

AIRPORT COMMITTEE

Time and Place: Tuesday, September 10th, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at the Wausau Downtown Airport Terminal Conference Room

Members Present: Mohr, Abitz, Mielke, Gehrt, Nagle, Prehn

Members Excused: Kellbach

Others Present: John Chmiel, Airport Manager, Tara Alfonso, Assistant City Attorney, MaryAnne Groat, Finance Director, James Campbell, Phil Binkly

In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and copy sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner.

Chairman Nagle called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Alfonso requested that agenda items 3 and 4 be discussed first since she had another appointment. The committee agreed. Chmiel stated the airport manager report could be discussed last.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of July 22, 2014 were reviewed and placed on file. Mohr moved to approve the committee minutes as submitted, second by Prehn. Motion approved 5-0

Discussion and Possible Action on Sale of Rick Coe, Mike Witzeling and William Holm Hangar to Glenn Burt III (including approval of new ground lease to Burt and approval of termination of current ground lease with Coe, Witzeling and Holm)

Alfonso explained that although the airport committee had approved the hangar land lease transfer from Coe to Burt at the last airport committee meeting, the process is a bit more complicated than that. Alfonso stated that not only must the lease be executed under Dr. Burt's name, but Mr. Coe's lease must also be terminated. Alfonso presented the airport committee with copies of a new Airport Ground Lease for Glen B. Burt III and copies of a Termination of Airport Ground Lease for Rick Coe, Mike Witzeling and William Holm. The sale must next be approved by the finance and finally City Council. Mohr made a motion to approve the new ground lease for Mr. Glenn B. Burt III and approval of the termination of current ground lease with Coe, Witzeling and Holm. Gehrt second. Motion approved 5-0.

Discussion and Possible Action on Duck Hunter Proposal for Shoreline Clean-Up and Posting Outside Airport Perimeter Fence

Chmiel explained to the committee that annually duck hunters approach airport management to ask permission to duck hunt adjacent to airport property on Lake Wausau. Chmiel stated that he supports bird hunting along the perimeter of the airport because it keeps the bird population down around the airport airspace. Bird strikes are a danger at any airport, but because Lake Wausau makes up a large portion of the airport border and 3 different runway approach/departure paths go over water, controlling the bird population is important to aviation safety. Chmiel also stated that he likes to know who is hunting along airport property so that they are aware of how they should conduct themselves while hunting birds near landing and departing aircraft. While discussing the airport agenda with Alfonso prior to the airport committee meeting, Alfonso stated that Chmiel should investigate whether any hunting could take place near the airport since the City of Wausau has an ordinance prohibiting the discharge of a firearm within the City limits. Chmiel's discussion with appropriate police personnel revealed that Alfonso was correct. But, maps showing the limits of the City line indicate that the area where hunters who have coordinated with Chmiel to hunt is located outside of the City limits and therefore the ordinance. The blinds are located in the water along the shoreline just north of the seaplane base. James Campbell and Phil Binkly are the only 2 hunters who Chmiel has discussed bird hunting with near the airport during the 2014 season. James Campbell stated that he had seen other hunters who had set up a blind 100 yards north of his blind who claimed to have airport management permission to hunt. Chmiel stated that he had not spoken with any other hunters this year. Alfonso reminded Chmiel that wasn't really giving permission to hunt since it wasn't on airport property. Nagle questioned how the hunters were gaining access to their blind. Campbell and Binkly stated that they accessed their blind by boat but that the other hunters were walking on airport property to gain access to their blind. Abitz recommended that signs be posted for no hunting and no trespassing. Prehn disagreed by saying that although the shoreline is airport property it is outside the airport perimeter fence. He questioned whether signs really needed to be erected for no trespassing and no hunting. Alfonso stated that hunting is already prohibited within the City. Mohr suggested that all that was necessary was a sign stating "No Hunting on City Property" on the property line outside the fence between Radtke Point Park and airport property and North Central Healthcare and the airport property.

Jim Campbell and Phil Binkly stated that they appreciated the ability to hunt adjacent to airport property. For the seasons that they have been allowed to hunt they have noticed a large amount of garbage and brush accumulating along the shoreline. Campbell/Binkly proposed that in their appreciation for hunting they would like to volunteer to help the airport by cleaning up the waste along the shoreline.

