

AIRPORT COMMITTEE

Time and Place: Wednesday, January 14th, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. at the Wausau Downtown Airport Terminal Conference Room

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

Members Excused: none

Others Present: John Chmiel, Airport Manager, Tara Alfonso, Assistant City Attorney, MaryAnne Groat, Finance Director, Dr. Glenn Burt

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.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

Chmiel stated that he wanted the committee to confirm his recollection of the minutes. The minutes of November 12th, 2014 were reviewed and modified. Mohr moved to approve the edited version of the draft airport committee minutes, second by Mielke. Motion approved 7-0. Abitz requested that taping the airport committee meetings and having the City Clerk disseminate the minutes should be on the agenda for the next meeting. The City is currently reviewing its meeting recording policy and the airport committee may not have a choice in the matter after new policy is set.

Airport Manager's Report – Chmiel

Chmiel explained the Airport Manager's Report for January 2015; and the report was placed on file. See copy on file. Nagle and the airport committee extended thank you to EAA 640 for the help and support this summer during the AirVenture Cup Race visit to the Wausau Downtown Airport.

Airport Budget Review - Groat

Groat explained a verbal summary of the Airport Budget Report through December 2015. Groat reiterated that the area of the budget which was not meeting projections was the cost of facilities maintenance at the airport. She also stated that the airport committee's recommendation to increase the enterprise fund for the airport by \$20,000 had been modified to \$10,000. No further action taken.

Discussion And Possible Action on Request To Operate FAA Medical Exam Service from Private Hangar – Burt/Abitz

Abitz stated that Dr. Burt approached her regarding the opportunity of providing FAA medical examinations at the Wausau Downtown Airport. Dr. Burt had stated to her that he had researched existing space availability at the airport to provide this service and that according to the airport manager, no space at the airport is currently available to rent for this service. Dr. Burt proposed to Abitz that he be allowed to perform this service from his private hangar. She approached Alfonso at the City Attorney's office to research whether the airport could entertain Dr. Burt's proposal.

Alfonso spoke with Hal Davis from the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics (BOA) to determine if allowing the service on the airport would violate BOA or FAA assurances tied to FAA funding. Mr. Davis stated that allowing an FAA medical service to operate from a private hangar at the airport was not a non-aeronautical activity and therefore the BOA would not recommend against it. Bill Hebert from the Wausau Inspections Department stated if the airport committee approved Dr. Burt's request, Dr. Burt would need to file a conditional use permit application with the inspections department because the airport is zoned R2. A public hearing is part of the permitting process. Answers about frequency of use, location description, office requirement, licensing, parking questions would be part of the application process.

Dr. Burt stated that the FAA is not opposed to locating a business of this type at an airport. He stated that the FAA cannot restrict his practice of medicine. Dr. Burt stated that he is the only FAA Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) located in the Wausau area, and he is one of the few AMEs in the area who is also a pilot. His practice is currently authorized to provide 1st, 2nd, and 3rd class medical exams. He performed 58 FAA physicals last year or approximately 4.5 per month. This would be unique in the industry and once word gets out he hoped it would increase traffic at the airport and possibly increase fuel business for the FBO too. Dr. Burt stated that it would not be financially feasible to build a single purpose facility on another location on the airport since the number of projected medicals would not pay for such an investment. If not allowed to provide this service at the Wausau Airport he would probably discontinue providing this service.

Chmiel stated that he was not opposed to Dr. Burt's business proposal, but he was opposed to Dr. Burt's proposed location for the business. Chmiel reminded the committee that the current land lease for private hangar construction prohibits operating a commercial business from a hangar at the airport. Allowing Dr. Burt to perform this service would be similar to allow an auto repair facility from their home. There are currently no office space vacancies available in the FBO/terminal facility or office space located in corporate #4. Chmiel had recommended that possibly Dr. Burt would consider modifying office space which is currently leased to the Civil Air Patrol for his medical practice. Dr. Burt stated that it would require too costly an investment

to bring up to code and medical standards. Chmiel agreed it could be positive for the airport. Chmiel recommended that if the committee should approve modification of the airport lease that this change would also require a modification to the FAA Minimum Standards Ordinance for the Wausau Airport since a business such as Dr. Burt is proposing is not addressed in the ordinance. Chmiel stated that questions such as hours of operations, number of employees, insurance requirement, office square footage, parking requirements, etc. would be described within the ordinance. This ordinance is required by the FAA for federal funding of airport projects. Its purpose is to establish a minimum standard for each service provided at an FAA funded airport.

