

City of Mt. Pleasant
Airport Advisory Board

Thursday, March 08, 2012

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Rousse H. Rousse, DPW Director, called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

Present: Jerry Elliot, MD (5:35 pm.), Donna Husted Kriss, Glen P. Irwin II,
Catherine Tilmann, and Mike Verleger

Staff: John Benzinger, Tammy Bow, Rousse H. Rousse, and
Todd Tarlton (7:11 pm.)

Others Present: Richard C. Evans, Mark Drumheller, and Adam Raycraft

II. Election of Officers

Rousse explained the process for the election of officers and duties of each officer.

Rousse asked for nominations for Chair.

Motion by Husted Kriss, support by Irwin, to elect Verleger as Chair. There were no other nominations.

Motion approved

Rousse asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

Motion by Husted Kriss, support by Verleger, to elect Tilmann as Vice Chair. There were no other nominations.

Motion approved

Rousse asked for nominations for Secretary.

Motion by Verleger, support by Irwin, to elect Husted Kriss as Secretary. There were no other nominations.

Motion approved

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Chairman Verleger, support by Husted Kriss, to approve agenda as listed.

Motion approved

Irwin requested the correct spelling of his name be used.

Benzinger requested Chairman Verleger review the nomination of officers for Elliot (5:35pm).

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion by Husted Kriss, support by Irwin, to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2012 regular meeting as submitted.

Motion approved

V. Airport Manager's Report

Benzinger explained about the inclement weather and snow removal during February and March (to date). Benzinger reported of two instances of braking action nil alerts at the airport due to inclement weather conditions and stated that between six to 15 flights could not use the airport due to the icy conditions. Benzinger explained to the Board that abrasive materials cannot be used on the runways for snow and ice control. Benzinger explained that sand can be used, but it creates a problem for turbo prop-type aircraft because the sand can be sucked into the engines. Benzinger explained that as a result of the inclement weather, a lot of money was used for snow removal. Benzinger further explained that the City's Street Department crew made repairs to the power broom and that he hopes it will last through the rest of 2012 without buying a new broom, since it is not scheduled for replacement until 2013.

Benzinger reported that a Cheyenne II struck and killed a deer at approximately 6:30 pm. on Monday, February 20, 2012. However, no injuries were sustained. Benzinger stated that he filed an incident report with the FAA and that the aircraft remains housed in the corporate hangar. Benzinger said he estimates the aircraft will remain housed at the airport for another month and the client is being charged an appropriate fee for housing. Benzinger stated that after the incident occurred, he asked the pilot to back taxi, but the pilot did not comply. Benzinger stated that the aircraft owner has submitted a claim with the insurance carrier. Husted Kriss commented that the FAA expressed their gratitude that no one was injured and that we were able to make accommodations for the pilot and crew.

Benzinger reported on the recent visit of Representative Ron Paul (R-TX) to the Central Michigan University Campus as part of his presidential campaign.

VI. Old Business

Review of Working Capital Report

Chairman Verleger asked Rouse to explain the December 2011 working capital report for the airport.

Rouse explained that there was little activity for the months of January and February 2012, which is why the Board was given the December 2011 report. Rouse described the category descriptions on the report and noted that fuel sales were down \$16,000.00 from 2010. Rouse further explained that the second page of the report lists the Tribal monies and working capital, and that Tribal monies are restricted use for certain projects. Rouse then described the unrestricted funds.

Discussion ensued.

Evans asked about the T-hangar rent and if the corporate hangar rent is reported separately. Benzinger explained that the corporate hangar rent is the rent received from transient aircraft use, not from the Fixed Based Operators (FBOs). Rouse stated that he will check with City Treasurer Mary Ann Kornexl to see if the hangar rent line item can be split to show both the income received from use by transient aircraft and the FBOs. Evans stated that it is important to distinguish between the two because it is important when planning the future direction of the airport and to indicate the trend in hangar usage.

Benzinger stated the airport lost about \$10,000.00 in revenue last year. Raycraft asked if the City kept past year's revenue history. Benzinger stated he did not know.

Husted Kriss asked the Board to add discussion regarding the Humane Animal Treatment Society's (HATS) event in May to the agenda.

Rouse asked the Board to enter this item for discussion under Miscellaneous on the meeting agenda.

VII. New Business

A. Mower Purchase

Chairman Verleger asked Benzinger to explain the proposed mower purchase.

