



Bentonville Municipal Airport
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, July 13, 2023 @ 3:00 pm
Thaden Fieldhouse – 2205 SW “I” Street
Bentonville, AR 72712
(*& VIA ZOOM WEBINAR*)

MINUTES

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

Present were Brian Baldwin - Chairman, Dennis Cherry, Rachael Holland, Chad Cox, Debbie Griffin, Mark Slaughter, Rich Ham, Will Gunselman, Mike Frost, and Chris Maestri. Chris Sooter came in later.

Absent: Beverly Shepherd, Administrative Assistant

Brian Baldwin opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. Old Business:

- ❖ Approval of Minutes from June 8, 2023

Mike Frosts made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 8, 2023, meeting. Rich Ham gave a second. Motion passed.

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

Robin Fields and Maverick appeared before the board with a very short and sweet update. Robin said they have not chased any geese in about two weeks. The geese are molting right now and are staying off the property.

II. New Business:

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

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

SE TAXIWAY EXTENSION – SOUTH END

Last time we were waiting on a couple of more documents from Tri-Star as far as releasing the liens to their sub-contractors. We are now waiting on one more document from Tri-Star. As of last week, they are to have it within the next couple of weeks. They are very close to having everything they need from a documentation standpoint to get this project closed out. Chad Cox made a comment about a section that did not have established grass this summer. He suggested that before he closes the project out, that Chris would want to check this out.

36 EXTENSION

This project is like the SE Taxiway Extension project, not from a paperwork close-out standpoint, but from a restoration standpoint. While the runway was closed, they had them go out and re-topsoil and seed, and they put some straw down to help that get established. Mr. Maestri said he went out there before the meeting this afternoon and while the seed is coming up, it is coming up slow. He said it seems like the straw had held the topsoil in place well. He said this should give us a chance to have some grass grow along the edges of the extension itself. He is going to contact C.R. Crawford to make sure they are keeping up with this before they set up a pre-final inspection with the city and then try to get this project closed out.

WIDENING PROJECT

Mr. Maestri said that as the board was aware, we are open and operating. We have a 75' runway now. At this point they are waiting on a few electrical items, some pappies, and riels. There is also some flush mounting and pavement lights still to be delivered. Those are estimated to be here the first week of August for the electrical part. We also have grooving that is scheduled for next week and then final pavement markings will take place after the grooving. In the next couple of weeks, we should have a grooved runway and nice reflective markings. All that work will take place at night. There should be no operational impact unless someone is trying to come in between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am. Chad Cox said that he had sent a note out to some people that fly in and out of here a lot but will also put it in a newsletter to hundreds of people. They will also issue a NOTAM. Mr. Baldwin asked about the progress on the grading area that was not quite right at the completion of the project that has been redone. Mr. Maestri said he has not looked at it since they flew in from the ADA meeting a few weeks ago. He said he needed to go put some fresh eyes on it and see how it is going. Mr. Baldwin said he had found an area that had not been graded to spec and almost left an opportunity for water to come back on the runway. It should have been graded down further toward the grass runway side. They were to have gone in there at night and fixed that. Chris Maestri also said that the foundations for the riels are in, but the foundations for the pappies are not. He needs to talk to Emery Sapp to see if we can come down and install those foundations so we can be ready to go when the equipment comes in.

HANGAR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Chris Maestri and Debbie Griffin have been working with Sycon on the taxi lane where the utility extensions and the grading and drainage associated with those six spots. He did get final numbers from Sycon and has a budget put together that he will email to the board members by the end of the day tomorrow. There were some savings associated with it compared to the Emery Sapp bid that we received originally. Mr. Maestri said that they are still shooting for this fall to get started on that construction and hopefully be done by the holiday.

EAST TAXIWAY EXTENSION – PHASE II

This is the 600' extension to get to the end of 36. As a reminder, this is an FAA grant we have received. Garver has submitted a contract to Debbie Griffin, so they are ready to go as far as design services go. This will start up in the September time frame where we will go through our typical FAA design and bidding schedule where we are ready to bid by the end of April next year and then construction that summer of 2024. Debbie Griffin said that the grant was for the design and professional services and to handle the bidding portion. Then we hope to get funded with an FAA grant for the construction next year.

