



Bentonville Municipal Airport
Advisory Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 2, 2023 @ 3:00 pm
Thaden Fieldhouse – Bentonville Airport
(**& VIA ZOOM WEBINAR**)

MINUTES

Call to Order, Welcome & Pledge of Allegiance – *Brian Baldwin, Chairman*

Chairman, Brian Baldwin, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at the meeting were: Brian Baldwin, Chairman, Dennis Cherry, Richard Ham, Mike Frost and Mark Slaughter (Zoom), Adam White, Chad Cox, Chris Maestri, Debbie Griffin, Mayor Stephanie Orman (Zoom), Mike Jones of the Democrat Gazette, Rachael Holland, Robin Fields, and Maverick, Will Gunselman, Tyler Flagg, and Beverly Shepherd - Administrative Assistant. Chris Sooter was absent.

I. Old Business:

- ❖ Approval of Minutes from February 1, 2023

Dennis Cherry made a motion to approve the Minutes from the February meeting. Richard Ham made a second. No discussion. Motion was approved.

- ❖ Geese Control Report – *Robin Fields and Maverick*

Robin Fields and Maverick appeared in person at the meeting. Robin reported that everything was good. Things are starting to pick up a little bit with the geese. Robin says he thinks that it is getting close to their nesting time, so it will pick up over the next couple of months. He has not seen any large groups lately. Usually in the smaller groups, it is less than a dozen, he says. There was a question about the presence of a coyote around the airport. Robin said that he has not seen it in about 3 or 4 weeks but, it could still be present.

II. New Business:

- ❖ Engineering and Construction Updates - *Chris Maestri – Garver Engineers*

Chairman Baldwin welcomed Adam White back to the meeting, and then asked Chris Maestri to give his report.

SE Taxiway Extension

Mr. Maestri said there are still a few minor items that need to get cleaned up by Tri-Star in the restoration realm down by the detention pond. The grass has still not grown in very well and needs to do so before they can get the city back out for reinspection and get it closed out. Someone from the board asked if Tri-Star has been fully paid. Mr. Maestri said they have not, but Ms. Griffin clarified that it is not on the city side.

Game Composites Expansion

Chris Maestri reported they had a site final inspection with them last week. There were a few minor city comments that we are working through on both the site and the as-built drawings that we are updating. They are hoping to set up another reinspection with them and get it closed out next Tuesday or the following Tuesday. Afterwards they can move onto their site and move on to getting their Certificate of Occupancy. They are very close to getting this one closed out.

Runway 36 Extension

This project has a similar situation as the SE Taxiway. There is a restoration issue mainly on the west side. Garver is working with C.R. Crawford to get those areas cleaned up. Mr. Maestri talked with them a couple of weeks ago about some options to get that cleaned up before the summer. Some of this is weather related.

Widening

The contracts have been signed on this project by Emery Sapp and the city as of today. Mr. Maestri will get those back from Debbie Griffin and will get those pushed out to Emery Sapp just so they have a copy for themselves and Garver can start moving forward with submittals, some of which we've already started on for some of the electrical pieces, but they are looking forward to the start date of May 1. They had conversations with them on whether the schedule was feasible officially, given some of the lead times they have on their electrical items, and they said yes. So, we are on track for May 1. Closure times are still 40 days full time and 33-night closures. The night closures are to clean up some of the electrical items. Chairman Baldwin asked at what point do we notify the flying community here of that date? Chad Cox said that their next newsletter which has the date in there to June 9th or 10th. Debbie Griffin said that there is a rain contingency so if it rains, they are not penalized for those days, so we are hopeful that it does not rain excessively or much in May. Mike Frost asked about the 150th Anniversary event. Ms. Griffin said that is contingent on what May looks like. We may have to push the air show to the end of June. There is something going on every month on the 150th celebration. We are just hoping to get an air show in for it this year. We may have to push that date back a little bit. Ms. Griffin said that she thought it would be prudent for the city to send a letter to all the hangar owners. She said they will do that. Brian Baldwin also mentioned that there is a delay on the pappies and riels. Mr. Maestri said that when they were talking with Emery Sapp about lead times, they didn't have any issues getting their end lights, conduit, cable, or underground infrastructure in time for the 40-day closures and 33-night closures. The PAPIs and the regulator

that runs the PAPIs is a 30-week lead time. So, on the PAPIs further away from the runway, we will have the opportunity to install those a little bit later once they come in. It doesn't negatively affect your operations, it just means there is a slightly longer delay in getting the PAPIs, but the edge light, REILs and every other thing will be able to be installed. Regarding the underground infrastructure for the PAPIs themselves they will just have to physically go and put that piece of equipment on the pad that's already been constructed there on both runway ends and hook it up to the regulator once they put the new one in. A flight check will have to occur once those are installed also. We did just get the drafts reimbursable agreement from the FAA. He said he needs to coordinate with Debbie Griffin and get it reviewed by the city to make sure everything looks good there. All the costs associated were built into the grant also, so we are on the right track.