Prehn made a motion to approve the clean-up proposal by Campbell/Binkly and that signs be posted outside the fence adjacent to Radtke Point Park and North Central Healthcare stating “No Hunting on City Property”. Mohr second. Motion approved 5-0.

Airport Budget Review - Groat

Groat explained the Airport Budget Report through August 2014; and the report was placed on file. Groat stated that the area of the budget which was not meeting projections was the cost of facilities maintenance at the airport. This included costly improvements to corporate hangar #4 to prevent accumulated ice on the roof from falling onto people and vehicles 35 feet below. No action taken. See copy on file.

Discussion and Possible Action on 2015 Airport Operating Budget

Chmiel presented the proposed 2015 Airport Operating Budget to the committee. Chmiel asked the committee to review the budget and asked their recommendations for any improvements. Chmiel stated that maintenance accounts for different buildings would be combined into one account in 2015 vs. 2014. He also stated that this was the only part of the budget that could be modified to meet the Mayor’s recommendation for a 1% reduction for 2015. Prehn asked about the recent history of the airport budget. Groat explained that the airport had become an enterprise fund in 2013. For the last 3 years the airport has had difficulty with maintenance at the airport. There was a problem with the tractor and broom in 2013 along with major hangar door maintenance on the corporate hangars. Vehicle and buildings maintenance have been the biggest culprits but considering the age of equipment these costs are generally unavoidable. The annual shortfall has been approximately \$20,000 annually.

Prehn stated that considering what the airport provides to the community, the tax levy is more than reasonable. Many communities do not have an airport that is as usable or used as Wausau. Gehrt reiterated that operating budgets only consider revenues vs. expenditures, not economic impact. Gehrt reminded the committee that the most recent economic impact study at the Wausau Airport (conducted by the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics indicated that the Wausau Airport provided close to \$2,000,000 of economic impact to Wausau and the surrounding communities. And that is a study which is over 10 years old.

Prehn made a motion that rather than decreasing the facilities maintenance account by 1% that this account should be increased from \$38,000 to \$58,000. Mohr second. Motion approved 5-0.

Discussion and Possible Action on Approval of \$8000 Fund Transfer to Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics to Initiate Design of “East Hangar Development Area”

Chmiel stated that a formal recommendation by the committee was required to transfer \$8000 at the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics to initiate the East Hangar Development plan which was approved at the July 2014 airport committee meeting. Although the concept of the East Hangar Development area had been approved, official transfer of the funds was not.

Prehn made a motion to approve the transfer of \$8000 to the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics to be used for planning and design of the East Hangar Development Area. Mohr second. Motion approved 5-0. Chmiel explained this would go on to Finance committee and City Council for approval.

Discuss T-hangar Rental Rate Adjustment 2015

Chmiel reminded the airport committee that last year’s hangar rent increase was approved but that the motion included a provision requiring the airport committee to consider T-hangar rate adjustments on an annual basis. While planning the operating budget for 2015 it would be appropriate to consider that decision now. Chmiel stated that based on the reaction of airport tenants last year he felt it might not be in the best interest of the airport to raise rates in 2015.

Prehn disagreed and although as an airport tenant he did not want to see hangar rental rates increase, he felt it may be right thing to do. Considering that utilities cost increase regularly but that frozen rental revenues don’t make up for this increased cost of operations. Also the T-hangars are aging just like all the other facilities on the airport. As a T-hangar tenant he would rather see a small increase annually rather than a double digit percentage increase every five years. Prehn recommended a 2% increase. Chmiel proposed an increase that matched CPI. Groat stated that projected CPI for 2015 was estimated to be between 1%-2%.

Prehn made a motion to have Chmiel inform the airport tenants by letter that T-hangar rental rates are proposed to increase by 1.5% and that tenants could attend the next meeting for comment. Mohr second. Motion approved 5-0. Chmiel explained that a letter would be sent prior to the next airport committee meeting in November.

Airport Manager’s Report – Chmiel

Chmiel explained the Airport Manager’s Report for September 2014; and the report was placed on file. See copy on file.

Mielke moved to adjourn the meeting, second by Mohr. Motion carried unanimously and meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by John P. Chmiel, Airport Manager