FUEL FARM PROJECT

This is a new project on our list. In June we received a 90/10 ADA grant for \$200,000.00 for a parking apron. Essentially, that is the first piece of the Fuel Farm project that we are planning. Garver is working on putting together a design contract for Debbie Griffin to review that will design the whole area, as well as parking so that we can relocate some tie-down spots from the east apron and not have as much of an issue with planes trying to get in from the south side. And, to completely build a new fuel farm just south of our existing electrical vault at that southern most hangar. The plan is to design it all and go for additional grant funds from the ADA once we get a little further along in design and have a better estimate that we are comfortable with, and then take that to them and try to get some more funding upwards of another \$500,000.00 with some more grants. Debbie Griffin said that when they were at the May meeting when we were going for a \$10,000 to \$15,000 grant to help with the infrastructure, they raised the cap to \$300,000.00, and we were afforded that for the west side infrastructure grant. But when we were at that meeting, there was funding left over and we had not received a 90/10 and we had to apply for one. We discussed it and decided to go for the 90/10. We looked at going for the 90/10 in the June meeting which was the last month of the funding year, and we went for the apron with the 90/10. We were awarded that, as well, in June. That is the additional grant we were awarded to begin the parking for the apron around the Fuel Farm. We are now eligible to go back, and we plan to go back in the fall to ask for another 80/20 grant and another 90/10 to help build out the remainder of the Fuel Farm. We have a commitment for private funding that would come along side and pay the sponsorship for that and pay for the remainder of the construction for the Fuel Farm. The private funding will go along side the state money that's been available for us to go and apply for, and so it will all be built, and the city won't have to put budget dollars in. We probably don't want to go back until fall, but when we do, we will have it designed as a whole and we can put the project in that way. That's the plan. When we were at the meeting in May and received another 80/20, we didn't want to go back and ask for another grant. But Jerry Chism was there, and we visited with him. We didn't want to go back and ask for another, but Chad asked about the money that was left over and Jerry Chism said, "come and get it". That's what we did. Knowing that parking was a priority, we asked for funding for the parking on that side of the field. At this point, Debbie Griffin recognized that Councilman Sooter is in the meeting and wanted to make him aware of this. We were awarded that million-dollar ARPA money and that is what we are using to remove the dirt and whatever we have left from that goes into development on the west side and we have some other projects that we need those dollars for. Debbie Griffin recognized Will Gunselman for all the work he has done on the Fuel Farm project. Ms. Griffin also added that we had also applied for a discretionary federal grant to assist with this, but we did not get it. There were 73 projects awarded nation-wide and looking at the list, it seemed more political than project based, and Adam confirmed that with me that the airport that the Arkansas airport that received the grant was Little Rock. We just found that out yesterday. However, she does anticipate getting the additional state grants.

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

Will Gunselman appeared today and gave the board an update on the fuel numbers. (The recording was not very good and the transcriber was not able to understand most of it. The recording is available if anyone wants to listen to it). Will said that there are two large jets based here now that are using anywhere from 1000 to 1500 gallons of fuel per aircraft and consistently. There was also mention of the Sheep Dog event tomorrow from 10 am to 6 pm. There is more on this later in these minutes.

Chad added that with larger aircraft there are concerns with pavement strength. Chris Maestri has been working on that. They updated our PCR numbers, a new rating system, helping us to ensure that we are giving accurate information to people flying in here. We are trying to make sure that the FBO is doing a good job of attending all the meetings that we can and disseminating information as best we can regarding

all the construction that has been going on. They will continue to do that. He can get information to anyone if he is provided an email. He will be glad to put them on the list. Chad said they are working hard to be the best FBO in the nation. He welcomes any suggestions on what they could do better. Chad said that the top of the windsock is broken. He is not sure if the light is working, but it is rotating like it's supposed to. Debbie Griffin said that she had been haggling with him over the pricing to replace it. She understood that it would be a \$2000.00 fix and now it is like a \$7000.00 fix. She is looking into this and trying to be cost effective but said that it will get fixed.

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

- Dirt Update

They are about three-quarters of the way through. They had one issue that they addressed immediately. Depending on how much of the ARPA funds that we have left, she would like to see all the dirt removed.

- Update on Planning Large Scale Meeting on Westside Hangars and Leases

One of the biggest questions we had at the May meeting that we had for the potential leasees was “what about the access road”? Debbie had a meeting at 1:30 pm today with Dennis Birge, our Transportation Director and Tony Davis, our Street Manager, and they are working hard to come up with a solution for us. The city recently purchased asphalt milling and paving equipment. Chris, I mention this to you as they have some personnel needs. When this comes up at budget time we can try and bring some of those projects in-house. They would be willing to do the project for the cost of the materials if they have the manpower. There may be a solution to get that access road put in. That would go from the parking lot down past Neighborhood One and stops. They need to go back and do some estimates as far as what it would cost to do the asphalt and then look at some of the utilities. Debbie thinks that at the tight turn by Mr. Baldwin's hangar to use for that access road, because they are going to extend it all the way to the parking lot and believes they could enter and exit from there. We are working to try and get the access road built on the city's dime, but the pavement and the parking behind the new hangars, the developers would pay.

