



Bentonville Municipal Airport
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, August 3, 2023 @ 3:00 pm
City Hall – 305 SW “A” Street
Bentonville, AR 72712
(& VIA ZOOM WEBINAR)

MINUTES

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

In Brian Baldwin’s absence, Mark Slaughter served as Chairman and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mark Slaughter, Dennis Cherry, Mike Frost, Debbie Griffin, Chris Maestri, Ginny Lantz, Robin Fields & Maverick (Zoom), Tyler Flagg, a Visitor (name unknown), Chad Cox (Zoom), and Beverly Shepherd, Administrative Assistant.

I. Old Business:

- ❖ Approval of Minutes from July 13, 2023

Dennis Cherry made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mike Frost gave a second. All approved. ***Motion approved.***

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

Robin Fields appeared by Zoom and gave his report. He said there has been a few geese just about every day for the last ten or twelve days. They are moving and coming into the lake a little bit. He was told that there was a bunch at the airport Tuesday evening about 7:00 pm or so. He asked the individual to call and let him know if they are starting to be present in the evening time. The individual said they were blocking the runway, so Robin will keep an eye out. He said he may adjust his hours if he sees that they are coming in the evening time.

II. New Business:

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

Chris Maestri appeared before the committee with the updates for the current airport projects.

SE Taxiway Extension

Garver has been working through getting the final lien release from Tri-Star from Sunbelt Rental Company. They did get some email correspondence back last week that they have come to a financial agreement and are waiting for the actual form to be sent over. Adam spoke with Tri-Star over the phone as well just to make sure there wasn't going to be any additional back and forth with them and Sunbelt to get that form. Chris Maestri said he thinks they have finally found that number that's going to make everybody happy. When they get the final document, they will confirm and get with them again on the restoration area that Chad Cox sent a couple of weeks ago that was still not grown in yet, and Mr. Maestri will make sure those get reseeded and restored before they have the final inspection with the city and then close out the project with the FAA.

Runway Extension

Mr. Maestri just got a letter from C.R. Crawford yesterday. Mr. Crawford said the grass is looking better out there and asked if he was ready to go look at it with the city. Mr. Maestri said that he still needed to do a walk out there to confirm before we take up the city's time on a final inspection, but it is looking better; and they did reseed it while the airport was still closed, and put some straw down to help keep some of the moisture in. It's not beautiful Bermuda grass, but it is green and it's going to hold the soil down like it should and prevent some future erosion issues. He said he needs to get out there and get a final set up with the city to close this one out. As a reminder, this was a privately funded job, so we don't have close-out paperwork to do with the FAA. It should be a smoother process with just the city.

West Side Widening Project

This project is done and paved. They are working right now through grooving of the runway. They have made it about 2000 feet of the 5000 feet over the last week during some night closures. This project is going a little bit slower than expected, but they are still making progress with the piece of equipment that they have. They did have a mechanical failure on Tuesday night and are waiting on a part and planning to resume grooving on Friday. Over the next week or so, we should have grooving complete and final pavement markings put down. Then we will just be waiting on electrical items to be delivered for the pappies and riels. Mr. Maestri said they have a flight check with the FAA scheduled for late October and that will get us closed out on that project.

Hangar Development

Chris Maestri said they are working through construction contracts with Sy-Con Excavation and are expecting those contracts and associated bonds in tomorrow. They are also drafting their work order for construction phase services to get to Debbie Griffin in one nice package next week so we can get on the city council agenda for the 22nd. Assuming we get approval on the 22nd we will move immediately into pre-construction scheduling with the city and then we will move into construction phase in early to mid-September. Debbie Griffin said that the funding for the west side infrastructure is funded through three (3) different state grants that we competed for and received. And the additional funding we received from ARPA when we got the one million dollars, so it was a big win for us to be able to fund that project through grants. Chris Maestri said a combination of those three grants from the state is \$700,000.00. They have been helpful and flexible in letting us split it up and getting some extra money when we could really use it. It was asked what we know about the Sy-Con Excavation. Chris said they are a local company from Rogers. They did a lot of the utility work for the Game Composites expansion. Debbie Griffin said she found them through correspondence with Game Composites. They were in between jobs and wanted to work and she met with them individually at the airport and they gave us a great quote. They came in almost \$600,000.00 cheaper than the bid we had to remove the dirt, and that is how we

were able to go ahead and get the dirt. Since they were mobilized on site, we are going before city council to waive competitive bidding to have them do this next project. The quote that they gave us even for the next project is way below the bids that we received. They are a new company, but they are up and coming. We should start to hear more from them in the future. Ms. Griffin said it was very exciting to be able to give business to local companies as well.

