



Bentonville Municipal Airport
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, October 5, 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*
Chairman, Brian Baldwin called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at the Meeting: Brian Baldwin, Chairman, Michael Frost, Dennis Cherry, Chad Cox, Robin Fields & Maverick (Zoom), Tyler Flagg, Michael Frost, Debbie Griffin, Rachael Holland, Ginny Lantz, Chris Maestri, Beverly Shepherd, and Mark Slaughter. Richard Ham was absent.
Visitors: Mark Marsiglio, Austin Conner, and Grant Allred.

I. Old Business:

❖ Approval of Minutes from September 7, 2023

Dennis Cherry made a motion to approve the minutes from our September meeting. There was a second by Michael Frost. Motion approved.

Off the Agenda: Brian Baldwin mentioned that Michael Frost’s last meeting as a member of the Airport Advisory Board. Brian said he wanted to say thank you for the work he has done for the city and for serving on this board and bringing his ideas to the table. He will be missed. Debbie said he was appointed on September 28, 2017, and said that Mike has served for six (6) years. She said we do appreciate his service and gave him a Certificate of Appreciation to you from Mayor Orman for his service to the City of Bentonville while serving on the Airport Advisory Board from September 2017 through October 2023. Thank you for your many contributions to our city and our community. Mr. Frost thanked the board.

❖ Geese Control Report – *Robin Fields and Maverick*

Robin and Maverick appeared before the board. Robin said that last week was somewhat busy and the week before had been slow. He has been seeing some geese more on the south side of the runway. They are landing on the runway and on the grass right there. There is not a lot of geese on the lake right now, but it will get busier for the migrating geese when the colder weather gets here. He said they have been seeing a lot of small birds, too, and they had a small bird strike about two weeks ago. We have been irritating the smaller birds and they will fly 30 yards and land again and again. He has not seen the coyotes in quite some time. Chad added that they do get some calls at the front desk about bird strikes and they asked who they report these to? Chad said that it is up to the pilots to report when they hit a

bird. It is expected on the part of the FAA that a pilot reports a bird strike. You can go to www.wildlife.faa.gov/home to report. If you hear of a bird strike, remind the pilot to report it to the FAA.

II. New Business:

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

Chris Maestri appeared before the board. He had hard copies of the projects and passed those around.

EAST TAXIWAY EXTENSION (South) (FAA Grant)

Last month we were still waiting on one of the sub-contractors and we heard from Tri-Star yesterday and their expectation is that if they get the paperwork at the end of next week, he had a mid-November time frame to have all of that close out documentation to the FAA so we can get our final reimbursement.

RUNWAY 36 EXTENSION (Private Funding)

Last time we talked we had an unofficial final inspection with the city to confirm that the restoration looks good. We have worked through the final close-out package documents. We have that ready to send into the city and then we can close this one out with them as well.

RUNWAY 18-36 WIDENING (FAA Grant)

All the final items, PAPI regulator, pavement lights and rielis will all be delivered this week and we are tentatively scheduled for a Monday night and Tuesday night closure next week to complete all of our electrical install. On the 19th and 20th, they will do the flight check of the runway edge lights and rielis, and on the 20th during the day they will do a PAPI flight check and close out completely on all our new electrical systems.

VBT HANGAR DEVELOPMENT (ADA Grant)

We have begun construction on the west side since we last met. Sy-Con has essentially completed all the west waterline extension and almost all the east waterline extension. Once the waterlines are in, tested and approved by the city they will move on to the physical taxi lane pavement construction. As of now construction completion is set for early December.

VBT E. TAXIWAY EXTENSION (Phase 2) (FAA Grant)

This is for the 600' extension to the 36 displaced end. They requested a conceptual planning meeting today hoping to get it scheduled for next week. They've completed site investigations with Geotech and survey, so we are well on the way to keep this moving and be on the schedule for opening bids next spring.

VBT FUEL FARM (ADA Grant)

Chris reported no major updates on this project. They are essentially working through budgeting with Debbie Griffin and Chad Cox's group on how it looks with ADA grants and private combos.