Hangar Development and Taxiway (West Side)

Where we last were is that we got initial bid pricing from Emery Sapp. They were the sole bidder on this project. We went back to them to see if there was an efficiency that could be gained from them already being on site for the Runway Widening Project. They did give us some updated pricing. Mr. Maestri said he needs to coordinate with Debbie Griffin and see how we want to move forward. He said we have everything we need from the contractor side of things, but we need to look at the budget and see if that is something that we want to award to Emery Sapp as well or take another step back and look at it again. Ms. Griffin made a comment that it did come in higher than the engineer's estimate, even with the adjusted negotiations so we will just have to see if we have funding to do this or not. She said that it came in about double from the original engineer estimate.

❖ Updates from the Field – *Chad Cox, Will Gunselman*

Will Gunselman and Chad Cox both appeared before the committee. Mr. Gunselman started with the fuel sales. In February of last year, they sold 14,402 gallons. This February they sold 24,789 gallons. Mike Frost asked if they had any issues keeping up or running out. Mr. Gunselman said it takes a lot more planning and he is proud of his team. He monitors fuel daily. He says that their tank size is even with the loads that we bring in. They brought another Jet truck in and sometimes they don't move. They are simply to tanker fuel. Things are going well.

Chad Cox reports that they are still on board for hosting some big groups coming in for their board meetings. The NBAA for their board meeting, the AOPA for their board meeting, and then NASAO for their national conference. This is the first time the national group has ever come to this state. Jerry Chism from Little Rock felt that we should have this at Northwest Arkansas and that we should host the group, which is 300-ish people here at this airfield. Mr. Cox says they are very excited about this.

❖ City of Bentonville Updates – *Debbie Griffin, Airport Manager*

Debbie Griffin appeared before the Board and gave a report on the SCAAAE (South Central American Association of Airport Executives) conference that she, Brian Baldwin, Adam White, and Chris Maestri attended. Brian Baldwin volunteered to go to the conference, and he also flew

Ms. Griffin there. She expressed her appreciation for that, and Brian recapped the flight to and from the conference. He said their landing was a little rough because of crosswinds.

Ms. Griffin continued that there were several sessions they attended and they received some good information. She attended a session on leases that was very timely. She learned some things that we need to be including in the leases that we sometimes have not included. The speaker is offering some templates of different things we could use. She thinks this will help clean up some of our leases as we go forward, and even go back and clean up some others. She also attended a session on climate change and how it impacts the runway. There were some interesting things in it. The reason she attended that session is because of sustainability, energy efficiency and a lot of the grant dollars are tied to that. She wanted some background knowledge so if we do need to apply for grants in the future to help with runway restoration, at least we know those dollars are out there. That seems to be where a lot of the grant money is going.

Ms. Griffin said in the general session on Day 2 they had Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana speaking about what is happening in their state. She mentioned a few things that Jerry Chism talked about. He reported they have a new governor, and a new Director of Commerce. Mr. Chism said they are under the Department of Commerce and there is a new director, but said their staff is going to remain the same. Ms. Griffin said that what is great about that is that the funding bill has already been signed and approved for that department. They are funded for two years with this approval. Fuel sales have been high and said that it is a benefit to us when the fuel sales are high because the income is high on a state level which allows for more grants that allow for the BIL match on some of the dollars that we will be utilizing. A portion of that that will come back to us that will help with some of the projects that we have coming up. In fact, we will use some of the BIL money on the runway widening, so from a state level that was great. Chad Cox mentioned the NASAO national conference that is coming up. Jerry Chism was very excited to talk about that. It is the first time it's ever been held in Arkansas. Debbie gave thanks to Rachael Holland because she coordinates all these things at Thaden. That conference will be hosted at the Embassy Suites, but at least one of those meetings will be here in Bentonville. Jerry has her contact information and we visited with him to offer him any support.

