



Bentonville Municipal Airport
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, June 8, 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, Chairman, opened the meeting and led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Baldwin stated that Debbie Griffin was not able to attend the meeting today but had briefed him in advance of the meeting on her updates.

I. Old Business:

❖ Approval of Minutes from May 4, 2023

Dennis Cherry made a motion to accept the minutes from the May 4th meeting as written. Mark Slaughter gave a second. No opposition. Motion passed.

❖ Geese Control Report – *Robin Fields and Maverick*

Robin Fields appeared before the Committee via Zoom and gave his report. He said that this week was very busy. He had been on vacation two weeks ago for a week and when he came back the birds had moved back. On Monday they chased seventy (70) to eighty (80) geese off the lake and he has chased birds off the lake every morning. Robin said this morning there was only about twenty, so he thinks maybe they are getting the hint. It should be getting close to molting time so they will lose their feathers and they will stay wherever they are at. He wants to make sure to keep them off our area before they lose their feathers. He said he would probably check the area a couple of times this weekend to just give it a little extra attention. Other than that, everything is going well.

Brian Baldwin made mention that the projected reopening of the airfield is June 9, 2023, at 5:00 pm. He asked Robin if he could, to pay a little extra attention to the area tomorrow. The construction site is getting cleaned up right now, but that after 5:00 pm for a couple of hours before sunset, we would probably get a couple of people bringing planes back. All weekend Mr. Baldwin expects it to be busy returning the other flock that we like (planes).

II. New Business:

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

Chris appeared before the committee with updates on the current projects at the airfield.

SW Taxiway Extension

As he mentioned last month, they were working with Tri-Star Engineering to get proof of final payment to all their sub-contractors. They have received most of those, but not all of them. Chris said that they have been in touch with them every week since their meeting with Bonnie, himself, Adam, and Nick from Tri-Star and they are trying to get these done. Chris said that what you may have seen over the last week is that Tri-Star came out and filled in some of their erosion issues. They also reseeded and put some straw down.

Runway Extension

C.R. Crawford also put some straw down like Tri-Star did to help. They wanted to get that done before we reopened the airfield. Hopefully, we can get the grass going again and get this closed out.

Runway Widening

Emery Sapp & Sons are finishing up their underground electrical install and restoration of seed and sod along the new pavement edge. Garver has a meeting with them tomorrow at 2:00 pm. Assuming they are good with the meeting we'll pull the final X's that are on the runway showing it closed, pull all the barricades, and all that pavement will be reopened. As soon as we are opened back up, we still must finish up the electrical install. This work will be done at night. Basically, they will just be pulling cable and installing fixtures.

Hangar Development

Garver just received an updated quote from Sycon. We need the board and Debbie to review it and talk about how we move forward with this project. There are two bids in at present. All the work going on with hangar development will have to go through City Council for approval.

East Taxiway Extension – Phase II

The only updates from Garver are that they gave Debbie was the Grant Agreement in place for the design of this project and the work order for Garver's services is going to City Council on the meeting after next. This will follow the typical FAA design schedule where we start in the September time frame on site investigations and actual office work. We have plans ready for the FAA in January for their review and then we advertise in March, open bids in April and start construction sometime next summer.

Dennis Cherry asked the status of the tunnel. Chris Maestri reported that it is on hold. Mr. Baldwin said that Ms. Griffin said it was not a dead project, but it is such that it does not require our focus at this time.

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

Will Gunselman appeared before the committee with his report. He said right now while the airfield is closed a lot of people are taking vacation or time off. They have gotten a lot of work done around the airport and the hangars and the FBO. They have sharpened their tools and are ready to open back up. Everything is running well; field trucks are topped off and everybody is very anxious to open back up. They have a fly-in coming in on Saturday morning with several tail draggers. The Flight School will be moving over on Saturday and the Club will slowly start trickling in and then a lot of the tenants will start coming back over the weekend as well. The construction crew has been fantastic with their communication and efficiency. Will made the announcement that he is making a slight role change at the

FBO. He won't be working for the FBO starting around the middle of July but will still be working on the airport with the Bentonville School System Ignite Program. He will still be attending our meetings, but just in a different role. Will said he may bring some of the students in here so they can get a feel for what goes on. He also mentioned that they moved one of their part-time people to full time. They promoted a gentleman to line lead, and then hired one of the interns through the Ignite Program that will be working with them the next few months. Then, they just hired another full-time person on the line as well, so all the fuel trucks will be up and running.

At this time, Brian Baldwin gave appreciation to Mr. Gunselman for everything he has done as an associate over at Summit. He said with his participation throughout the years here with the city and helping in every way he possibly could, it is bittersweet to see him move out of this role. However, Mr. Baldwin is very excited for him. He continued and said he will be influencing youth in aviation, which is great, but he is hoping that it is a great job change for him. On behalf of the board and the city, Mr. Baldwin thanked him for everything that he has done to help progress the airport as far as it has gotten.