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

Chad Cox said last year for September, they did Jet A – 18,000 gallons. Back when they moved over there that would be a total for the entire fuel sales for the month. We went beyond that by 6,000 gallons, so we sold 24,500 gallons of Jet A and then 100 Low Lead that went up a little bit, as well. We did 15,000 gallons of 100 Low Lead, so we did a shade under 40,000 gallons of fuel sales. This is our high-water mark, so it was a very busy month in terms of fuel sales. NASAO had a reception at the airport, and it was great. They brought a lot of people in, so that helped our fuel sales as well. Game Composites are at about Serial #80 in their production line. 22 to 28 of aircraft they have built and sent out came back for an annual event they have, to touch base with their customers. It was very impressive. Sad news to report. Chad said the Richard McSpadden, leader of the AOPA organization passed away in a small aircraft crash up in New York. He was a friend of this airport, and he wrote an article about us a year or so ago and it helped to put this airport on more of a national stage. His son, Grant, was an instructor here at one time. He mentioned again that Louise is now open 7 days a week from 8 am to 3 pm. They are going to stretch back out to a longer day but wanted to get open 7 days a week first. Progress with the Ignite Program, an extension of the Bentonville Schools, have 40 students this year, and now have internships. They doubled from last year. Tours are available. Chad also mentioned that if you are at the airport and notice anything that is not right, please report this to him. He mentioned to Garver that a porta-potty left over there, and some of the blue taxiway lights are not working. They are working hard to get their wait list down to zero and that is our new normal. We feel like if someone comes here and ready to start training, we need to staff up and be prepared to start working with them. On the fuel farm, we did have a little bit of an issue with getting fuel from the trucks loaded into the tanks and they are currently loading it over the top, which is doable but not a long-term thing, but Will is taking the lead in contacting Rebel about this.

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

Debbie Griffin reported that on 10-18-23 at 9:00 am the ARFF truck will be at the airport, and we will have the dedication of it. The Fire Department will be there and will do a demonstration and we will give a “thank you” to those that donated funds to make this purchase. That was Steuart Walton. He is planning on being here. The board is invited, and we will make the sure media is aware. Next week Chad Cox will be meeting with Public Safety and are going to work through some of our protocols for handling emergencies with the ARFF truck and other things at the airport. Rachael Holland has been working on a Community Day on 10-28-23. They are going to be doing an event at Thaden. We had mentioned earlier that we wanted to do something for our 150th anniversary at the airport to involve the community and Rachael said one of the guys had come up with an event called “Baggage Compartment & Treat”, but we want do a trick-or-treating that goes around the ramp and invite people on the field who have planes and put our planes out and some War Birds out and kids can go around and trick or treat. We’ve also invited the Police (maybe Bomb Squad) and Fire departments to come and will invite the community to come in and trick or treat, and they would love to have Maverick come out, too. Debbie Griffin thanked her for her efforts. This will be held from 10 am to 2 pm. She also wanted to recognize that Chad Cox was a lunch speaker on Monday for the NASAO. Dr. Ham did a session on drones, and Brian Baldwin did a session. Bentonville was represented very well. She appreciates them and their valuable efforts. They made some very valuable connections at the cookout they had when the aeronautical leaders were in.

- Update on West Side Hangars and Leases

Regarding hangar development. She said they had hoped to have a meeting in September, but they did not. She had a couple of issues to resolve before they had that meeting. One was the access road. They did meet on site with the Transportation Department, Garver, Brian Baldwin and Chad to talk about this. We do have something that has been presented, but we need to look at the funding of that. Garver has been working on this. It would involve an ADA grant, a match from the city to be monetary, and some of the match from the city would be work by the Transportation Department. It has not been approved yet, so she cannot move forward with exactly how the access road would work. We will have a meeting in the next couple of weeks to find out how its' looking. We will have to use the Legal department as well. Please be patient. There have also been some questions about the utility corridor. We would be putting in the water and the sewer, but the developer would be responsible for the utilities that would go in there. The city cannot take on that burden as we don't have a funding mechanism in place at this point. We had a meeting with legal the other day about how the leases could be written. They have been working on the draft leases. Legal has had them about a month. We don't know what we need to put in there about the access road and being very clear about what the city is paying for and what the developer will need to pay for. A preliminary timeline would be that all the leaseholders would be through large scale development by the end of the year. She is still hoping that process will be started by the end of the year and that we could start construction by early spring. It is just going to come down to how quick can we get the access road in and then are the developers understanding exactly what we are asking them to pay for and exactly what the city is going to pay for. We will schedule a meeting with all parties so those questions can be answered. Brian Baldwin reported that the feedback from the city that the access road is the preferred route by the city versus curb cuts all the way down. They would not re-do center median breaks at all. From a feasibility perspective in what Garver has looked at is the width and the ability to tie-in to existing pavement coming off the parking lot. It's all in concept form right now. The funding mechanism would be a state grant, which means that would be one that we would be taking away from something else. There was some discussion between the board and some of the visitors we had in the meeting today. That discussion is available via recording if you wish to listen to more. Brian Baldwin did, in answer to some questions some of the leasees (visitors) had been to put their collective thoughts, ideas, proposals in a letter to the board that could be taken to the city. He said that he would commit to them that we would expeditiously on that.