The meetings have gone well with leasees. Ms. Griffin has had contact with all of them and have personally met with half of them to start the lease negotiations to pick the spots where they want to be. Chris is working on the diagram because the larger hangars will be closer to the taxiway and the smaller ones will be closer to “I” Street. He is going to flip that diagram. I've already discussed kind of what that rate structure looks like, and everyone feels that it is more than fair. She said it was double what we are charging currently. It will generate some revenue for the city; not a whole lot, but enough where if our operating costs stay where they are, we will be sustainable. That is huge. She also reported that the gate is in and the pad is working. We have an app now that the pilots can use. The city will manage the app, but Brian Baldwin has said that he will train all the pilots and help them get access to it. The pilots must pay a monthly fee if they want to use the app, or they can use the code to open. The FAA had some concerns about handing out clickers, so to speak, because of the easy transferability.

Debbie Griffin said she was looking for a tentative timeline as all leases will need to be negotiated and ready to be presented to this board and to City Council before the end of the year. We are asking that all the leasees be through large scale development by the end of this year, and they can start construction no later than July of 2024. Some of them may be ahead of that timeline, but we will make sure to put the timeline in their leases. We don't want one of them to get one and then hold it. There is a lot of collaboration going on with the six (6) that were selected. One gentleman has contacted all of them and asked if they all want to work as a group to go through large scale together and then purchase materials together for a cost savings. That's on them. She thinks that is a great idea, but she knows that some of

them have had meetings about it. Brian Baldwin said that Tyler with Planning at the City told them that the best thing that could happen is that they do a coordinated effort and come with one big plan. He continued and said there is real savings in scale purchases in steel and such.

- Update on State Grant Award

Chris Maestri mentioned the FAA grants that came through. We got the design for the Phase II of the East Taxiway. That has not gone to City Council yet. We have taken a couple of other things to City Council. We've gotten some grants that we were awarded that won't go to City Council until we award the construction project. We also received a grant from the Walton Family Foundation to pay for the grooving. That did go to City Council and was approved along with the fence extension. They are paying for the iron fence to be extended up to the parking lot area from those hangars.

Mike Frost had asked about those applicants who are on a waitlist who come back in the fall to present. Debbie is going to try and schedule that for our September or October meeting. These are the ones who are up for the next neighborhood. We have four or five waiting right now. Debbie will mail those out ahead of time to the board so they can start looking at them. We are getting around three or four calls a month about hangars.

As an update on the FAA visit. They were here on Friday, June 17, 2023. Chad Cox and Will Gunselman hosted us. Kathy Franklin flew up from Dallas just to see us. Glen was seeing other airports, but Kathy came in to visit with us and it was appreciated. They spent two- or three-hours visiting Brian and Debbie and then Chris Maestri and Chad Cox took them on a tour. They were extremely complimentary of everything that was going on. They have some things that they want us to do to get some of these grants closed out. There are a couple of technical corrections they want us to make on the 50/10, which is kind of the Master Plan that gives pilots information. We can log into that system now. Chad Cox said that this was something that we thought the State Engineer updated and they were giving him the updated information and assumed that he had entered it correctly, but it wasn't in there yet. We need to work on this. The biggest thing we needed to update was they had our runway condition at fair. It needs to be at good or excellent. It just needs to be updated in the system. They also had said that our pappies were already operational, and they weren't. We also reviewed the CIP. The one thing on the CIP that I got to visit with Glen about was that he does not feel we need to pay to have our Master Plan upgraded. He said we needed to do that a few years ago when the airport was developing and we needed a Master Plan, but he would not recommend spending the dollars to update that plan. He said he recommended that we continue to make sure that our layout map is updated, that they are aware of all our projects, and that our CIP stays up to date. He recommended taking the Master Plan expense out of the CIP.

The electric vault had some safety issues. We have now put a crowbar in there and some door stops. I'm not sure exactly what happened, but during construction the door shut behind one of the construction workers and he couldn't get out. Someone else was there and got him out, but as a safety precaution they put a crowbar in there.

The only other item I have is Mike Frost will be off the Airport Advisory Board this fall and so we will start advertising for an appointment for that position, and Mark Slaughter is coming up for re-appointment to remain on the board, if you so choose. We will talk privately about this.

