



Bentonville Municipal Airport
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, April 13, 2023 @ 3:00 pm
City Hall – 305 SW “A” Street
Planning Commission Chambers
(*& VIA ZOOM WEBINAR*)

MINUTES

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

Attendance: Brian Baldwin – Chairman, Mark Slaughter, Mike Frost, Richard Ham (via Zoom), Robin Fields (&Maverick), Debbie Griffin – Airport Manager, Chris Maestri – Garver, Craig Gourley, Tyler Flagg, Bonnie Bridges – Legal, and Bradley J. Tidwell and Mark Marsiglio on Zoom. The Administrative Assistant, Beverly Shepherd was absent.

Chairman Brian Baldwin called the Airport Advisory Board meeting to order and led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Baldwin made one general comment: He had the opportunity to join a smaller group that put on a starting celebration of the City’s 150th Anniversary. He said it was a well-done event. They had three of the former mayors there to talk about the history of the city and some of the changes that are going on. Mayors McCaslin, Mayor Coberly, and another gentleman whose name he did not remember. They gave a look back at the city, what was then, the evolution they have seen, what’s going on now and what the future looks like. Mayor Orman talked a bit also about what the future looks like for the city. There were some other speakers, but the reason Mr. Baldwin brought this up was that they did a nice spotlight on what is happening at the airport. Steuart Walton prepared a video and gave his thoughts on the work that is going on. Mr. Baldwin said that Mr. Walton was very positive and endorsed the work that all of us are doing. Chairman Baldwin felt good about how our airport was positioned at that event.

I. Old Business:

❖ Approval of Minutes from March 2, 2023

Chairman Baldwin asked for any comments, changes or reviews on the Minutes from the March 2nd meeting and there were none. Mike Frost made a motion to approve the minutes and Mark Slaughter gave a second. The motion was approved.

❖ Geese Control Report – *Robin Fields and Maverick*

Robin Fields (& Maverick) appeared before the board via Zoom. Robin said that everything was good. He said they have been a little bit busy. He said he had been looking at some photographs and video today from years passed this same time of year and there was a big difference from April of this year to

April of 2022 and in 2021. He said he had been looking at about a dozen everyday that are flying in at different at different times. He said they are really trying to nest right now as it is the peak of the breeding season and they've been trying to discourage them from being there and trying to nest. But everything is going good comparing to last year and the year before there is a huge difference in his opinion on the numbers of geese. He said that they nest, and they lay eggs and the eggs are born there, that becomes their home, and they will always come back there, and they will try to nest there. We will do our best to keep them out of there and keep them from nesting for sure. Debbie Griffin spoke up and said thank you to Robin for the meeting with Jerry Chism when he was here. The timing on that was good. She will report more on this later in the meeting.

II. New Business:

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

Chris Maestri appeared before the board to give updates on the current engineering projects.

SE TAXIWAY EXTENSION

As a reminder that is an FAA funded project under the AIP and Cares Act. The last we spoke we had reached out to Tri-Star on some payment to sub-contractors. We sent a letter about a possible Notice of a Contract Breach to them, that technically came from the City of Bentonville, that we had heard there was lack of payment for sub-contractors. They sent a response letter detailing where their payment was and why it was late. We needed some follow-up information from them on that to backcheck their accounts. We have yet to see it that additional information and will continue to reach out to them. We are planning on drafting another letter just as a reminder for them that we are still waiting on the additional information and that if we don't receive it, we will have to move down some different avenues.

GAME COMPOSITES EXPANSION

Before Chris takes this off the list, he wanted to let the board know that all the site civil and work was approved back in February. They now have their Certificate of Occupancy and are moved in, so Chris will remove this from his current project list.

RUNWAY EXTENSION ON 36

Garver reached out to C.R. Crawford to get some additional restoration completed. Their previous efforts were unfortunately timed and washed away by all the rain events we had. They are rescheduling their topsoil guys to get out there and get it reseeded. There were some concerns about erosion by mowers. They did look at the silt fence, but C.R. Crawford asked if they could go ahead and remove the silt fence given the amount of restoration that we have right now. They will leave the smaller BMPs in place like at the flared end sections, but it will not be a detriment to the mowing operation. Debbie Griffin said that the city is ready to start mowing.