- NASAO / AAOA Conference Update

Brian Baldwin spoke and said that others did a great job of stating what went on at the NASAO/AAOA Conferences but said to have the leaders of every state that run the airports within their states, from California to New York to Florida, the whole crew was here. To have our little place to have the spotlight was special. He had a chance to attend the NASAO dinner because I was a speaking on Wednesday, so I got to meet a lot of people. The jaws that dropped when they stood in the Exhibit hangar or out on the lawn area here, as they watched the planes come in and out and see what we all have created was amazing. He also attended AAOA Conference which is the Arkansas Airport leaders. He joined Chris from Garver there and he thanked Chris for representing us well down there. There was good news/bad news. The bad news is the Friday leading into that weekend, the FAA was set to have a whole series of speakers. That was the night before the potential shutdown and they had to make a decision to come or not. They had to pull the plug and put in other speakers down there. The good news is they didn't do the shut-down. We got time with our state officials and with other folks from around the state. And like the national folks, there is a lot of talk about what is going on in Bentonville. I got to brag about our place and both Jerry and Richard from the state were very appreciative that we were represented down there and had a lot of good things to say. So, the momentum continues.

One thing that Debbie Griffin failed to mention before that has been a hot topic is that gates at the airport. We continually have problems with the gates not working or not shutting. So we are going to have a walk-through with Modern Fence next week and are going gate by gate. She is going to go along so she

can kind of put the pressure on them. We have paid for a lot of the repairs to the gates this year and the repairs are not working. Every week there is another problem with another gate. Chad is going to be available and someone else from Thaden and we are going to look at every gate. They are going to make a recommendation as to what we need to do. It may be that we need to replace some gates or sensors, but we can't just keep calling them every week for a \$300.00 service charge.

III. Other Business:

❖ Discussion regarding Projects and Priorities – Mission Statement – Etc..

Chairman Baldwin expressed that he would like for us to be discussing and working on. He passed around a hand-out that listed his mission/vision, other thoughts, and priority ideas as he sees them. First, he said we are at a point right now where we just finished up some very large projects outside of the things that Chris said is currently on the CIP. Obviously the new six hangars are a focus and priority, but we are at a great time to sit back and say, "what are the next important things that we want to be working on"? One of the things that comes to mind for him is what are we going after? He wants the airport to keep pace with what's going on in the city in terms of functionality, aesthetics, amenities, roads, capacity and growth. Second, that the airport to be developed and positioned as a city asset that has appeal to and inclusion of the broader community. And third, that the airport be positioned as a premier GA airport with a strong passion for the history of aviation. He would like to start provoking some thoughts in the board's heads about what they think.

He randomly wrote down some other thoughts: For the airport to be self-sustaining, are we an economic engine, a gateway to Bentonville, uniquely positioned vs surrounding airports. We are not positioned to be a corporate jet center. We have stated that we want a nice mix of lights, and a small GA with some jet traffic. To have a stronger initiative on community engagement, and a business hub. Mr. Baldwin said he would like to take some time at some point and make that a priority to recraft those and would like for myself or for all of us to go present at a city council meeting to them and the Mayor what would be the next chapter that we as a board propose for this airport. There was some discussion on this. One thought was about land and how we are going to run out soon.

Some of Mr. Baldwin's priority thoughts were regarding: The next six (6) lease infrastructure. He said this is paramount right now. Also, policies and standards. He would like for us to have some nice policies and procedures in place. We started this and then a lot of other things came up, but now might be the time where we start bringing that back up and really take a closer look. The fuel farm is a big one, resident and transient parking, from who is here and what should they be paying on the ramp, perimeter road, perimeter fencing, 412 corridor, further growth on West side, and property acquisition. Mr. Baldwin said what he is asking for from the rest of the board members is that you provide some thought to this. You can scratch out what you don't like, reorder this and you can add whatever you like, but he would like to get some feedback from you on what you think.