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

Mr. Baldwin is reading Ms. Griffin's updates:

- Runway Widening

I want to express my thank you to all the contractors, to the board, the FBO and to Garver for construction and collaboration through this process. (Mr. Baldwin did not read what Ms. Griffin said about him, but instead told the board that Debbie Griffin is giving her thanks to everyone who has been involved in this). To the Garver Team: Bravo! I've not been involved in many projects that finish on time and almost looks like if they'd have really pushed it, they could have dusted this thing up and finished it a few days before, but the right thing to do is go right to the end to the last clean-up and everything. I witnessed amazing work from our construction companies and the subs. I want to call Chris Maestri out for his coordination. You were primarily the hub of everything going on there. I know other people were involved, so I am not taking that away from anybody else, but we've leaned on you a lot. Your management on the ground I think has been spectacular. Your communication on a weekly basis - we knew where things were going, what was happening, anything moving backwards, things moving forward, safety, cleanliness, exit, entry, ingress, egress, all that stuff. Well done, thank you, thank you on behalf of the board and the city. We will be celebrating tomorrow evening, but I am pre-celebrating today, and I thank you for all the work you have done. And to Will Gunselman, thank you and to the entire Summit team for the coordination and making this a safe operation, because being six weeks down is not easy to do at any airport. Mr. Baldwin said thank you, all!

- Dirt Update

Sycon continues to move dirt. They are a little over halfway complete. No issues except for some sidewalk repair that had to be made due to cracking. They responded quickly and worked with Parks and Street Departments for a quick turnaround. Some neighbors were concerned with the trucks turning around on the street and they adjusted their haul route. Mr. Baldwin said it sounds like Sycon is in frequent communication with the city and adjusting where we see issues.

- Update on Planning Large Scale Meeting on West Side Hangars and Leases.

Regarding the May 24th meeting, four of the six potential leasees made the meeting, and Planning, Legal and Garver reviewed the large-scale process. I led the meeting. Mr. Baldwin added in that the two

additional lease candidates have reached out and been supplied information. I thought the meeting went very well. Bonnie (Bridges) thank you for being involved there. You kept us up where we needed to be from a compliance perspective and really making sure everyone understood, not just financially, but legally where we needed to be. We got a good response from all of them. They had great questions, it was a good Q & A. We had a few of the board join, so thank you for coming in. Rich also joined us. It was a good discussion with these folks. Brian Baldwin said that Debbie is out today, but probably sometime next week she will be back involved, and she will be putting some additional packets together with some additional information. Chris, thank you for supplying a couple of those. I think some of it was the testing results on the earth over there, which we explained to them is not going to be gospel, so to speak, but it is directional so if they are looking to put a pencil to paper on the finances, they are going to know roughly how deep they are going to have to dig to get to good dirt and how much backfill they are going to need to put in. So, we are very excited about that.

Mr. Baldwin said to Bonnie Bridges that depending on Debbie's availability he could also take questions from some of the last two folks, if they have any further questions, but he sent a recap of the three things that I thought we needed to complete in those packets.

- Update on State Grant Award

The airport received a \$300,000.00 grant from the State for infrastructure pads for the west side hangar area. This was a bonus as we applied for \$250,000.00 grant and they raised the limit at the meeting. Talk about time and place. In Little Rock, they gave us an additional \$50,000.00. We will issue a contract for this work in the next few weeks and will begin immediately following the dirt removal. Debbie, Chad Cox with Summit, and Chris from Garver attended the meeting. Thank you, Chad for flying the team to the meeting.

- Update on Additional East Side Taxiway, FAA Design Grant

The city did received notification of a \$140,000.00 FAA grant for the design services on the east side taxiway. Garver has supplied the work order for Phase II. This grant, along with state funding will pay for the project one hundred percent (100%). Board action is needed to recommend this to the city council for June 27th.

Brian Baldwin asked if there was any discussion or clarity about what this is going to be used for? Mark Slaughter asked, "the last little part on the east side, or SE side, I should say will go all the way" Chris Maestri said that this grant specifically is for the design and bidding of it. He said once we bid it and we have a contractor on board we will get another grant for the construction piece. It is already in the Capital Improvement Plan to do that in two separate years. Like Brian said, it will be one hundred percent (100%) funded once you add the state ten percent (10%) match to it, which we get at close out of the FAA grant. Brian Baldwin continued and said that if there is no further discussion a motion to recommend that the airport manager take this to the city council meeting with our recommendation on the 27th of June 2023 would be in order. *Mark Slaughter made the motion that we accept it (\$140,000.00) for the grant for the SE Taxiway Extension. Dennis Cherry gave a second. There was no opposition. Motion passed.*