East Taxiway Extension – Phase II

We have a grant from the FAA for the design of this project. Garver has executed a design services contract with the city to move forward with that project. He said they will start early September doing site investigations, geo-tech survey, etc. to get started on design this fall. That will follow the same FAA-funded project schedule where we've got review documents ready at the beginning of the year and then we will be ready to advertise for bids next spring with construction the following fall. If everything goes smoothly, they will start construction in the fall of 2024.

Fuel Farm Project

Mr. Maestri said we have received one grant from the ADA so far and are working through a design services contract with the city right now to design this entire area which would encompass a new fuel farm and a lot of extra parking. We could move some planes over from the east apron over to that area and help start moving towards a true taxiway on the east side full parallel instead of people having to jog in and out. He said he had a meeting with Debbie Griffin and Chad Cox in a couple of weeks to review final processes on this.

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

Chad Cox appeared via Zoom. He began with a report on the fuel. They sold 12,000 in 100 low lead and just under 12,000 in Jet-A. This year it is 11,000 in low lead and 12,000 in Jet A. So, basically about 24,000 gallons sold this year and that is about flat with last year. Regarding the taxiway that Chris was talking about earlier, he said that we could probably get a bit more room for people taxiing up Taxiway Bravo and that they pulled the ropes from the tie-downs that were facing west and that buys us about another 20 feet for aircraft that may be taxiing on that runway. It does take some capacity out, but all the ones facing the east were not being used. That is one tactic that we have worked on to try to make that area as useable as possible and leverage all the construction that's happened, and to keep people off the runway and onto the taxiways.

Last week was Oshkosh. The Flying Club goes up there in full force. About 50 club members attended and then Fly Oz had a booth where people would go by and ask what we are selling and they would tell them that they just want you to come visit the area, check out the airstrips, check out Thaden Field. Chad said he came home about mid-week and looks at the arrivals board and there were several planes coming in from Wisconsin back through here. People listened and are coming through our area more and said that it is that kind of incremental growth that will keep us sufficient.

Chad then said that he appreciates all the support from the city to hustle and get those grants. He mentioned the work that Debbie Griffin and Chris Maestri do to help. He is happy with the team that we have.

