

MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 9, 2020
Municipality of Anchorage, [City Hall], 632 W 6th Avenue, Room 155

Anchorage, Alaska

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Jamie Patterson-Simes, Chair
Dr. Sharon Chamard, Vice Chair
David Knutson
Terry Cartee

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Chet Harris

AIRPORT STAFF PRESENT

Dr. Ralph Gibbs, MRI Airport Manager
Alex Jumao-as, MRI Asst. Airport Manager
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 12:00PM.

2. SELF INTRODUCTIONS

Jamie asked all attendees to introduce themselves.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the September 9, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved.

4. CHAIRPERSONS REPORT- No Report

November meeting cancelled due to lack of quorum.

5. AIRPORT MANAGER'S REPORT

Noise

Ralph reported two noise complaints, both were helicopters. One was flying low over the hangars. He scheduled a meeting with the tower to establish minimum altitudes over the hangars and the flight line. The second was from a habitual complainer about helicopter touch and goes on 16-34.

Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviation (VPD)/Incursions

There were two VPD's this quarter.

First, a flight instructor got out of a plane in a restricted movement area by Ace hangars. The tower talked to the instructor but wouldn't provide name to the airport manager. It took Ralph about 6 weeks to find the culprit and write the report.

Second, a hangar owner had a contractor working in his hangar. He showed the contractor the pathway to drive and then assumed he would follow the same path (that he was shown) on the next trip to the hangar. He did not.

Ralph stated that the next time a VPD happens because a leaseholder gives someone access without ensuring their visitor completes the drivers training program (DTP), their access to the airport will be terminated until the consequential point can be made, i.e., VPD's impact MRI's ability to get grants. Jamie asked if a fine that could be imposed? Sharon asked if there was a "best practice" in airport management that deals with this problem for Merrill to model?

Alex explained that enforcing completion of our drivers training program (DTP) is the responsibility of the leaseholder to make sure that anyone, to whom they give access to the movement area, has completed the self-study program and the associated test. Jamie explained that the DTP includes only a short 10 question quiz, taking a minimal amount of time. "It is simple, easy, and fast," she said. Upon completion, it gives you a certificate and it is very user friendly on the MRI website.

However, concern was expressed that there was a lack of signage to inform the public about the training. Alex stated that there is signage on the gates and fences, stating that only authorized individuals or vehicles are authorized beyond the gate. If an individual has a code to get into the vehicle gates, it was given to them by either the Manager's office or someone else that knows the rules of the field. Thus, the importance of the required training should have been emphasized by lease holder or owner-operator.

Ralph stated that leaseholders need to help the manager's office police gate access. He believes that FAA will eventually step in, if it continues to be a problem. There was an inquiry about issuing a ticket with a fine. Alex explained that we do have the authority to write a ticket. It is set in muni code. However, it is very time consuming for the office staff to have to attend mandated court appearances for each ticket written.

MRI AIP Projects Overview

Alex reported that there were 2 professional services contracts awarded. HDL Engineering Consultants was awarded the contract for the MRI access road, to be paid with the 10-million-dollar grant from the FAA and our matching funds. The survey work will begin next week with flaggers on the road. It should take approximately two weeks. There will also be geotechnical holes being bored to check the landfill garbage depths. The work shouldn't have much of an impact on traversing Merrill Field drive. The design work will be done and advertised for bidding in 2020. The actual construction of the road is slated to begin in 2021 due to a late bid advertisement.

The other project slated for construction in 2020 is the Taxiway Charlie Lights Upgrade. This will convert the existing incandescent taxiway lights to LED's this summer. The other existing/on-going project is the Rehabilitation of Quebec and Golf apron. This project is slated for completion this summer.

The other contract was awarded to R&M Consultants. This will update the ALP for Merrill Field. It was last done in 2005. However, it is supposed to be completed every 10 years. So, we are a little behind on this project.

Regarding the other projects presented to the Assembly last summer, Ralph stated that he pushed out most projects to 2027 and beyond. The access road project is really the last project we will accept until we are financially healthy. We want to build up our revenue reserves so that we have the matching funds before any additional grants are requested/accepted.

90th Anniversary Planning

Ralph stated that Terry Cartee volunteered the Airmen's to take over responsibility for orchestrating the plans. Terry clarified that they would help. Ralph then solicited additional help to pull off this major celebration. A date will need to be selected first, one that doesn't conflict with anything else happening on the airport or in Anchorage this summer.

Rate increase

The rate increase of \$.03 per SF for leaseholders went into effect on January 1st. A \$10.00 per month increase for all tiedowns was also implemented on effective January 1st. The electric rate for the tiedowns was not increased, but it is slated to be reviewed for possible increase later this year.

There have been several complaints about the vehicle rates going up too much. However, it was pointed out that we were 50% below fair market and still less expensive than most long-term vehicle parking in Anchorage. Also, during 2020, we will be looking to raise transient parking rates and eliminating the 6 hours or less free parking for them.