Nagle stated that a “home occupation exception” might apply in this case to allow the committee to modify the land lease for private hangars.

Gehrt questioned why locate the service at the airport. Dr. Burt stated that he has closed his private practice and is semi retiring. Because of his love of aviation and close relationship with the pilots in the area he hopes to continue providing FAA physical in the area. He hoped that frequency will increase if he allowed to practice from his hangar at the airport since pilots will be able to fly in for their exams. Gehrt agreed that it would be an advantage for the airport and local pilots but probably not a money maker for Dr. Burt.

Prehn stated that he felt Dr. Burt be allowed to perform FAA physicals out of his hangar at the airport. It is a service that is needed in the area and would be a benefit to the airport.

Mohr stated that he was against Dr. Burt’s proposal. Mohr stated that he is a hangar owner and aircraft owner in the same row with Dr. Burt. The amount of automobile traffic that park on the taxiway outside of Dr. Burt’s hangar is already large. The amount of salt that is deposited on the taxiway is a hazard to aircraft that have to taxi through it. Salt is corrosive to aircraft structures. Mohr stated that when he built his hangar in the location that it is in, he did it because it would NOT be a commercial business area (according to the land lease). Automobile traffic on the taxiway may even increase further if this is approved. Mohr reminded the committee that they should consider insurance requirements for this type of operation, restricting the operation to only FAA physicals, and whether the office facility requirements for this operation could even be approved by the City inspections department. Mohr stated asked how it will affect the security plan at the airport. Burt customers who are not airport tenants should not be given an access code or allowed to drive onto airport property and park on the taxiway. Mohr also recommended that the City receive compensation for allowing a commercial operation on the airport, possibly a monthly fee or a percentage of flight physical income.

Chmiel stated that if the committee does approved Dr. Burt’s proposal that he would recommend that Burt customers who drove to the airport only be allowed to park in the parking lot outside the fence and that Dr. Burt escort his customers from the pedestrian fence behind his hangar to his hangar facility. This would prevent a modification of airport security plans at the airport.

Prehn made a motion to approve Dr. Burt's request to perform FAA physicals from his hangar. Mielke 2nd. Motion passed 6-1.

Chmiel stated that the next step was for conditional use permit process with the inspections department and planning commission. A public hearing will be necessary. Mohr recommended that notices for the public hearing also be sent to all the airport tenants in addition to the normal local property owners. Modifications to the land lease allowing Dr. Burt to perform FAA physical examinations from his hangar facility will also have to be approved by the finance committee. Ultimately City Council approval will also be requirement. The modification of the airport minimum standards ordinance describing an FAA physical exam facility at the airport will be on the next airport committee meeting agenda. This ordinance modification will also have to be approved by City Council.

Discussion and Possible Action on Boy Scout Troop 465 Request For Storage Shed Location on Airport Property – Jerry Kronschnabel

Mr. Kronschnabel was unable to attend so no action was taken. Chmiel briefly described the troop request to the committee. The Boy Scout Troop sponsored by Wausau Flying Service, Inc. requires a storage area for some of their equipment. There currently is no such area available at the airport. The troop is proposing that they be allowed to place a secure movable yard storage building onto airport property. Chmiel stated that he was not opposed to the concept, but that the only appropriate location be outside the airport security fence. Mr. Kronschnabel will attend the next meeting to provide a description of a specific storage building and a map showing proposed locations for the facility.

Mohr moved to adjourn the meeting, second by Kellbach. Motion carried unanimously and meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by John P. Chmiel, Airport Manager