Jane added Medallion tried to set up a fee schedule but ultimately went back to free. Their business model never really worked for medallion to charge. But it does work for some of the flight schools on the field and UAA. She is concerned that after the cares money runs out in four years, we will be saddled with the aged SIMS. But realizes there are advocates in the state wanting them to stay in Alaska.

Ralph stated that Kristi Warden is the FAA's Airport Director, she's been very supportive of the idea of a SIM center to keep those simulators in Alaska for the aviation community in response to the NTSB roundtable. There is a multi-engine and a helicopter Fly-it SIM that look very promising. He has the program managers of both companies on speed dial. And the plan is to hire four part time schedulers, 10am until 8 pm 6, days a week.

Chet Harris added that that full motion simulator is a very valuable piece of equipment however most of the working and higher end desktop simulators were picked up by the Civil Air Patrol and what's left of the desktops, are not meaningful. The Fly-It, the full motion SIM and the Super cub are still available, they didn't take the full motion SIM because it was going to be too costly to maintain.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- No new business to report

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AVIATION

- Jane Dale asked about the narrowing of the taxiway it appears to be causing some traffic issues. Alex reported the narrowing of taxiway Charlie at 7-25, was done to alleviate runway incursions. Runway incursions are not only VPD's but also for the controlled surfaces for landing and taking off. In 2015, the FAA created the Runway Incursion Mitigating (RIM) program. After reviewing all airports, the FAA found that MRI had 14 incursions at the intersection of Runway 7-25 and taxiway Charlie. Jamie asked if they were aircraft or vehicle? Alex was not sure of numbers but will look into breakdown. FAA headquarters flagged three areas at MRI, intersection of runway 7-25, intersection of taxiway K on 25 and intersection of taxiway G on 5-23. The FAA said that MRI needs to standardize taxiway Charlie from north to south, and that is why the reduction came to be instituted.

Jamie is concerned with the reduction of intersection Mike from 100 feet to 40 feet, leaving room for only one aircraft doing a runup. It is creating a bottle neck or making an aircraft have to divert to another runway for takeoff.

Jane Dale talked to the project manager at the FAA and was told, no one was required to make those changes but the project would be funded by them. So, was this really required? Alex replied that MRI did not volunteer for the reduction but did it to conform to the FAA's request that it needed to be corrected. In 2008, MRI was listed in eighth place for runway incursions nationwide.

Chet thanked the airport for their entrepreneurial efforts but feels like the stakeholders and businesses were left out of the loop on this reduction project and would appreciate more communication in the future.

Ralph asked Alex to explain how MRI included stakeholders in project. Alex said all projects are based off of the Master Plan which has gone through the public process for presenting them and their development, for the next ten years. In the future, he will work at better communication on up coming projects from the Master Plan.

Terry said that the narrowing of Mike was brought up at a MAAAC meeting a year ago and the commission was against the reduction. It seems no action was taken then or maybe it was misunderstood; Jamie agreed.

Mike Spernak and many others on field thought the narrowing project was temporary due to the new signs being put up, and was surprised when the grass was put into place, making the reduction permanent. He thinks the Fairview area is good for the SIMs building but not for the Manager's office.

Marshall Severson a tie down customer at MRI for 32 years, inquired how the cares money can be used for security cameras. There are not many cameras available for public access so customers can view what is happening on the aprons. The MRI web page shows many cameras but only a few are public. Most are private. Were these cameras purchased with FAA funds? He would like to see more cameras purchased for the unsecured aprons on the field.

Alex responded the cameras for security were purchased with FAA grants. However in the last three years FAA has cracked down on non-certificated airports by not allowing camera program projects to be funded with FAA money. But with the cares money there could be a possibility to go forward with more security. We will reach out to the FAA to see if that is possible. Marshall talked to Kristy the Airports Director and was told the cares money can be used for cameras and asked if there was still a camera project on the Master Plan. Alex said there is a security improvement project on the books for 2022, involving new signage and lights and coordinating with the FAA the new camera security could be added to that project.

Mike Schroder asked Ralph to elaborate on how the cares money is going to be used to offset leaseholder and tiedown customer rates. He was also against the narrowing of the taxiway Charlie. It was his understanding that it was just a replacement of the pavement and lights, not a narrowing, and was surprised when the project was finished.

Ralph said he will send out the spreadsheet showing how the relief money was figured out based on the three-cent increase. The leaseholders should see the relief dollars soon.

10.COMMISSION COMMENTS

- Jamie noticed the MAAAC members phone numbers were removed from the website and would like them to be listed on the page. Also, please update Chet Harris's email to reflect two r's.

11. OTHER

- Next Airport User Group Meeting October 7, 2020, 5:00PM, at the Airport Manager's office
- The next MAAAC meeting will be November 5, 2020, 12PM [VIA TEAMS]

12. ADJOURNMENT at 1:28 p.m.