Mark Slaughter said he thinks we need to add the Master Plan to the list somewhere and updating it. Also, the CIP. What's next? Are we going to do the SW Extension? Debbie Griffin said that we bring the CIP to the board every year, and we will be bringing that back to you this year. We can add to that if we need to. Maybe we could put that on the next meeting for review. It does have to go to the FAA again this fall. So, we will put this on the next agenda. Everyone agreed. Debbie said she would send it to all members via email.

Chad Cox added a comment that he thought the Mission/Vision that the bullets were appropriate when people started to really focus and put a lot of energy into this airport. In a broad sense, he said that the mission and vision there is not large enough. I would look at all these and say "yeah....check, check,

check”, and I would say let’s work to have goals that are certainly achievable, but I think we can go far beyond that. Brian Baldwin agreed. Let’s come to the next meeting with some thoughts and I will get with Richard Ham and I know he will talk about the Master Plan. The feedback we have received from the FAA is the CIP drives what they think. Chad continued that the airport in Pennsylvania he has mentioned before had goals that were more direct. Not in just priorities, but said something like, “We’re gonna have this by this time”. He said he knew that is a very difficult thing to do when you are working with a complex municipality, but it also allows you to know, “Are we winning or are we losing”? “Are we getting behind, or is this at the pace that we are trying to keep”? I would add to that “pro-business”. Could we bring another manufacturer to this “I” Street Corridor within the next year? I think we could. I think it would take the whole group. The airport, Visit Bentonville, the City of Bentonville, all of that to lure someone in because that’s huge. He also thinks we could hit the national designation is a goal that we could hit within the next year. We are only three (3) jets away from starting to knock on that door. Then improving winter operations with regard to equipment and staffing....trying to work that into the next budgeting plan. He just thinks that providing that level of specificity can drive us a little harder. Brian Baldwin said he would send Chad his document, and he can add and adjust. And, he said that we would take input from anyone. He said good ideas come from every angle. Send him feedback. There was a little more discussion here about our airport being the home base airport for everyone that has a hangar at the airport.

Chad asked Rachel to set up a time where whomever, but Debbie, Brian, Chad...whomever would want to participate to prepare for this. Chad said he would do an audit and have someone physically go through every hangar, write down tail numbers and make sure we capture them all.

IV. Closing:

- ❖ Schedule AAB Meeting for September 2023
Proposed Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, November 2, 2023 @ 3:00 pm
Location: City Hall – PC Chambers, 305 SW “A” Street, Bentonville, AR

The proposed date and time were agreed upon.

- ❖ Motion to Adjourn:

Michael Frost made the motion to adjourn. Mark Slaughter gave a second. Motion approved.

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Project Task	East Taxiway Extension (South) (FAA Grant)						
	Runway 36 Extension (Private Funding)						
	Runway 18-36 Widening (FAA Grant)						
	VBT Hangar Development (ADA Grant)						
	VBT E. Taxiway Ext. (Phase 2) (FAA Grant)						
	VBT Fuel Farm (ADA Grant)						
Site Investigations						11/15/2023	
Conceptual Meeting w/ City					10/11/2023	12/1/2023	
Preliminary Design					10/1/2023	12/15/2023	
Preliminary Design Review					1/31/2024	2/28/2024	
Final Design					3/1/2024	4/1/2024	
Final Design Review					3/31/2024	4/15/2024	
Bidding					4/30/2024	5/15/2024	
Grant Award					7/15/2024		
Construction Contract					8/1/2024	7/15/2024	
Preconstruction					8/15/2024	8/15/2024	
Construction Start				9/18/2023	9/1/2024	9/1/2024	
Construction Complete	9/1/2023		10/10/2023	12/2/2023	11/30/2024	11/15/2024	
Grant Closeout	11/15/2023	N/A	1/10/2024	1/15/2024	12/31/2024	12/15/2024	



Airport Strategy and Priority Discussion

Mission/Vision

- Airport will keep pace with the overall city development in terms of functionality, aesthetics, capacity and growth
- Airport will be developed and positioned as a city asset that has appeal to and inclusion of the broader community.
- Airport will be positioned as a premier GA airport with a strong passion for the history of aviation

Other thoughts:

Self sustaining

Economic engine

Gateway to Bentonville

Uniquely positioned vs surrounding airports

Stronger initiative on community engagement

Business hub

Priority ideas:

Next 6 lease infrastructure

Policies and standards

Fuel Farm

Resident and transient parking

Perimeter road

Perimeter fencing

412 corridor

Further growth on West side

Property acquisition