

AIRPORT COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 @ 6:00 pm, Wausau Downtown Airport

Members Present: Lisa Rasmussen (C), Lou Larson, Dennis Seitz, Pat Peckham, Carol Lukens, Doug Diny

Others Present: John Chmiel, Tara Alfonso, Karl Kemper

In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisc. Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner and a quorum was present. The Airport Committee meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lisa Rasmussen.

Public Comment

None

Consider Minutes of Previous Meeting, March 23, 2023

Pat Peckham pointed out a typo for the word “electronically” which should be “electrically” and also suggested that acronyms BOA, AIP, and BIL be defined.

Motion by Peckham, second by Seitz to approve the minutes with the revisions. Motion carried 6-0.

Discussion and possible action regarding proposed agreement between Wausau RC Sports and the Wausau Downtown Airport to conduct model airplane operation at the airport. - Chmiel

John Chmiel explained the EAA Chapter and Learn Build Fly organizations operate the hangars over by the park. They conduct youth programs encouraging them to get into aviation and engineering trades. He indicated they recently partnered with RC Sports which is the radio control model organization in our community. There have been opportunities for RC Sports to fly out here at the airport with youth to help introduce them an affordable angle of aviation.

Chmiel stated regulation is going through on September 16, 2023 that will only allow model airplane and UAV activity in airspace approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). These approved areas are called FRIAs, which stands for FAA-Recognized Identification Areas. He indicated Wausau RC Sports already has a FRIA approved at Sunnyvale Park as their primary place. He stated he still wants RC Sports to do youth programs at the airport and approached them to consider using the airport as a secondary space and help the airport to get approved as a FRIA, which they agreed to do. A set of rules were negotiated (*referenced in the committee packet*) and reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Tara Alfonso who provided her recommendations for changes to an agreement, which was based on a previously approved agreement at a different airport. It was forwarded to the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics (BOA) or input and their letter of response is included in the packet.

Chmiel indicated he forwarded the final draft of the agreement to all the hangar tenants in the East Hangar Development Area because he felt they'd be the most impacted by it. He stated three out of the four hangar tenants had no issues with it, and the fourth tenant came to him to voice his concerns and recommendations. After consideration, he agreed these changes should be made to the agreement. All the tenants, RC Sports, and himself agreed that there should not just be an open free area for anyone to use any time. The new draft proposes that Wausau RC Sports will only be able conduct 12 operations per year, from May to November 1st. They would have to tell us in March what the dates will be and how long those activities will take place. It is a 6-month timeframe and operations will be conducted twice per month for two hours at a time. He explained the reason he would need to know the dates and times is because the grass runway will be closed during that period of time. The agreement will be in effect for one year so that at the end of the year we can sit down with all parties to ensure everything occurred as intended. *Discussion followed.*

Pat Peckham questioned how spectators will be handled. Chmiel stated they must do it through Learn Build Fly and EAA, who are responsible for crowd control and the agreement states they can only go to that location this way.

Doug Diny questioned if there were any radio monitoring requirements. Chmiel stated the agreement recommends when RC model operations are taking place that there is a Unicom radio there for monitoring.

Motion by Larson, second by Diny to accept the agreement contingent upon legal review and finalization of the language as presented. Motion carried 6-0.

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Request for City's Approval of Proposed Improvements by the City of Schofield at Radtke Point Park in accordance with the Lease Agreement between the parties.

Lisa Rasmussen stated because Radtke Point Park is on airport property so the lease with the city requires them to comply with airport style regulations.

John Chmiel explained the City of Schofield approached him with a request to place a picnic structure on the park. He indicated he notified the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics (BOA) of the request and received an email stating the location proposed was in the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) which is not allowable. He stated he gave Schofield the phone number to the WI BOA as well as a memo that contains a map showing where the RPZ is. He noted there is some area in that park that might allow a structure, but he told Schofield to contact the BOA first to discuss the location.

Karl Kemper cautioned the committee regarding allowing improvements to the park as it could impact the airport regarding future runway projects.

Update regarding FAA/BOA funding process for future CIP - Chmiel/Kemper

John Chmiel commented he has been incredibly frustrated with the funding process and trying to get the terminal project done over the last two years.

Dennis Seitz exited the meeting.

Chmiel stated when going for FAA funding from now on we will likely be asked to fund locally and then seek reimbursement. Karl Kemper clarified that it will likely be for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) projects only and probably all the BIL funds will be used up for the hangar door replacement and the terminal renovation.

Update regarding Hangar #3 Door Replacement Project & Terminal Boiler Project - Kemper

Karl Kemper stated these Door Replacement Projects is currently out for bid with the opening of bids on May 25th. It typically takes the BOA about a month to award the contract and get it signed, going into late June. The contractor then puts together submittals for the door and send to us for review and is subsequently ordered. He estimated he delivery and installation of the door to be an August/September timeframe.

Kemper stated they went out for request for quotes for the Terminal Boiler Project in September 2022 and received acceptable quotes. He explained it was planned to be funded sponsor only initially using BIL funding for reimbursement, but for unknown reasons the BOA has not awarded that work to the contractor. He noted he has been inquiring regularly on the status and has only gotten a response that they are busy. He commented it has been frustrating for us as well as the contractor.

Discussion and possible action regarding initial City of Wausau funding of the FAA Terminal Office transfer to the Terminal Basement Project - Chmiel

John Chmiel stated we are going through the same process to get another part of the terminal project done. He explained the FAA currently occupies an office on the main floor at the corner of the entry, which is valuable space for the terminal, so we would like to move that facility downstairs into the basement. We are breaking this project out of the terminal project to get it sponsored and BIL reimbursed. He indicated the FAA estimated the cost at \$250,000. Karl Kemper stated this is just for the FAA to review the design and to be here on site to oversee the contractor move the radio and to run a few wires. He noted it is called a Reimbursable Agreement and we must do them any time we are touching an FAA facility and their cost is huge. Lisa Rasmussen indicated if approved, it will have to go through Finance Committee.

Motion by Lukens, second by Peckham to approve the funding for the office transfer. Motion carried 5-0.

Review Airport Manager Report - Chmiel

John Chmiel reported in spite of the economy, we are still looking at a 9% increase in fuel flow, and the flight school is busier than it has ever been. He noted an upcoming big event is Armed Forces Day on May 20th with B25 Bombers and some Warbirds on display. There will also be additional events of Air Venture Cup and Wings Over Wausau. He commented the Wings Over Wausau event will have world-renowned acts including the number one formation team in America performing.

Review Airport Budget Status - Groat

No discussion.

Adjournment

Motion by Larson, second by Peckham to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned 6:47 pm.