Benzinger stated that the airport currently does not have a workable mower. Benzinger said that he has purchased a garden tractor in the past for use at the airport and that the problem with that is that it becomes City-owned, meaning it is used frequently by other departments, such as the Parks Department, and the excessive use wears out the equipment faster. Benzinger explained that he would like to purchase a zero-turn radius mower to remain at the airport for airport use, and that he has obtained three quotations for a new mower from Doug's Small Engine, TSC, and Home Depot. Benzinger explained he is focusing on purchasing a mower with fabricated steel welded decks, not stamped, for durability reasons. Benzinger said he would like to consult with Irwin after the meeting to discuss the different types of mower decks.

Benzinger informed the Board about the Tribe's progress in building a new high-end RV Park for motor homes only across the street from the airport that it is due to open in April or May. Benzinger informed the Board that there will probably be increased traffic at the airport due to the RV Park being across the street and he is concerned with the effectiveness of the airport's current security system. Benzinger said he met with Gilboe's to obtain recommendations for increased cameras in the area around the first few T-hangars and terminal building, especially the gate to the field. Benzinger stated the cost to upgrade the airport's security camera system would be approximately \$6,700.00 and also would include increased warning signage that the area is monitored. Benzinger reported that during Gilboe's review of the current security system, they noted a problem with the magnet closure on the security gate to the field.

Motion by Chairman Verleger, support by Irwin, to approve the purchase of a new mower.

Motion approved

B. Proposed 2013-2017 Airport Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Rousse informed the Board that the City is currently reviewing the 2013-2017 Capital Improvement Plan. Rousse stated that the CIP is based on the ALP that was approved by MDOT in November 2011, but that the ALP has been changed due to the number of procedural errors that it contained.

Irwin asked about the delay in funding the crosswind runway project until 2015. Rousse stated that projects can be moved up by two years as additional monies are found or other projects come in under budget.

Irwin asked about the Federal 90% funding for projects. Rousse explained that just recently changes have been made to the Federal funding requirements and that funding has decreased from 95% to 90%. Chairman Verleger questioned where the extra funds would come from if the runway project happens to exceed the budgeted amount. Benzinger explained that the State and Federal Governments could grant discretionary funds to be used if they feel the project is worthwhile.

Chairman Verleger asked for clarification regarding the utility vehicle purchase. Benzinger explained that one is necessary for airport use instead of using his own vehicle and fuel to perform maintenance duties and cleanup work that the existing snow plow cannot manage. Benzinger further explained that often he must wait for the City's Street Department crew or snow removal contractor to perform the cleanup work. Benzinger stated the utility vehicle would be permanently housed at the airport for airport use only.

Rousse stated that the City has submitted a Tribal 2% application for this item and that there are two opportunities to submit applications for Tribal 2% monies, one in the spring and one in the fall.

Tilman commented that she would like to see the utility vehicle purchased this fall as she sees a need for Benzinger to use it before the scheduled 2013 purchase date.

Evans asked for clarification regarding the method used to list projects on the CIP, since the Airport Advisory Board did not make any recommendations to Mead and Hunt, the airport consulting firm, and no input had been sought from the community. Rousse explained that City hired a consultant to meet with MDOT to create the Airport Layout Plan (ALP).

Husted Kriss noted that some of the projects overlap on the ALP. Benzinger replied that some projects are listed, but that the City follows the priorities recommended by State and Federal authorities. Benzinger stated that the projects can be moved up or back depending on funding.

Rousse explained that the ALP will be redone this year and that the projects listed on the CIP are derived from November 2011 ALP. Rouse further explained that the CIP is driven from ALP, but reiterated that the ALP is changing.

Rousse stated that he is looking for an endorsement from the Board regarding the purchase of the mower and additional security cameras so he can take the recommendation to the City Commission for approval.

Tilman stated she views the airport as excruciatingly important in improving the city, county and region.

Husted Kriss suggested the Board make a motion for purchase of additional security cameras, make sign improvements, and repairs to the fuel pump with the dollars allotted in the CIP.

Motion by Chairman Verleger, support by Irwin, to approve the airport signage improvements.

Motion approved

Motion by Chairman Verleger, support by Irwin, to purchase additional airport security cameras.

Motion approved

Motion by Chairman Verleger, support by Irwin, to adopt the airport CIP with the understanding that it is subject to change.