Ms. Griffin said that the keynote speaker was Shanita Griffin from the FAA. She reported some key points for them. Safety remains their priority. For us, the signage at the airport. Do we have everything signed correctly? Do we need to think about bi-lingual signing? Ms. Griffin doesn't know if this is an issue for us, but she wanted to mention it and bring it to the board's attention. She mentioned that the Flight Deck video series. It was suggested that if we are not watching those, we should make sure our pilots are aware of those. There are several education points in there. Debbie has not researched that yet. Ms. Griffin told them that they could just Google it to find the videos. If there is not a video from our airport, they would like to come in and do that. Debbie will contact them about that. Ms. Griffin said they talked about vertiports a little bit. This is something that they are seeing nationwide. They have appointed a committee to study that, looking at regulations, design, but really thinking about the impact to the local airspace should one come in. Also, they are beginning to see spaceports, as there is a lot of launching and reentry. Also, they started a new airport challenge a few years ago that has been very beneficial for Junior High students. However, this year they are launching a challenge for the fifth through twelfth grade. This is a national competition that is done through Mine Craft,

where you design a complete airport. This might be something that our Ignite students could do. It is a six-to-seven-week challenge. It teaches them a lot about airports, safety, etc. She wants to make sure this gets mentioned to our Ignite group. Then, lastly, they will continue with some community education and support.

Ms. Griffin then reported that on the way home, they had another experience. She said they barely took off before another massive storm came in. This ended her report of the conference.

She asked if Brian Baldwin and/or Chris Maestri wanted to mention anything about the conference. Brian Baldwin mentioned a few things. He said they got to spend time with our airport partners, which is always valuable. He said the other thing was they got to interface and spend time with the other people in the state and the regional FAA offices that are very influential in the future of our airport with funding, design, support, etc. We spent a lot of good with Glenn and Kathy. She sought us out on several occasions to visit with us and it was all very positive from them both. Then, obviously Jerry Chism, and Richard Mills, and some of the folks from the state. They had nothing but positive comments from them...Where can we help? What can we do? So, in his opinion that time with them was equally as valuable as the information they got sitting through the conference. He expressed thanks to Debbie Griffin for inviting him. Chris Maestri also said that it was great to get to see the faces of the people you work with over email all the time. This was his first conference to get to go to. He said we have all been separated since about 2019, so it was good to see those faces again. Brian Baldwin said the conference was well attended with around 600 people there.

At this time, Mayor Orman wanted to address the board. She just wanted to make sure that everyone was aware that April 6th we will be having what we call the State of the City and Volunteer Appreciation Night at the Bentonville Community Center. Last year was our first year to do this and had an on-stage presentation. She said this year we are going to be partnering with Downtown Bentonville, Inc. They are going to help us video the event and put it into a program that will air on television. Also, that night they will be tying in with the 150th Celebration of the City of Bentonville. They will showcase the good things happening here in the city. She said they will probably talk a little bit about the airport and some things that are flying high over there. She just wanted us to be aware that they will be sending out an invite to all our boards, commissions, and volunteers, and to be looking for this invitation. Mayor Orman said that because we are the city, we don't charge tickets for our events, because we are trying to let everyone know what is going on in our city. She mentioned to please make sure you RSVP and you will have a seat. If you cannot attend, please let them know so they can open that seat up to someone else.

Ms. Griffin then wanted to mention stormwater updates. She met with Will Gunselman and Chad Cox prior to this meeting. There are a few things from the inspection with the city and a few minor things that we need to look at to make sure we are meeting the requirements from a stormwater standpoint. The Fire Inspection group was out here last week. They are inspecting the hangars and making sure fire extinguishers are up-to-date and we don't have any electrical cords running across hangars, etc. Obviously, they can't get into the hangars when you are not here, so we are looking to schedule a time with hangar lessees to make sure they can do those inspections. They, very positively, have offered to come and do fire extinguisher training and

training related to safety around aeronautical activities. She visited with Will Gunselman, and he is going to help with that, and we will either host this at Summit or the new training facility, which is right across the street. Be looking for this coming this spring.

