



Bentonville Municipal Airport
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, May 4, 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*

Brian Baldwin called the meeting to Order with all board members in attendance at 3:00 pm and led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

All in attendance: Brian Baldwin, Bonnie Bridges, Dennis Cherry, Robin Fields (& Maverick), Michael Frost, Will Gunselman, Richard Ham, Chris Maestri, Beverly Shepherd, Mark Slaughter, Tyler Flagg, and Mark Marsiglio (on Zoom). Debbie Griffin was absent.

I. Old Business:

- ❖ Approval of Minutes from April 13, 2023

Dennis Cherry made a motion to approve the minutes from our April meeting. Richard Ham gave a second to the motion. No discussion. Motion passed.

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

Robin Fields and Maverick appeared before the board and said that everything was good with them. He said that there were not a lot of geese right now and that he had not seen any nests so far this year. He said that it was good news not to have any little goslings around. He mentioned that it was the first time for that since he began the work with Maverick.

II. New Business:

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

Chris Maestri appeared before the board and gave updates on the current airport projects.

SW TAXIWAY EXTENSION

They have been coordinating with Debbie Griffin and Bonnie Bridges on how to best move forward with Tri-Star Engineering. They got a response from them that they are procuring Release of Liens from all their sub-contractors, which is a good sign for a close-out. They will set a meeting up with Tri-Star for the 19th of May to talk about where they are at, status-wise, getting those releases. If they don't have them, what they are doing to move forward and get them.

RUNWAY EXTENSION PROJECT

They are still coordinating with C.R. Crawford to get out there and restore some of the area that did not grow seed very well. They will coordinate closely with them now that Emery Sapp is on site doing the runway widening, to determine where they need Crawford to seed versus where we know we are going to be disturbing with the current construction project. Chris reached out to Crawford a couple of weeks ago and they said they were planning for new topsoil and fresh seed, but I have not heard back about an exact date. He will be reaching back to them soon to see what their timeline is.

Brian Baldwin said that with the airport being closed right now it might be a good for the board to try and coordinate a time to get out and walk the site in general. He said they don't get this opportunity very often with no air traffic. That might help to witness exactly what he is talking about. He will send an email out and invite any or all to join him, or they are welcome to do this on their own, and then we will just report back on what we are seeing. Chris Maestri said that sounds great.

RUNWAY WIDENING PROJECT

As everyone is aware this project started on Monday. They closed the runway and have it NOTAM-closed from 2:00 am this past Monday to 5:00 pm on June 9th or 10th or forty (40) days from May 1st. Emery Sapp has been making good progress until the rain today. They have excavated about 2000 feet of trench and put B-stone backfill to build up the pavement section. They are making good headway and in good time. They are putting the dirt excavated to the south of the runway in between the south end of the new extension in the highway. They have been directed to smooth out any material they are dumping down there. They will also grade the area to drain along similar paths of how is drains today. Some of it goes to the west side of the extension and then pops under the extension with the pipe that we installed and then some of it goes straight to the detention pond that was installed with the taxiway project.

Richard Ham said that we have been needing a good airfield photo for a long time and when this project is completed would be the perfect time. He said that he has access to a high-powered good drone that we could get a good photo. Otherwise, we would need to commission someone with an aircraft to do it. All our pictures are going to be really outdated in a short time. Brian Baldwin said he was familiar with a situation where the city turned down somebody just recently, primarily because we are still allowing helicopter operations. While the airfield is still shut down, but where it is almost completed would be a good time to get a picture. We would need to go through the city and make sure we go through the process correctly to get this done. Chris Maestri said that they are contracted with NV5 Geospatial. They will be performing an aerial survey as part of this project, so we should get pictures from them that we could mesh or have one giant picture as an updated picture. They will take one during construction and one after as an as-built condition that we will have to submit to the FAA to get the procedures updated to the new six-foot offset centerline that we have now. In early June, we are expecting to be opened back up and then we will move into the night-closure phases where we finish up the electrical work and do final pavement markings and grooving. That is the responsibility of Emery Sapp to take care of doing this.