RUNWAY WIDENING

Garver had a pre-construction meeting this morning with the city and Emery Sapp, the contractor, as well as their sub-contractors doing the electrical work. It went well. No issues with the city engineering. There will be typical testing requirements and all that they do with roadways that they are comfortable with and that they've been a part of with the SE Taxiway Extension and the Runway Extension on the south end. Emery Sapp is still on schedule to start May 1, weather pending. We continue to see

submittals from them to get ramped up on this project. Notice to Proceed is still likely to say May 1 as the effective date of construction start. They are hopeful for 40 days on this project. Debbie Griffin mentioned that the board would see on the City Council agenda the fee for the engineering for this project. If you see that, know that the construction phase has already been approved. Engineering fees will be on the April 25th meeting.

HANGAR DEVELOPMENT ON WEST SIDE

Chris mentioned that we got a single bid from Emery Sapp back in December. We negotiated with them down to a price that saved about \$75,000 to \$80,000 originally, and then had them go back to the table and that was not within the budget that we were trying to work with to renegotiate. We got a second revised price from them and presented that as bid budget to Debbie Griffin. The next steps for hangar development Debbie Griffin commented on. She said that we are in negotiations working on the hangar development. Nothing is firm yet. Their bid is still higher than what we had estimated. It's still higher than what we have for state grants. I'll report a little more on the dirt removal a little later. Negotiations are still ongoing on that piece.

EAST TAXIWAY EXTENSION – PHASE II

We are scheduled for a design only grant this year from the FAA. They are working through the scope of services and the fee for that now. We sent the scope of services to the FAA for review and have not yet received their comments. As soon as they get those, Garver will send a spreadsheet to the city to perform IFE and then they will put our grant application together to submit to them in early May. Since it is MPE-only money, they should get that apportioned over to us very quickly so we could get started on design in late summer or early fall and prepare for bidding that next April 2024.

Dr. Richard Ham spoke up and said that Chris's co-worker, Adam White, is going to get a University Alumni Award. This will be at the annual College of Engineering Awards Banquet this week.

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

Chad Cox appeared before the board and was asked to give the board an update at Summit, the Field House, and the field in general.

March fuel sales were down a bit. Last year there was a total of 26,000 gallons sold and this year a total of 22,000 gallons sold. Mr. Cox thinks the majority of that is just a decrease in GA traffic. The flight school numbers were down, and the Flying Club numbers were down. It was nothing drastic. An update about the different lines of business out there are going to work around the closure, so maintenance has secured one hangar and maybe another place to stash planes over in Rogers, and Blue Sky is opening a spot for them to work on planes. They will keep going and have staff at the Bentonville Airport, too, so if anybody needs parts, there will be someone there to sell parts, etc. The Flight School is also going to operate out of Rogers. They've been great. Beaver Lake has opened an office and a conference room. It's a lot more restrictive than our airport, but they are doing everything they can to work with us to make it go smoothly. The club will be housing their planes at Rogers as well. The Charter has found hangar space in Springdale. There are some private aircraft on the field that Chad Cox manages, and they are moving four (4) over to XNA to operate out of. He wanted to make everyone aware that if you did have an aircraft on the west side and you needed it to get on the east side for maintenance, Chris Maestri let him know Alpha 3 and Bravo 3, the north crossing, should remain open because all of that got widened when they did the turnaround on the north end. They added that ten (10) feet at the same time. It's just that center section between Alpha 1 and Alpha 3 or Bravo 1 and Bravo 3 that is being widened.

On April 21st they are having a clean-up day. They are going to work people from Summit, and everyone associated with us are going to dress in some not so nice clothes and clean up around the lake and clean up the airport. It's been a windy spring and things blow out of pickup trucks and such. We will be picking up all the trash.

The Ignite program for the last couple of months has had a dozen of their students that wanted ground school. He doesn't know who paid for it, but Summit is getting paid. They come over and from a certified flying instructor they are taking lessons. It's an awesome story that not only is this based at Thaden Field, but it really has inspired some of the students to take the next step and learn to fly on their own. Teresa Hudson, who runs that program, is retiring and she has been a fantastic person to really kick off Ignite and get it to where it is today.