There is a possibility for a dump truck to help remove ice and snow from the runways. After our last meeting, she checked with Dennis Birge, and he said the Street Department is going to have a surplus vehicle that they might be able to partnership with us on. The truck has a sprayer on it, but it does need some repairs. They are checking to see what the cost of those repairs would be. Ms. Griffin said we would be able to station it at the airport. She said it may not be cost efficient for us to move this route but will have to look at the costs of the repairs. She said that last month Chad Cox had said that he could provide the personnel to run it if Debbie Griffin could get the equipment. She said she is also looking at what it would cost to contract with someone else to remove the snow and ice. She said she is just trying to find a solution for this.

- Update of Subcommittee on Hangar Development

Debbie Griffin said that we do have an opportunity that is rather unique to have the dirt removed from Neighborhood #1. A company has approached Ms. Griffin that it is in between jobs, and they are willing to remove the dirt at their cost because they want their people to work. They are going to get an estimate to her. If she gets that estimate prior to City Council meeting on March 14th, she may schedule a Zoom call meeting to get consensus from this board, so she can get it on the March 14th City Council agenda. She has talked to Legal and Purchasing and said they are following the proper procedures to have that done. The dirt has been declared surplus so we would be able to waive competitive bidding to get that done. She thinks this might be the solution to get the dirt moved in Neighborhood #1. She doesn't think we can afford with the dollars we have to have all the dirt removed, which would be her preference, but we will look at the quote. She said she should have it by end of the day tomorrow. This company said it may take them three or four weeks to get the dirt out. They estimated 400 to 500 loads, but they are ready to go, dependent on the weather. She would like to have them move all the dirt but doesn't think we can afford it. We may just have to start with Neighborhood #1.

Debbie gave the topic of the Hangar Development to Brian Baldwin to talk about. She said they met with Tyler Overstreet in Planning, and they were talking about large scale development and what would need to be happening. Brian Baldwin said that Ms. Griffin has been working behind the scenes within the city so that when we sit down with whomever that wants an opportunity for a lease, we want to be very declarative about what is included in the lease and what is not. And not just the lease itself, but the work that is being done by the city and the work that we will expect to be done. If you are the one that is awarded a lease, we want to be very clear on what the city is putting in underground, how far the city will develop a pad, here's how much of the ramp we are willing to develop, which means there will also be ramp space that will need to be invested in by the potential builder. They need to know how wide and how deep, and what our specifications are. He said that Ms. Griffin has been working on this. He said he got to be in a meeting with one of the perspective lessees, and so he got a glimpse of where we are going with this. He also mentioned the meeting with Tyler Overstreet from the Planning Department. Mr. Overstreet gave them a list of the things they would need. We want to be able to sit down and have a package ready for any given person that wants to invest in developing here. That way

they know exactly what they are going to be faced with. That way they can go do their cost estimates and there will be no surprises at the end.

Mr. Baldwin also mentioned that the other thing that came up while they were talking is airplanes with wingspans of “x to y” with “y” being something with some significant girth, like 70 or 75 feet. The design in Neighborhood #1 is designed with a standard 20 fewer feet. Chris Maestri said it is 10 feet, and that we have 115 feet from hangar door to hangar door in Neighborhood #1, so a little bit smaller. It will be up to us to discuss at our next meeting how we want to go about that, because right now we are thinking is wingtip to wingtip. Mr. Baldwin said that in his neighborhood, there is a Pilatus that goes in and out of there with great frequency. There is plenty of room to empty people’s hangars out. But if we had an aircraft that had a 75-foot wingspan, it would be difficult. He thinks we should take this into consideration when making final decisions. Ms. Griffin said that to go back, and redesign again is going to add more cost to the overall. She thinks that maybe we go with the design we have and pick lessees that can fit into the space we’ve designed. That is something we need to look at. Chris Maestri and Adam White both said that the wider you go with the aprons, the less hangars you are going to have room for on the west side. Mr. Baldwin said that we can talk about this in the future, but he wanted to mention this. He would like to have enough width where you can have buildings and planes outside the buildings and planes could still pass but making them wider could knock out six to eight more hangars in the future. Ms. Griffin said that her recommendation would be to stick with the design we have, so we are not going back to redesign the neighborhood and expand the cost....at least on Neighborhood #1. She said we may need to revisit this in the future because Neighborhood #2 will look different. Ms. Griffin said they are meeting with some of the lessees that brought in some of the bigger proposals next week and hopes to bring back to the board what it is they are asking for.