Motion approved

VIII. Miscellaneous

Rousse reported on the Humane Animal Treatment Society's (HATS) request to rent the corporate hangar for a fundraising event to be held May 19. Rousse reported that HATS will need to obtain written approval from all of the FBOs to move the aircraft out of the hangar so they can use the corporate hangar. Rousse stated that HATS would like to serve alcohol at the event and have sought approval from the State. Rousse stated that if the State approves the liquor licensing for the event, it is then forwarded to the Isabella County Sheriff for approval. Rousse said he has contacted Union Township for their input on any possible issues. Rousse stated that one of the concerns with having the event at the corporate hangar is parking. Rousse suggested that attendees will most likely need to park elsewhere and be shuttled to the event. Rousse stated that the HATS event may be similar to one held at the Harbor Springs, Michigan airport and the benefit of holding such an event is that the airport will receive a lot of positive exposure. Roger stated that HATS personnel would be at the airport on Friday, May 18 to set up for the event and clean up would take place on Sunday, May 20.

Husted Kriss asked if having alcohol at the event requires approval from the Federal Aviation Administration. Benzinger replied that if HATS is able to obtain a State liquor permit, then they do not need approval from the FAA.

Benzinger stated he does not approve of having the event in the corporate hangar due to concerns about the location and liability to FBO aircraft, aircraft engines, etc. Chairman Verleger asked if planes were expected to be on display at the event. Benzinger replied yes.

Chairman Verleger suggested that HATS uses tents for the event. Benzinger said HATS is explicit in their desire to use the corporate hangar. Benzinger further stated that the City and the aircraft must be indemnified for the event.

Chairman Verleger asked how involved the airport manager would be at the event. Rouse stated that he will ask HATS to attend next Airport Board meeting to answer questions and address concerns. Rouse also stated that final approval of the event has not yet been granted.

Husted Kriss stated she was able to have 4-5 students perform community service at the airport over a weekend to thoroughly clean the entire terminal building, including shampooing the carpets.

Husted Kriss stated she submitted a Comprehensive Economic Development grant pre-application to the East Michigan Council of Governments in Saginaw for the construction of a 120' x 120' x 30' new corporate hangar to attract and retain more jets.

Husted Kriss informed the Board that she attended a two day airport executive conference in Lansing. Husted Kriss asked if there would be interest in a holding a one day or two day boot camp for Board members and interested parties to learn more about what is involved with running the airport. Husted Kriss asked if meeting once a month is enough, considering our involvement with Mead and Hunt, the airport consultant.

Discussion ensued.

Irwin suggested the Board hold a special work session to discuss the HATS event and noted the next Board meeting in April may be too late to grant approval of the event.

Rouse stated that he can send the Board email updates when he hears from the HATS representative.

Husted Kriss stated she has been in contact with the Tribe to see if they would be willing to send a liaison to attend future Airport Board meetings.

Husted Kriss asked Board members to solicit letters of support for future grant writing purposes.

Husted Kriss stated she will create an agenda for a potential boot camp.

IX. Public Comment

Chairman Verleger opened the Public Comment.

Raycraft stated that he is very concerned about the having the HATS event in the corporate hangar. Raycraft asked if the aircraft will be roped off so no one can access them. Raycraft stated that the shuttle driver needs to be a pilot and if not, would need to be educated because there is a protocol to driving on runways. Raycraft further stated he would attend event.

Raycraft expressed his displeasure that he was not consulted by Dan Otto, airport consultant, and stated that the fences and the gate motors do not work below 45°. Raycraft asked if it is possible to obtain copy of Dan Otto's report.

Benzinger stated that he has only the first version of the report.

Raycraft stated that he would like to see the airport purchase a heavy industrial mower and utility vehicle to perform airport maintenance and that it would be highly valuable piece of equipment to have.

Chairman Verleger asked about the static display at the Alma airport air show this year. Raycraft replied that there will be many volunteers walking around supervising the aircraft, although they will not be roped off.

Husted Kriss stated she met with the president of the Airport Pilots Association at the conference in Lansing. Husted Kriss said that the APA president can help with an airport open house to promote the airport.

Husted Kriss informed the Board about a good deed performed by Benzinger by preventing a new pilot from flying his ice covered aircraft and that by doing so probably saved the pilot's life.

Chairman Verleger requested the contact numbers and email addresses of the Airport Board members be forwarded to him so that he may contact Board members as needed. Staff agreed to forward the information to him.

There being no one else who wished to address the Board, the Public Comment was closed.

X. Adjournment

Motion by Husted Kriss, support by Irwin, to adjourn.

Motion approved

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.