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

Debbie Griffin started by introducing her guests that she invited to the meeting. She asked Fire Chief Justin Scantlin, and Deputy Chief Kevin Boydston to join us today. She shared that Deputy Boydston was extremely instrumental in writing and working with the Walton Family to get a grant for the ARFF truck, and they had given her some pictures today and let us see them and where we are with the ARFF truck and let you see what it looks like. We are getting close to delivery of this truck. She wanted to take the time to give credit to them and to the Walton Family Foundation, particularly Steuart Walton and the Runway Group who provided the grant for this truck. The cost has gone up considerably and we have been waiting a couple of years to receive it, so we were very fortunate to have received this grant when we did. Debbie then showed the room pictures and videos. Deputy Boydston talked of the thermal imaging camera mounted on the exterior. This gives them the ability to maneuver and be able to see the smoke, pick up the heat, and then also anything else that may be down on the ground. It is a Class 4 ARFF. It's unique in that we opted to purchase this ARFF that was designed for the Air Force. The criterion of the USAF was that it must be a Class 4 ARFF, but they had to have the ability to load it up on a C17 and transport it wherever they needed them throughout the country. The USAF purchased about 55 of these vehicles. Deputy Boydston continued that they liked the design. He said that we are a General Aviation airport and don't have to comply with all the FAA regulations, but they did look at what was out there and what Bentonville had and needed. Bentonville is unique and an extremely busy airport and some of the aircraft that they have is unique. It was going to require something that was beyond a Class 1 or Class 2, and this Class 4 meets those needs. If it can handle the military's jet fighters, then we feel like it will be able to handle the planes we have flying around here. It holds more than 1000 gallons of water and has a 500 lb. dry chemical system. The only thing it doesn't possess that the military's does is the lowering suspension. He said they didn't see a need to load it up on a C17 and transport it anywhere. Its markings are unique, including the Louise M. Thaden Field name. Also, is the tail number of Louise's aircraft when she won the Bendix. It is numbered after her FAA license 6850. The airport will be the vehicle's number 1 priority. It will be staffed every day during the peak hours, which is pretty much daylight. Those staff are there strictly for the airport and nothing else. We expect those crews to know the airport like the back of their hand; know every square inch and be there and be available. Also, we are housing the vehicle at Station 6 which is right across the street and kudos to Game Composites when they added their gate, they added the ability for us to fire our siren and go through their gate, so we can access the runway and taxiways there. The location of Station 6 puts them well within the FAA requirements on times for getting to the center of or the farthest point of the airport and runway. They meet everyone's criteria, but they don't have to. But, with Bentonville being as unique as it is, they really needed to. Thanks to the Walton Foundation, they sped up our timeline. We were probably looking at 2024 to placing the order and hoping to have it in service by 2026, but they sped up that process with their grant. Covid then slowed it down and then supply chain issues, so it is a year late. However, if everything goes well with the inspection they were doing yesterday and today, and the tests meeting approval, within the next two weeks it will be loaded up and shipped to Bentonville. Then we will be working with the contractor doing training the next two weeks and then we will hit the taxiway running and start our training out there. Deputy Chief Boydston said he didn't know what they will do but there will be some sort of ceremony when the truck comes in. They want to acknowledge it when it gets here. Debbie mentioned that Deputy Chief Boydston was the one who did all the research on this and work out the details. He said that they had a lot of willing participants. It all started in a conversation in July of 2020 and here we are in 2023 and it is coming to fruition. A lot of great partnerships and a lot of people in the community with the same visions and working together made it happen. They are very appreciative. The manufacturer has technicians if we have something. We do have emergency vehicle technicians. However, if it goes beyond our capabilities and it is not drive train related.... if it is drive train related then we do have options here locally. Then we must put in a request to our distributor, and they send the technician. They have also partnered up with XNA. They sent their personnel to DFW for their initial training. But from here on out they will partner with XNA every year for the annual testing.

Debbie Griffin then mentioned that Brian Baldwin has started working with the Fire Marshal because they are coming to do the inspections on all the hangars. They have offered to do safety classes and different things like that. So, I really appreciate the relationship that we have with the pilots, the FBO and the Fire Department. Thank you for coming in to help with the training and all that. And thank you for coming today.

She also wanted to mention the NASEO Conference. She pulled it up today and the computer and they have a picture of our airport on it. As a reminder this conference is coming the 9th through the 13th. Registration is live now. The bulk of the classes are going to be at the Embassy Suites, but they do have an event on September 11th there is a reception at Thaden. As I get more information, I will make sure the board gets it. She thought it was great that they used our airport as the background for the registration page. This is a national conference.

- Dirt Update

They have finished working on the removal. They still have a little bit piled up out there, so they are still hauling a little bit of it off, but they are down to about 175 loads that needs to go. This should happen within the next week or two, so they are about 95% complete on the initial dirt removal. I would encourage you to drive by and see. It's a completely different landscape.

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

I mentioned this on the last meeting that we had. As far as the West Side Hangars are concerned, Legal has all the information now to work on the draft leases with the three or four different things that we are requiring that are different on other leases, and that being a portion of the wrought iron fence, a couple of other things we are adding to the lease and so Legal has that. Bonnie Bridges said she hoped she can get me something from a draft perspective in the next week or week and a half. She has met initially with all the lease holders, and they are just waiting for those draft leases to start working on the negotiation. Everyone already knows what is going to be included. All the six (6) should be working on large scale and working on their development. They were able to flip the design. The larger hangars now are going closest to the runway. Chris is working on that, so we had a minor increase in the design portion of that, but it looks like it is not a problem to put the larger ones closer to the runway. I just now need to sit down with each individual lease holder and make sure they are moving forward with their large scale and that they don't have any other questions.