Debbie expressed her appreciation to the board for helping cover her while she was gone. She had some personal stuff....my husband is healthy. He had a very complex heart surgery. It was successful and he's doing well. Unfortunately I have missed the last two meetings. I appreciate the board and all who jumped in to help.

Brian Baldwin made a comment further about our FAA guests recently. He said their demeanor was like he had never seen before. They were so supportive and because they have been a part of it, as we have made them a part of it over the years, I think there is a sense of pride with them with all the things that have gone on here. Kathy Franklin had to provide us with a list of things we needed to do, but I think it was just because she *needed* to provide something. But, Mr. Baldwin felt like they were here to celebrate with us and say, “wow” and remember where we came from. They specifically talked about the big jets and talked about us reaching the next level of funding. The FAA said we need to keep our eye on that and make that an objective. Chad Cox added that Kathy Franklin mentioned twice that the airport was so busy and vibrant. She goes to a lot of airports that are like “crickets”, and he thought it was nice to hear how we compare to other airports and how we are being used and utilized. They are putting money into it and they are glad to see people using it.

- Update on Additional Grant Application – Parking Apron/Fuel Farm

This discussion was had previously in this meeting.

- Update on Sheepdog Event – July 14, 2023

Ms. Griffin states that Will Gunselman has stepped in and worked a lot with the Sheepdog people on the Honor Fest and they are excited to be able to do this. However, she did say that some of the concerns she had of allowing an event to come in have all come to fruition. From the beginning we told them we needed their details to be straight, and they were not. Will has really had to work a lot with them to make this event happen. She said tomorrow at Noon there is an enlistment ceremony that is going to be held in the Exhibit Hangar. Rachael Holland worked to get all that set up. We will see what happens. This is the first year they have done this program and there have been quite a few some changes in the plans, but she thinks it will be better next year. If you are available tomorrow around Noon, come to the enlistment ceremony for the military. There will also be something that happens on the circular apron as well, and we want to be supportive of that. We just need them to be a little more organized with what they are asking.

III. Other Business:

- ❖ Perimeter Road Design; Ingress, Egress – Brian Baldwin, Chairman

Brian Baldwin said thank you for doing the work on the ingress and egress on the new hangar area. Debbie said this was going to come down to a funding situation and she is trying to move some dollars around. Since Chris Sooter is here, she wanted to mention it because if he has to present it to City Council she wants him to be aware of what we are trying to do. Brian Baldwin continued and explained to Mr. Sooter that now we have line of sight since the dirt being moved. The Master Plan calls for a perimeter road, so without belaboring it here today, he would like to get the results of his discussion with Dennis, how that’s progressing, and just keep our foot on the gas to figure out what that looks like, so we can figure out how these people are going to get to their hangars and what their cost is going to be.

Chris Sooter said that the idea was that we would build the entry portion and then each developer would build their section. Debbie Griffin said it will be once we get past this first access, because the six (6) that are coming in were never told that they would have to build a road to get to their hangar. It’s always been on the layout plan for an access road, but when they originally planned this they thought they would just drive down the taxiway to get to those. At the time, it was, but now it is so busy that from a safety standpoint it is just not feasible. You don’t want cars driving down the taxiway. Because we have that median and that we don’t want curb cuts all the way down, she really thinks the access road will take care

of this. She thinks we will have funding once we see what we have left from the ARPA dollars. Tony Davis said that he could not get it done until next year, but he did say that it would be advisable to do it in phases. First, they would put the base down, we get the hangars constructed, and then they would come back and put in the asphalt. Phase I probably would not start until March, but it could change.

Brian Baldwin had another item of transient parking. There was some general discussion about this, but nothing was decided. His concern is that we do not overburden people with charges for transient parking. His perspective was that they would be eating our food and utilizing our facilities for fuel, and so forth. However, there are people who do not have a home for their plane, they want to stay in Bentonville, they are parking here for free, and it's now become their residence. Time limits were mentioned. Debbie Griffin would like the board to look at this matter and discuss what would be equitable for everyone. The item of the city's T-hangars was also mentioned. Debbie Griffin said she thought we needed to look at that and see what we can do there. She said it is in rough shape, the city is not putting any money in on the maintenance, but they do pay property tax on it. Will Gunselman said he will start talking to the people that use these spaces and let them know that a new plan will be coming in the future.

IV. Closing:

- ❖ Schedule AAB Meeting for August, 2023
Proposed Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, August 3, 2023 @ 3:00 pm
Location: City Hall – Planning Commission Chambers – 305 SW “A” Street
- Motion to Adjourn:

Mark Slaughter made a motion to adjourn. Mike Frost gave a second. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned.