Tonight at 6:00 pm an AOPA representative, Alicia Herron will give a safety seminar to anyone who wants to show up. If you are a pilot and you are wanting wings credit, which is a program that the FAA will apply continuing education credits to people who attend things like this, and it counts toward your every two-year flight review, this will apply to that.

May 18th is a Fly-Fishing Film Fest in the Exhibit Hangar. Also, in working with the Parks and Rec Department they will be having a fishing tournament...sometime around the 28th or 29th.

Debbie Griffin wanted to give thanks to Chad Cox and Will Gunselman. They are always good to help and are great ambassadors for the city and the airport. She said that we have had three instances this last month where she had called them, and they were gracious to help. She said we had a visitor from the Air Force out of Little Rock. They came in for a courtesy visit to see and learn about the airport. Chad spent a little time with them, and Will spent the greater part of his day showing them around. Chad said that Will had spent a lot of time with the Fire Department in the last month. He spent full days working with them and other departments city wide. They wanted to better understand how to do various things at the airport, how to get someone in or out of a plane, and things like how many hazardous materials are held at the airport? Chad admitted that he had done nothing, that Will had done it all. Just strengthening that relationship with the departments has been great. The Fire Department is supporting us with greater safety aspects with the truck they are getting. They are going to be doing a lot of training so that they can be effective should there be an emergency they need to respond to at the airport. Chad said that relationship is just leaps and bounds from where we were years ago. He said he appreciates those guys and wanted to mention Will as well. Ms. Griffin continued that they had met several times with photographers from the newspaper for great articles. She just wanted to say thanks to Chad and Will both. Also, she said that Jerry Chism came in also. Will and Chad made sure everything was clean and presentable on short notice and they always take care of him. Thank you for going the extra mile with all the things that we ask of you.

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

Debbie Griffin said there is cause for celebration on the dirt moving. They have mobilized the area and people started calling and asking if the dirt was moving. They have ordered some fencing for erosion control and is supposed to be in this date. They are ready to get started with this as soon as the fencing gets up. The quickest will probably be 90 days or under depending on the rain. One of the mechanics that works with Game Composites saw a sign "Clean Fill Dirt" and wanted the dirt. They will be hauling it just a few miles from the airport. This is a great thing. You should start seeing actual dirt moving here in the next week if not tomorrow from the first neighborhood. That is the biggest amount of dirt out there.

- Arkansas Aeronautical Inspection

Debbie mentioned that the Arkansas Aeronautical Group was here. They did a runway inspection. It was great because it was Jerry Chism, Richard Mills, and John Williams that came. They spent about half a day here. They went through the inspection and then she and Chad Cox took Jerry on a great tour. It turned out great because as we rounded the corner Robin was pulling up with Maverick and we got out and he got to have a conversation with Robin. Then they went on by Ignite and the students happened to be having a class at that time. Jerry went in and got to meet these students. It was huge for the kids to get to come up and shake his hand. He was very interested in what they were doing. We took some pictures, as well. She said we would be applying for a state grant in May. Ms. Griffin felt it was beneficial for them to see what we are going to be using that money for and, hopefully we will get the grant. She will talk a little more about that in a minute.

- Update of Subcommittee on Hangar Development

Also, regarding the dirt moving we obviously have an anxiously awaiting lease pool to see who we are going to award the sub-committees to. She met with City Planning, and we will be offering all the lessees that we move forward with, a disclosure sheet that will show what the city will be responsible for, what we will do, and then what they will be responsible for. We will be doing the grading, the pads, and some of the utilities. In that last sub-committee meeting we had taken the eleven and preliminarily narrowed them down to six, but you asked for a little more information from a few of those. I have obtained that information and I would like to recommend that we have a working session in the next 14 days to let the board sift through those eleven again and look at the criteria and narrow down to six (6) to give me guidance on who to start negotiating the leases with. I would ask for that meeting to be set. The meeting was set for Monday, April 24th, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Following that meeting, Ms. Griffin would like to leave the meeting with the six (6) to move forward. For the ones we don't pick and the additional ones that have been submitted we will communicate with them and allow them to come in and present for Neighborhood 2, so that we can an idea of how many we will have. Ms. Griffin said she has received about five (5) additional applications come in, in addition to the first eleven. She would also like the board to look at those and then look at seven through eleven and then the five or six additional that have come in and go ahead and set another date so that we at least communicate to the others who have applied. If we want to look at a July date, that would be great. I just want to give them some sort of communication if they didn't make the first six, or, for some reason or if they are restricted and did make the first six but decide they can't meet the criteria then we could consider them for the next neighborhood.