Ms. Griffin also mentioned that she has been receiving additional Statements of Interest. She said that there were four or five more from the original ten that we heard from.

The other thing Ms. Griffin wanted to mention is that they did announce the recipients of the ATP grants and that we did not receive one of those. This was for terminal. There were 104 recipients nationwide and there were 658 applications. They had 967 million dollars that they awarded, but the requests totaled 9.6 billion dollars. The two airports in Arkansas that received the grant was Little Rock and Texarkana. Ms. Griffin said we have also applied for a \$500,000.00 grant that was extra money that will be announced in April. If we get that, it will be for the expansion of the fuel farm. Also, she said that if we are going to apply for a state grant to go along with this, we should do so quickly if we are to capitalize on anything for 2023. We may have to apply on an engineer estimate, which may be in our favor since they have been high. She is going to visit with Chris Maestri about this if she gets a motion from this board to pursue a state grant for the fuel farm. Our match on that, if awarded, will come from private funding to finish it out.

Mike Frost made a motion that we move forward. Richard Ham gave a second to the motion. Motion passed.

- Traffic Bottleneck - New Taxiway Intersection

Debbie Griffin reported that she has talked with Dennis Birge about this. Mr. Birge is our Transportation Director and Mr. Tony Davis is our Street Manager. They said we just need to get a warm day and meet out here. They've got the equipment and can take the stripes up and remove the tie-downs. Ms. Griffin will get with Will Gunselman and coordinate a date for this.

Ms. Griffin also wanted to recognize Mike Jones with the Democrat-Gazette. He is working on an article on the airport. He has been good about covering the city, but he is also a friend of the airport. This article should come out sometime in mid-March.

III. Other Business: TBD

Mark Slaughter asked if the board could go ahead and make a motion to go ahead and accept Debbie Griffin's good judgment on the estimate for the moving of the dirt and just let her go with it? Ms. Griffin was okay with that. Brian Baldwin asked if we could do that in advance? Ms. Griffin said she thought we could if she sends out the quote to the board first and they let her know if there is any objection. She said she could double check with Legal, but she should have the quote by tomorrow and she could just email it to the board. Brian Baldwin said if it is appropriate to do, then let's do it on a contingent motion.

Mark Slaughter made a motion that we accept the parameters of the moving of the dirt if they are within the qualifications that Debbie Griffin deems appropriate, and that we go ahead and let them do it. Mike Frost gave a second to the motion. All were in favor. Motion approved.

Brian Baldwin mentioned that he is excited about the interest that people are having about building at the airport. He thinks that it would be an appropriate response to the second round of applicants showing an interest in building at the airport by keeping them up to date on what is going on. Out of respect of their interest, he thinks we need to let them know a little bit about the process we are going through so that they know their application is not just sitting in email land. He asked Debbie Griffin that if she could do this. She said that she absolutely would.

Mike Frost asked if we should schedule a second presentation meeting for these new applicants? Ms. Griffin said she thinks there is merit to that if we don't get cloudy on trying to finish a timeline that we can't give them. She said we were fortunate to get the ARPA money to help us get going and doesn't know that will come along again. It is going to be dependent on whether the developer wants to kick in and help put the pad in for Neighborhood #2, or how quickly we could get another state grant to get started on that. She thinks that as long we are clear about that we really don't know what that timeline looks like. She doesn't want them to come in and present something and then suddenly we select somebody out of that group and not from the group that has already presented. She thinks we owe that to the people who already presented. Mike Frost agreed with that, but thinks we could let them present, but tell them beforehand where they are at in our process. But, if they want to come and present, that's okay, however, make sure they understand their level status. Debbie Griffin said she was fine with that, but she doesn't want it to get clouded over until we get Neighborhood #1 solidified. Chairman Baldwin

suggested that we move this to the May agenda because there will be some things happening between now and then and we could have greater clarity on Neighborhood #1. Mike Frost said that maybe we could schedule one of the presentation meetings every six months and that way it's not happenstance. This item will be on the May agenda.

IV. Closing:

- ❖ Schedule AAB Meeting for April 2023

Proposed Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, April 13, 2023 @ 3:00 pm

Location: City Hall – Planning Commission Chambers

Because of a couple of conflicts, the next meeting was agreed upon by the board to be held on Thursday, April 13, 2023, at 3:00 pm.

- Motion to Adjourn:

Dennis Cherry made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Richard Ham gave a second. Motion passed.

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