- Update on Parking Apron/Fuel Farm

We talked about all this earlier.

- Recap on Sheepdog Event

Debbie Griffin said she felt like this event was good. Will Gunselman ended up having to do a lot more work than we had anticipated but appreciated him doing that. Brian Baldwin and Debbie Griffin attended the event. She didn't know if we would host it again next year at the airport, but we might. They just had a lot of changes at the last minute. However, she still felt like it was a good event.

Ms. Griffin has one board action that she needs. There is a lease for Hangar 6. It is currently owned by Enfield's Estate and the nephew would like to transfer that lease to Josh Breeden. They have brought forth paperwork to transfer Hangar 6 from Enfield to Josh Breeden. They owe me a little more paperwork, but I told them I would try to get a motion so that I could get it in on the end of August. If the

board is okay with this lease transfer, she needs action on it. The same terms apply. It was owned by Enfield Estate and the nephew has been taking care of his affairs and he doesn't want to utilize the hangar anymore. Josh Breeden wants to take over the lease. Also, just to let the board know, those leases are written on that city-owned hangar that if we every decide to do something different with that, we are not locked into those leases for the 35 years. We just need to give a minimum 30-day notice if we decide in the future that we want to do something different with that piece of property. Dennis Cherry made a motion that the board accept the transfer as explained. Mike Frost gave a second. Motion passed.

The only other thing that Ms. Griffin had that wasn't on the agenda was just a reminder that Mike Frost will be ending his time with the board with our October meeting, so you will start to see advertisement for solicitation for a new Airport Advisory Board member. If you know of someone who would be a great fit for this board, let her know. It is a five (5) member board, and it is a three (3) year term. She will start advertising for this.

III. Other Business:

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

The parking related to this is on the Fuel Farm parking. The access road would be on the west side. Debbie Griffin mention that they have met with Dennis Birge and Tony Davis with our Transportation Department, and they are working on some solutions to see what they can do on that access road. They don't have a dollar amount yet, but we do have some new equipment where the city can do its own asphalt paving, so we are going to try and utilize that. They are looking at the feasibility of that and what the costs would be. She said it is just tight there. Chad Cox also sat in on this meeting. They are going to go out and walk it, measure it, and look at costs, and then we are going to meet again in the next week or two to see what they have found out as well. She needs to give the board more data for them to be able to evaluate that. The discussion on the parking was how we would handle parking there as far as if we were going to charge and what the length would be and that's what the board was going to discuss. Chad Cox said that it is just grass out there now. They are working to get grants for future and a working Fuel Farm, that will be a great location for it. Currently, there is always about half a dozen planes that are tied down on the east side and they tend to obstruct the movement of aircraft and it is just not the best situation. If you remember, toward the end of last year, the city put in some signs pointing aircraft that are landing to exit onto the west side onto Alpha taxiway and go north so they wouldn't get stuck because of transient aircraft that might be tied down there. This would be a positive for everyone and can get us away from having to use those tie downs and be able to use a full-length taxiway on both sides of the runway, which I know is what the FAA would prefer, and it would make movement a lot easier. Ms. Griffin said where they are currently parking on the east side is where we have some people that are doing long term parking without paying. There was no action taken. It was just up for discussion, so the board knew we'd like them to look at it.

Ms. Griffin said on the August 22nd meeting, they will have a couple of city council agenda items, but this board has been in favor of those, so she didn't need action on them, but they will see accepting those grants and awarding the contract.

IV. Closing:

❖ Schedule AAB Meeting for September 2023

Proposed Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, September 7, 2023 @ 3:00 pm

Location: City Hall – Planning Commission Chambers – 305 SW “A” Street

- Motion to Adjourn:

Mike Frost made a motion to adjourn. Dennis Cherry gave a second. Motion approved.