- Traffic Bottleneck New Taxiway Intersection

We talked about doing away with those two spots where those people are tying down. Our Street Department is willing to do that. Brian and I just need to sync up and look at it with them, and they are willing to take those stripes up. I mentioned that at the last meeting. We just need to get that meeting set.

- Grant Update

On the grant update, we did apply for some discretionary funds that were made available from the FAA for the Fuel Farm for \$500,000.00 grant. The Fuel Farm was the only thing that really qualified, but we were able to apply for that. We are expecting that announcement by the end of the month f we are awarded that amount of money. We did not opt to move forward on the state grant until we know if we are getting that money. We will apply for a state grant to go on the Fuel Farm in the fall. And we are going to move forward with applying for a state grant to help finish out the infrastructure for the first six pads. Our first grant was only for four. When we went back and looked at that we realized we could

capture some state dollars to help build up the additional two and so Garver is working on putting that grant together. If we make the agenda, it would be on May 17th. That will be in Little Rock and if we make the agenda, we are pretty much guaranteed to get the funding, so I think if we are on the agenda, it would be worthy of us to go down for that meeting if anyone is available to go to Little Rock. Ms. Griffin said she would plan to go. Chad said that he believed he could make that.

The one other thing Ms. Griffin wanted to mention was that on September 11th, the NASAO Conference. It's the national conference. She has mentioned before that it has never been held in Arkansas. The state conference is going to be here. They will have a reception that night of September 11th that is being hosted at Summit and the board will be invited to that, so I just wanted to get that out there for you to get that on your calendar. Jerry Chism really wants to show off our airport and said that an invite would be extended to our board. She mentioned this to Dr. Ham and thinks he is wanting to do something with drones. She mentioned to Craig, that she thought they were hoping to get a flyover with some of the Game Birds. She encouraged him to get it on his calendar if he wanted to do this. She said it would be a pretty good crowd. Ms. Griffin also said she thought if we are going to be awarded a grant, we should always attend these events.

III. Other Business:

Brian Baldwin mentioned that we have two guests here today. He opened the floor to Tyler Flagg and asked if he had anything on his mind that the board could address or help him with. He thanked him for coming. He did not. He then addressed Craig Gourley. Some time ago he had expressed a thought around the closure of the runway and doing what Game Composites does. With the need to do testing on your aircraft or delivery during a 40-day window it could be prohibitive. He asked if there was any progress moving on that as we are coming to that closure date. Debbie Griffin mentioned that she had talked with Chad Cox briefly about it yesterday, and a little bit with Garver as well. We are willing to allow some specified times on the grass strip. She knows that is not ideal. The FAA has sent some conditions to use the taxiway. If we can meet those conditions to allow them to use the taxiway, the city is supportive. We must figure out a way if we want to move forward with meeting those conditions. This is her update. She just wanted the board to be aware of those two things, and the support. If there is something that we can do, we are willing to do it, we just need to meet the stipulations that have been put forward. (There was some talking in the background, but a mic was not in use. It was not audible). Mr. Baldwin recognized Craig Gourley and said that he knew it was important to him, and that they run a good size business adjacent to the airport and that he recognizes the burden the closure has. Chad Cox spoke up on the striping plan that Chris Maestri shared. He said all of it made sense except deleting the centerline. He said it looks very burdensome and probably introduces more wear on the taxiway if you must remove it. Mr. Cox asked if it was something that didn't have to be done. Chris said at the very least, he thought they would have to black it out. He said that maybe they wouldn't have to delete, but black it out because it would be a conflict with the temporary runway centerline stripes, if you left the yellow centerline in place. Chad commented that on a runway you have yellow lead-in lines like all over the place. A yellow line is not in conflict with anything. It's not like.....if you follow that line, you're on the centerline as well. He said it seems like a good thing but would like to better understand. He thinks it all seems reasonable except deleting the centerline. Mr. Cox asked if he could go back and say is "this is going to decrease the lifetime of the taxiway because now you're blasting the black you cover it with". Mr. Maestri said what immediately comes to his mind is that the lead-in lines that Mr. Cox references on the runway are off set three feet right now from the runway centerlines. They are not actually in the same alignment of your true runway centerline, but they would be in this temporary condition. Mr. Cox asked what danger that presented. Mr. Maestri responded that he didn't know, but it's a question that he can ask. Ms. Griffin said that permission has to be granted from the city for use, which we would grant, but it's not just open if you do that. It's a case-by-case basis on if they can use it.