Sharon asked if the \$15.00 covered the cost of the electricity in the tiedown's being leased out to Angel. Ralph stated that he took the average of the bills from 2018 for the last three months and the average from the bills from 2019 for the last three months and invoiced Angel for that increase in usage. It was \$535 per quarter versus \$45.

Terry Cartee wanted to know how long Angel would be in Charlie transient. Ralph explained that not only is Angel Aviation there, but Pan Alaska is also leasing tiedown's. So, there are 2 flight schools in Charlie transient. Angel is actively looking for a permanent space and said they would be out in spring. MRI doesn't have space for them. So, they too are actively looking for space on the airport for Angel to rent. It was asked why not put 220 electricity in Golf so that they could move their trailer to that space. At the time, it was a time constraint decision to put them in Charlie transient. Angel has 3 twins tiedown in Quebec. Jamie stated the what she is charging for electricity on her lease lot does not cover the actual cost.

6. ORGANIZATION REPORTS

PAMR AOPA-Airport Representative Joe Darnell

Jamie introduced Joe Darnell and asked him to give us a run down on what was happening at Merrill Field and how he could help us. Joe was recently asked by AOPA to be a volunteer representative for MRI by Tom George the district manager in Fairbanks. He is trying to get

AOPA more active in Alaska. Joe gave his flying background, learned to fly in 1987 and has had an aircraft on the field since 1989. He is trying to figure out how to get AOPA more engaged with the airport to help it be part of the community. Joe asked, if there are issues you have that AOPA might be able to help with, feel free to contact him.

ATCT-No Report

CAP- No report. Jamie asked about the funding cuts. Response ...They are impacted by everything. Their maintenance facility takes care of their aircraft versus contracting out that support. It is that flight operation's support that will be impacted most by the cuts. They are very involved with the cadet education and STEM projects. There are 4 squadrons that have very active cadet squadrons, which are all active in fundraising to help support their summer training encampments. Budgets are tight and they are working to get things done with what they have been given.

7. OLD BUSINESS

No old Business

8. NEW BUSINESS

No new Business

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AVIATION

Heather MacAlpine of MOA OEO would like to be added to the email list for MAAAC announcements.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Terry Cartee talked about the noise complaints from the helicopters flying low. He wrote Alpine about them flying 50 feet over the hangar and they ceased doing it. He also talked to Alpha about flying lower than 50 feet over his hangar. The pilot was not receptive to Terry's concerns, so he contacted the pilot's boss. In response, he was told it wouldn't happen again. There was a complaint concerning another helicopter taking off from Dan's hangars. Terry stated that such an action is against the Dan's association rules. A pilot can be removed from the association for careless and reckless behavior, such as taking off from or landing anywhere the pilot wants. He asked for the individuals name, so he can talk to him. The airport manager wants to ask the Tower about minimum helicopter altitudes.

Sharon thinks the optics for having Angel Aviation in transient are not good. It appears as if they are receiving preferential treatment. She thinks it would be beneficial for the sake of the members of the community that have concerns about this, to have a full financial accounting by the next meeting, including snow removal (**removing their own snow**), water usage (**none, except manager's building toilet**) and a square footage rate instead of the tiedown rates that they are being charged.

Regarding the use of an airport footprint instead of tie down spaces, Angel is occupying 9 of 18 spaces in Charlie transient and another 3 spaces in Quebec. Using 2020 tie down rates, their quarterly tie down fees are **\$3,075**. Comparing 3 months of 2018 to the same period in 2019, the difference our electric bill was **\$535**. So, the total bill is computed at \$3,610 per quarter or **\$1,203 per month**. Conversely, Angel's 12 tie down spots have an airport footprint of **16,740 feet**. Multiplying by **\$.242** computes an **annual bill of \$4,051** or **\$338 per month**. Adding the additional **\$178 (\$535/3)** for electricity, computes a **monthly bill of \$516**. Thus, Angel is paying **\$687 more** than a lease rate based on their footprint times \$.242 per square foot.

Upon his arrival at Merrill, the FAA challenged Ralph to run the airport more like a business. So, he took the opportunity to bring in more revenue by offering the unused spaces in transient to Angel. He didn't want to lose the income from the fuel tax from a business flying 10,000 hours per year. The snow removal is being done by Angel and clearing all of Charlie transient, benefitting the MRI maintenance team. They are providing toilet paper products for the airport manager's bathroom use as well.

Ralph has received unhappy calls from interior pilots upset that they might not have a space to park in Charlie transient. Ralph will send out a note delineating the revenue generating decisions behind putting Angel in Charlie Transient for the short term. **(Note: Emailed to the MAAAC within the week following the last meeting).**

Rob asked why touch and go landings were not allowed when the maintenance was plowing one runway. He was told by the tower it had something to do with the new municipal maintenance contract. The airport manager had no knowledge of this and would talk to the tower.

11. OTHER

- Next Airport User Group Meeting April 1, 2020, 5:00PM, at the Airport Manager's office
- The next MAAAC meeting will be March 5, 2020 [AFD TRAINING ROOM]

12. ADJOURNMENT at 12:49 p.m.