HANGAR DEVELOPMENT

Since we last met, Garver submitted an addition ADA grant for funds to complete the final two hangars closest to "I" Street. That includes 130' of extra taxi lane. They have not heard back from the ADA if we are on their agenda for May, but they are hopeful to be. That will gain us another \$250,000.00 of ADA funds to help with the infrastructure of that first pod of hangars which is the taxi lane and water line extensions that are needed there. Debbie Griffin has been great in trying to get as many funds as she can

that are available. If you have driven down “I” Street, then you have seen how the dirt has started moving. We are estimating this project to start late summer or early fall or the August time frame.

EAST TAXIWAY EXTENSION – PHASE II

This is another FAA funded project that we will be submitting a grant application for by the end of the day tomorrow for the design services associated with it. This project is the 600’ extension plus one connector to the newly extended end of Runway 36. It has been on our CIP for four or five years, or since we knew that runway extension was going to be coming along. We are estimating that your typical FAA design schedule where we start design this fall. They will have plans and specs ready to go to the FAA early next year and then bid in the April time frame of 2024 and construct next summer. Chris said by the end of next year, we should have a taxiway extension to the end of 36 as it stands today.

There was some discussion regarding where we could possibly put more hangars and what we would need to do regarding land acquisitions. Again, Mr. Baldwin mentioned the need of the board members to walk the airport area to get a feel for possibilities. Development of the west side was brought up. It is on the CIP and will be coming up around 2025. Chris said there would have to be some land acquisitions on that side as well.

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

Will Gunselman appeared before the board and gave us the VBT update. First, Mr. Gunselman wanted to mention that the area that the board was talking about for hangar development was really the only option for long-term parking. All the planes on that east side on that ramp is just not going to be conducive to the size of aircraft that are going to be coming in and out of Bentonville. He thought there could be about 20 parking spots there but didn’t know if it would be an income generator or not. Brian Baldwin said that it was still on their list to discuss is potential fuel farm further south and parking but thanked Mr. Gunselman for bringing this up. Dr. Ham said we need raise the old hangars and put in some good hangars. He felt that it was wasted space. Bonnie Bridges said that she though Debbie Griffin is looking into that and going through the leases. Mr. Gunselman said that fuel they sold in April of 2022 amounted to 29,687 gallons. In April of 2023, they sold 29,634 gallons, a difference of 53 gallons. The construction crew working out there is very safety conscious. The Flight School has been operating out of Rogers Airport and we have had a pretty good experience out there. The FBO bought a Jon boat. All the firefighters in Bentonville over the last couple of months have been talking about safety and we were looking at the runway. We’ve had about three potential instances where someone could have gone off 36 and into the lake. We spoke with Ms. Griffin and bought this boat. Robin and Maverick are also going to use it for patrolling the lake, and we would use it in case we had to quickly get in the boat and go out and help with an accident. He also said they are trying to clean the lake up. The algae has really come up. They met with the folks in Bella Vista to help come up with a solution to take of the algae. It was a little slow around the FBO. They are doing some painting, hangar clean-up and some other things that they don’t normally have time to do. Brian Baldwin asked him to share about having radios on them to use. Will said that he will have a radio on him no matter what. They still have a lot of helicopter activity, which is nice. He started an application with the government so that they could accept different types of payment that the government offers. We have one US Air card that they can accept, and we only see maybe a handful of helicopters throughout the year. With this additional way to accept different cards, we could take about anything that was able to land here, which could be beneficial for fuel sales. Brian Baldwin mentioned that at our last meeting the FAA was working on granting access to our old taxiway on a as-needed basis with prior approval. That went out to all lines of business and his understanding that

it was denied by the Safety Group. They have responsibility for some of the stuff going on over there and for that and other reasons it was denied by the FAA.

❖ City of Bentonville Updates – *Debbie Griffin, Airport Manager (Brian Baldwin)*

- Dirt Update

Brian Baldwin gave an update on the dirt. He said he had a pretty good view of what is going on and they've moved a lot of truck loads. He said they were moving fast.