Mr. Baldwin said he brought this up because it is important for a business such as Mr. Gourley's, so he wanted to make sure that we discussed it today. He has a safety concern that he would have is that it's thirty-five (35) feet wide. Ninety percent of the people out there who fly cannot land on a 35-foot strip. If this became general access, he would have a safety concern for that. A Phillip could land on a 10-foot wide, so he understands that there should not be safety concerns if it's Game Composites and it's limited to specific pilots, but a 35-foot runway for somebody who chose to say it's open, which you just highlighted that it would not be, it would be prior permission only. Chad said he couldn't agree more. (Mr. Gourley again talked and it is not audible). Mr. Baldwin then said that came to his attention from an individual randomly this week. We are two and a half weeks from closure. I don't know that we could do anything with that. But what had been brought to the board's attention was Game Composites' request specifically for business purposes and the need that you have. Debbie responded it would only be open for that type of business. It can't be open for anything general. It would be a special circumstance in this case. We talked through that a little bit before. I just need to know what your preferences are and then we will see what we can do. (Mr. Gourley talking again and it is not audible). Debbie said she thinks if we are going to be using the taxiway, we need to expedite on the that quickly because there is one other thing that must be filed to do that. I think we could get the FAA to take a quick look at it and get that approved. We just need to decide. Brian Baldwin thanked everyone for their input. He opened the floor to Brad Tidwell, who was on Zoom. Mr. Tidwell had a quick question for Debbie Griffin. He said that she had mentioned there were 13 people in line. He just wanted to confirm that he was still in line for a spot at the first neighborhood. Brian Baldwin asked Debbie and Brad if he could address that? He said yes that Mr. Tidwell had presented to the board and had his submission within the time window that we had given, so the straightforward answer to your question is yes, you are still in consideration. What we were talking about earlier is coming to some finalization at our next work session about the criteria that we have previously discussed at the last work session and where everybody comes out on that. We are not complete with that. We hope to complete that in two weeks, and he said that it was just eleven (11) that we reviewed. Mr. Griffin said that only ten (10) presented that day. Brian said we had 10 that presented, but we had 11 in consideration in that first Neighborhood. Mr. Baldwin asked if there was anything else he could answer for Mr. Tidwell. Mr. Tidwell asked if, at the board's last meeting, they discussed the consideration method the board was using to determine who would get the spots. Brian said that the board came up with preliminary criteria. He said that it was more of an ideation session. He said a lot of us threw a lot of ideas out and we started talking about 1) what's most important to the city, 2) and what are the ideas for individual criteria that we would want to sort and rank who would end up where. That was just a logic path. The next meeting, we narrow down the applicants, come to an agreement, and we finalize. I believe that is what the board owes to Ms. Griffin. This would come out in two weeks if we are able to accomplish that. Mr. Tidwell asked if that criterion is available online? Brad asked, Are the criteria that you guys discussed available online anywhere. He didn't know, but said they were very preliminary and that they could change. It is a public meeting, and you are welcome to join and listen. Ms. Griffin said the criteria are not online yet because we have not finalized them. Brian said the next meeting for the group and this invitation will be for the entire board. We know that at least four of us can make the next meeting on April 24, 2023, from 2 pm to 4 pm, most likely at the Planning Commission Chambers, but Ms. Griffin will give us some counsel on that.

IV. Closing:

- ❖ Schedule AAB Meeting for May 2023

Proposed Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, May 4, 2023 @ 3:00 pm

Location: City Hall – Planning Commission Chambers

The above date and time were agreed upon by the board members.

Brian thanked everyone for attending and gave a “high-five” to Adam White for all the work he has done and for the honor he is going to receive.

- Motion to Adjourn:

Mark Slaughter made a motion to adjourn. Mike Frost seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned.
(Duration: 59:37)