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

The city is eligible for one additional state grant for this year, and we have applied for a \$200,000.00 grant for the apron parking near where the fuel farm will be located, which is on the south-central east side. We will be notified if we are included in the June meeting in Little Rock. We are also still waiting to hear on federal discretionary funds for the fuel farm. This announcement was expected in April, but the FAA said they will be announcing soon. We received funding from the Cares Act Award 2021. That

total was \$82,000.00. Funds will be put in the maintenance and repair account. It will also be used for a percentage of Officer Fields' salary. Bonnie Bridges spoke up and said it's going to this city council meeting, so next Tuesday city council will recognize the funds and appropriate them into the correct accounts. Mr. Baldwin said that we don't need any board action on this. He asked Chris Maestri if there were any additions to that or any updates that Ms. Griffin doesn't have on here in terms of announcements. There were none.

- Update on Sheepdog Honor Fest – July 14, 2023

Sheepdog will be hosting an Honor Fest in Bentonville the week of July 10, 2023. The inaugural Honor Fest is a weeklong festival recognizing veterans, current military, military families, First Responders, and their communities. We will be hosting an enlistment First Responders ceremony on July 14, 2023, at Thaden Field. We will also be holding a plane pull for teams to be timed pulling an airplane. Celebrities will be on hand to help with this event. Emergency vehicles will be on display along with a military simulator. This will be a community event and a great way to honor those who serve and are first responders. Will Gunselman and Debbie Griffin met with the group several times, and this will be a great highlight for the airport, as well. Summit is putting a lot of work and time into helping with this event. All board members should attend if possible. I will send more information later. Save the date and plan to attend if you can. Will Gunselman said that it would be from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm at Thaden Field. They will NOTAM the west ramp closed and to operate off the east ramp. Will said the planes will be on the circular apron and will do a fifty foot (50') pull. The teams will probably be three to five people to pull. A lot of people will be out there. (Admin could not understand everything he said. Apparently, no mic was used).

- Repairs

Modern Fence will be on site to look at all gates for repairs. BEI Electric is in the process of installing electric for the gate on the west side hangars. That's the one that leads into where Mr. Baldwin's complex is. It's the new roller gate that has been installed, which is fantastic, Mr. Baldwin said. The only thing that was left off was access to electricity to run the gate back and forth.

III. Other Business: TBD

Brian Baldwin wanted to bring up one other topic and maybe not dissect it today since we have a small group. He said that as he has been seeing development happening on the next block of hangars, the one thing that becomes clear is that when we had our meeting, our plan for ingress and egress was not completely baked. There was some discussion that we work on a design to start to work on the perimeter road. Since he has been on the board, he doesn't remember us talking about that as an action item, so he would like to propose that at our next board meeting or when we have the larger group together, we take a section of our time to talk about that. What he found is that the potential leasees asked some pretty good questions that we didn't have very good answers for. I just want to capture in the notes that we should talk this up at the next meeting. I will bring this up to Debbie Griffin as well, and make sure she is aware of it.

Bonnie Bridges said that it might be a good idea for Debbie to invite Dennis Birge, since he over the streets, so he can give an update on if there is a plan for this road or where it is on the city's timeline, or if it's on the city's timeline. Brian Baldwin said that it is on airport property, but asked if Dennis would still be involved with that? Ms. Bridges responded that she thought he would. She said that she thought Tyler said it was part of the Master Street Plan. Brian said he knows it is on the airport's Master Plan but when it comes to the city, he doesn't know who has the ultimate responsibility and accountability.

Dennis Cherry asked, as an old item: Do we have any visibility of the use of the electronic refueling station? I know it is ready, but is anybody using it? Will Gunselman said they had one plane come in. Mr. Cherry said we raced to get that installed in time for a big event (The UP Summit). But then said that if it is not there, we can't use it.

IV. Closing:

- ❖ Schedule AAB Meeting for July 2023

Proposed Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, July 6, 2023 @ 3:00 pm

Location: Bentonville Airport – Fieldhouse Conference Room

Brian Baldwin indicated he would be out of town on the 6th. He asked what the 13th looks like for everyone? Everyone was good with it. Mr. Baldwin proposed that pending the availability of Debbie Griffin, we will look at the 13th of July 2023 as our next meeting date at 3:00 pm. *Mr. Cherry made a motion that we move the meeting to the 13th barring any other conflicting information. Mark Slaughter gave a second. Motion passed.*

- Motion to Adjourn:

Brian Baldwin thanked everyone for attending and officially adjourned the Airport Board meeting. Mr. Cherry said he thought we needed a motion to adjourn. *Mark Slaughter made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cherry made a second. Motion passed.*