- Update of Subcommittee Meeting on Hangar Development

As it pertains to the potential lease holders, they have been working with the city on what the appropriate process is, and we have been doing everything correctly thus far. He wanted to explain the process because they are at a pivot point on going from Stage 1 to Stage 2. Stage 1 was they put deadline on the date for the submission of an application. Everyone who did apply, which was 10 or 11, we assessed the situation. We gave each of those folks an opportunity to present in person verbally or visually. Then the board stepped back, we had a discussion at a board meeting and agreed that we need one if not more sub-committee meetings of which almost all of us had to participate in. We held one, brought the data back and said we need another meeting. We sat back down a couple of weeks ago and at that point in time the sub-committee came up with our interpretation the best rank order of the applicants. The rank order was based on what the group of us decided was in the best interest of the city of Bentonville. That was taking everything that everybody had presented and based on the questions that we asked. At that meeting, we had submitted to the city airport manager a list of in order and what the process now requires. We are done with that. All we are going to need today, unless there is other discussion that we need to have, is a motion to accept the work that we did at the last sub-committee meeting as presented to Debbie Griffin, our airport manager, and then obviously we will vote on that. Then if we conclude on that today, the next steps are Debbie will contact or somebody from the city will contact each of the six applicants down the line and start having a discussion. What will be disclosed in that discussion are: You have the opportunity for a lease, here are the requirements that go along with that meeting, full disclosure on what the city is going to do in that infrastructure, here is what the city will provide and here is what you would get with that lease. Here are the financial implications that will be laid upon the prospective lease holder, and time parameters. The entirety of the lease will be explained and what potential costs that the lease holder has, time frames, and everything like that. At that point in time, starting from 1 down to 6, they have an option to say yes, I want to pursue and then lease negotiations start. If somebody says hey, I'm not ready for that right now, the city will continue down the list that we have provided. That will take place, again predicated on the fact that we move this forward today. Debbie Griffin is out today, I am going to make this a gray, not a black and white date, because I don't know how long she is going to be away, but right now the agreement is that the applicants will be notified by May 9th. So, there is not a lot of time between now and then, so we are really trying to get this moving. We see the dirt moving now, we see the line of sight to growth and opportunity for those people who are interested. Rather than go openly and discuss the list publicly, that the city has asked us not to do, is simply take the submission, the city will make the communications from there. The board indicated he had explained the process to their satisfaction. Mr. Baldwin then asked if there was any further discussion coming out of the last sub-committee meeting. There was none. Mr. Baldwin then said he was looking for a motion to move forward with the list as submitted to the City of Bentonville airport manager.

Mike Frost made a motion to move forward the list presented to the Bentonville Airport Manager. Mark Slaughter gave a second. There was no opposition. The motion passed.

III. Other Business: *TBD*

There was no other business.

IV. Closing:

- ❖ Schedule AAB Meeting for June 2023

Proposed Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, June 1, 2023 @ 3:00 pm

Location: Bentonville Airport – Fieldhouse Conference Room

Mr. Baldwin said that he would be out-of-town on the proposed meeting date. Mark Slaughter also said he would be out-of-town. Mr. Baldwin asked if June the 8th looked better or worse for members of the board. The board all indicated the **8th of June** was good for them. Mr. Baldwin asked the Administrative Assistant if she could put a proposal predicated on Debbie's availability for the same time, at Thaden Field, on the 8th of June. Mr. Baldwin asked Will Gunselman if we would have access to their conference room. Mr. Gunselman said that he would get with Rachael in the morning and reserve that room.

Mr. Frost asked if they would have access to a vehicle so they could see the field. Mr. Gunselman said they have all kinds of vehicles. Chairman Baldwin said that maybe they would keep the agenda a little bit tighter so they can use the back half of the meeting to tour the site together. He said that would almost be the last day of the closure.

- Motion to Adjourn:

Mark Slaughter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Richard Ham gave a second. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned.