



Bentonville Municipal Airport  
Advisory Board Meeting  
Thursday, August 5, 2021 @ 3:00 pm  
*Virtual Webinar via Zoom*

MINUTES

Call to Order - Dr. Richard Ham, Chairman

Dr. Ham opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present: Debbie Griffin, Dennis Cherry, Lisa Kelley, Mark Slaughter, Mike Frost, Richard Ham, and Robin Fields/Maverick, and Beverly Shepherd, Admin. Asst.

Others Present: Bradley J. Tidwell, Cameron McAhren, Chad Cox, Chris Maestri, Kevin Boydston, Nicholas Clabbers, Sarah Wilbanks, Mayor Stephanie Orman, Quintin Hilburn, and Will Gunselman.

Old Business

1. Approval of Minutes from July 1, 2021

Mark Slaughter made a motion to approve the Minutes from the last meeting. Lisa Kelley gave a second. Motion approve.

2. Robin Fields and "Maverick"

*A. Updates on Geese Control and Progress of Maverick*

Robin and Maverick appeared before the committee via Zoom. Robin said that July had been very slow, and said it was probably the slowest month they have had since they began. He said that he and Maverick had been going to the parks and chasing geese. Robin had noticed many geese at the distribution centers just a little west of the airport. He counted about a 100 birds. This seems to be where the resident geese are hanging out. He said that Maverick is doing well and showing some maturity. He is very happy with his performance. No other discussion.

3. Updates and Discussions Re:

*A. Hangar Access for Public Use – Report of Sub-Committee Members*

Dr. Ham recognized Lisa Kelley to speak about the hangar access for public use. She said she would like the sub-committee to meet again and they decided to meet on Thursday, August 25, 2021 at 1:00 pm. She also requested to have a representative there at the meeting to assist them as to what the FAA would and would not allow. Debbie Griffin said she could make that date and would be there. She also will send out the notification for this meeting.

Mark Slaughter said he was willing to help with this sub-committee, and Lisa said that anyone was welcome to attend.

#### *B. Dirt Removal – Dennis Birge*

Debbie Griffin said that Dennis Birge would not be attending today, but she said that they are working with one person on the dirt removal and they have a Right of Entry with him. This person wants to move the dirt, but he is having a problem securing dump trucks because of all the construction in the area. However, they are working with him on this. They also contacted another person that Lisa Kelley had contact with, but he wanted us to pay them \$150.00 a load to haul the dirt out. They will check first with the first man and see what happens there.

#### *C. Self-Fueling Station – Will Gunselman*

They asked Rebel Services to come out and do a fuel farm analysis before we got in too deep in asking for a grant for a self-fueling system. Their findings were that the system flow rate is too low, jet offloading problems, filtration does not cover flow rate, the cat walk is not OSHA compliant, the jet tank does not have floating suction, and due to the age of the tank the liner is deteriorating. Rebel Services recommends the installation of new tanks and equipment due to the condition of the current fuel farm. He recommends we do something sooner than later. Will said they received a quote from Rebel for bigger tanks. We would increase from 10,000 gallon to 15,000 gallon. Will said he would be happy to go over numbers with the board members. A rough estimate cost for two bigger tanks, the expansion of the retaining area, and the self-serve station would be \$565,000.00. The board asked questions and discussed options. Debbie Griffin said they would continue to monitor the system, and consider options for funding. She will also talk to Dennis Birge about this.

#### 4. Military Aircraft Loan Update - *Mark Slaughter*

Mark Slaughter gave the board an update of the military aircraft loan and shared a map of the area he thinks might be good to install the plane. The dimensions are roughly 90' x 150'. He also showed a picture of an F4 plane that he found that could be an option for a plane to install here. He explained that the Navy and Air Force both require an email or letter on City letterhead from the Airport Manager to get a loan package sent to us. We would fill this out and send back in and then be evaluated and approved or denied. Mike Frost thanked Mark for his exploring the idea and doing the legwork to even get started, but noted that we are just on a fact-finding mission right now, and this is not a "done deal". Debbie Griffin said she would work with Mark Slaughter on drafting that letter.

### **New Business**

#### 1. Engineering and Construction, *Chris Maestri - Garver Engineers*

##### *A. Update on Current Projects*

Chris Maestri appeared and gave us an update on the current airport projects.

#### East Taxiway Extension

This project is moving along well. They are still excavating and installing B Stone for the parallel portion. It is anticipated that the start of the displacement will begin the first of next month and will be in conjunction with the start of the Runway Extension Project. The contractor is looking at a 90 day threshold displacement with the addition of 600' of runway. They should move to the north about a week after that.

#### Tunnel

Chris said he shows the tunnel displacement starting about December 1, 2021, but the actual construction should start about the first of November. This displacement should be about seventy-five (75) days.

## 2. City of Bentonville Updates – *Debbie Griffin - Director of Administration*

### A. *ARFF Firetruck Update*

Debbie introduced Deputy Chief Kevin Boydston and Battalion Chief Justin Scantlin that were with us via Zoom to tell us about the recent \$800,000.00 grant donation from Steuart Walton's Foundation that has allowed us to purchase an Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting vehicle. Deputy Chief Boydston explained that they have noticed increased activity at the airport, and with the increased activity come more risks for fires and emergencies that might be involved at an airport. He said they have ordered *ARFF Truck – 820* that is uniquely and specifically designed for use at airports. Deputy Boydston gave a short Powerpoint presentation to show us how it functions. He mentioned that this vehicle was rather a tribute to Louise Thaden, as evidenced by the graphics and information on the truck, such as NR15815, which was Louise Thaden's tail number and 820 which was her License number. The vehicle holds 1000 gallons of water and 500 pounds of dry chemicals. It will take special training for the firefighters to be able to operate the truck, but Deputy Chief Boydston reported that they already employ five (5) firefighters that have been trained on this type of vehicle. As of right now, it is scheduled to deliver in the fall of 2022. It will be housed at Fire Station #6, which is very close to the airport. Chad Cox said that the FBO welcomes the collaboration with Station #6 and this vehicle.

### B. *Minimum Standards Discussion*

Debbie Griffin introduced two attorneys visiting with us regarding the Minimum Standards discussions. They are Nicholas Clabbers and Sarah Wilbanks. Mr. Clabbers will be working on the Through the Fence issue, and Ms. Wilbanks will be working on the Lease Agreement issue, and both will be providing guidance for us as we move forward to work these issues out. Camille Thompson has worked with them in the past and felt like this was a good time to bring them on board. They have been provided the necessary documents and history regarding these two items. Right now, they have just taken a preliminary look at the documents and have no advice for us. They spoke to us briefly via Zoom and are hopeful they will have more information for us as soon as next month. Dr. Ham said that we could call a special meeting if we needed to discuss new information. Lisa Kelley asked that they have some time prior to the special meeting to go over any documents they might be sent to us before the next meeting. Debbie said that she could make that happen. Also, the FAA is aware these two attorneys are working with us.

### C. *Beta Charging Station Updates*

Debbie Griffin said that the item of the Beta Charging Station did go before City Council and is approved. She said the language that Lisa Kelley requested be changed was updated and the agreement has been executed. Ms. Griffin reported that the UP Summit has been postponed until the spring, but they are moving ahead with the installation of the charging station in September.

Ms. Griffin also notified the Board that Ex Officio member and Councilwoman, Aubrey Patterson, resigned her position on the Airport Advisory Board. Her replacement is Councilman Chris Sooter. He was not in attendance today. Ms. Griffin mentioned to the Board that if they wanted to entertain moving the meetings to a different time, that we could do that. There was no discussion at this time.

## 3. Airport Updates from the Field – FBO, Flight School - *Chad Cox*

Chad Cox appeared before the Board with his report. He began with fuel sales. In July of 2021 they sold 22,000 gallons. This was up significantly from July of 2020 at 15,000 gallons. In August at the Fieldhouse, Chad said they will be rotating through a Corsair, a P-51, and a Spitfire, for those that might be interested. He said that he and Debbie Griffin have been getting requests on what it would take to build a hangar at the airport. He said that most people don't understand the whole process, such as that it is on leased ground, that there airport design standards, and that there are grant assurances that prohibit anything outside of aeronautical activity to take place. So, in working with Ms. Griffin and Adam White, they are going to have a meeting 2:00 pm, here in the conference room and give people the facts about what all is involved with the building of hangars, etc. They have about fourteen people scheduled at this time. If you have others that you know of that would like to attend, they are welcome.

Chad mentioned that the restaurant staff have been and will probably continue to wear masks at this time, and they encourage others to do so, as well. Osage Park is having a Grand Opening event on August 28, 2021. And, he recommended a book on Louise Thaden, her life and accomplishments. It is entitled, "High, Wide, and Frightened". He said it is very well written.

Lisa Kelley requested that Chad let them know the outcome of the meeting tomorrow.

It was asked of the Board members if they wanted to move the meeting time. After discussion, Mike Frost made a motion to leave the meeting time at 3:00 pm. Second by Dennis Cherry. Motion passed.

Dennis Cherry told the board he will be out of pocket from August 25, 2021 to October 1, 2021 and would miss the September meeting.

### Additional Items Not on the Agenda

#### Quinton Hilburn

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Quintin Hilburn appeared before the Board and wanted to speak. He said he was here eighty-five (85) days after his first meeting with us trying to discern where we are at in the process and where we are at with his lease. He said they are currently under contract with engineers and architects, and spending money on the project. He states that he has gotten no feedback from us. He said that he has done everything step by step, as laid out, and he has gotten nothing. He wants information.

Dr. Ham tried to explain to him where we were at in the process, and Mr. Hilburn stated that we have not followed the process since 2008, as it is written and laid out. Dr. Ham said that as soon as it came to our attention that there was a difference in our practice and process, we have been trying to rectify it and do it the right way. He continued that we have hired experts in these matters to help us expedite this matter as fast as we can. Dr. Ham said that the Board and staff realize that Mr. Hilburn has been waiting for this for a while, but that we will expedite it as much as we can.

Mr. Hilburn asked about the possibility of a Letter of Intent. He said that it is done in leases all over the country that allows both parties to continue on. He said we could fix our administrative issues and we could move on down the road. Dr. Ham told him that Mr. Hilburn had heard the last time it was the Board's sense that we hadn't done things right, and so, we would need to make it right. He said we could ask our attorneys about the Letter of Intent. Mr. Hilburn said that they had asked for one.

At this point Camille Thompson asked to speak. She wanted to clarify that the process was followed when Mike Bender was in charge. To clarify further, she thinks the policy has been *not* to do Letters of Intent. She does not think those are spelled out anywhere in the Minimum Standards, nor has that been the practice. She said she had looked at previous minutes, and it was not something that we did.

Dr. Ham said that the only thing we can assure Mr. Hilburn of at the present is that we are trying to do this right by everybody. He told Mr. Hilburn that they understand how he is affected, and that we are trying to do this as fast as we can. He said we want to make sure it is right.

Mr. Hilburn said that he can appreciate the fact that we want to get it right, but to go back to Camille's comment, they were involved in this in 2016. They had a lease, they put a check in, and he said that Mr. Bender was involved. He said the process wasn't followed at all. He said that then they were told then that Chuck was the new regime, and they spent two months negotiating a lease. Now, he said, we are told the policy is wrong. Now we have a new regime, and we have gotten no feedback. He said, *"As a citizen, it's ridiculous. As a person trying to open a business at your airport, it's restrictive. So, that's my piece"*. Dr. Ham explained his side again and said that City Council sent the lease back to us and we are trying to get it right before we send it back through again.

Mr. Hilburn asked about the verbal agreement or verbal offer that was quoted out by the Mayor in the city council meeting. He wanted to know how that played in this? Ms. Griffin was not sure what he was talking about.

Mr. Hilburn said it was in the minutes.

Mayor Orman spoke at this time and Ms. Griffin to clarify to Mr. Hilburn that there was no verbal offer made. Ms. Griffin told Mr. Hilburn that yes, there was no verbal offer made by Mayor Orman. Ms. Griffin told Mr. Hilburn that Mayor Orman was on the Zoom call, and that she did not what he was referring to as a “verbal offer” and that she didn’t think that Dr. Ham knows either. She explained to Mr. Hilburn that we sent the lease to City Council, and it was pulled and sent back to the Board because of some information that had been found. She continues that City Council had sent the lease back to the Airport Advisory Board and that was why we now have contracted experts to give us an opinion so that we can make sure that we do things right. They are FAA national legal experts, and so we need to do our due diligence to make sure we get it correct. Mr. Hilburn asked if we are dealing with an administrative thing that we are working through to get to the contract? He wanted to know if that is what he is hearing. Ms. Griffin said we need to hear from our counsel, and, that when that happens, we will be following the grant assurance, our policies and practices, and what’s written as well. Mr. Hilburn asked if we were moving forward. Ms. Griffin responded that she did not think we could answer any questions hypothetically. She said that until we get the legal advice from the attorneys we have contracted with and have brought our options back to the Board and advised them, we could then move forward.

Mayor Orman said she would like some clarification from Mr. Hilburn if he thought that a verbal offer was made. She asked that he please clarify what was said, because a verbal offer was not made.....that did not happen. Mr. Hilburn responded that maybe it was a misunderstanding, but there was a statement made that there was another verbal offer for this site. He said it that was the case that it was concerning, “but if it’s not, it’s not”. Ms. Griffin again said that she did not know to what he was referring.

**Chad Cox (not verbatim)**

Chad said that he wanted his statement in the minutes. He offered that maybe this goes with what Mr. Hilburn was saying. In February, March, April, Mr. Cox said he came to the Board following the current and established Minimum Standards and that he called the previous Airport Manager and advised everyone that we were going through the process to get to large scale and that’s what was put out there to the public. He said that was the process that he was following. I just want to make sure that also goes in the minutes, because there have been several hangars that have been built out here and we have followed that process, and I didn’t move to town until 2013. I just wanted to make that statement.

**Bradley J. Tidwell (not verbatim)**

There is a lot of talk about wanting to do this right. I am talking in reference to the hangars. Again, we’ve been working since 2016, and you know in a time where some of us gave checks. The city accepted them, so I’m not a lawyer....I know a couple of you guys are, but in my mind that’s offer and acceptance, but you guys gave back the checks and that’s fine, but we’ve not made any traction in the past 5 or 6 years. So, again another example of we’ve hearing that we want to do things right, but not really seeing you know, the action behind it, so I just want that made known in the minutes.

Dr. Ham expressed that he understands the frustration, but the Board is taking what we have now, and we are going to do everything we can to get things straightened out.

Mr. Tidwell spoke again (Not verbatim). Yeah, and I also want to point out that many of you have mentioned that hey, we want to make hangar space available to the average flyer, not necessarily the corporate flyers, and that’s exactly what I am. If I go back to 2016 when I got my original estimate for building my hangar, outside of dirt work, we’re talking about \$200,000.00. Now we’re talking about 6% of \$100,000.00. And Chad, *(unable to understand)*, and I don’t think the Board has been sensitive to this matter.....that you are choking out individuals that want to buy hangars *(unable to understand)* for past 6 or 7 years. And I’m not alone in that thinking and the finance proves that. That’s all.

Dr. Ham said that we would be working on this as quickly as they can get it through the process. Mr. Tidwell said that he asks that we start working on it quickly. Dr. Ham assured him that we are.

### Craig Soos (not verbatim)

Mr. Craig Soos spoke and thanked the Advisory Board and said he appreciates their hard work on this. He said he had some similar concerns. He said he has been on that list and had his check returned. He also has a signed piece of paper from Chuck (Chadwick) that says where I am going to be on the schematic....extremely advanced conversations. He said he can appreciate everyone talking about doing it right, but there's also doing it fair. Doing it right is a really important part, but doing it fair is equally as important. He said that he shares some of the frustrations a lot of people do in the sense that we're being left behind. He said if we are squeezing out the people that really do want to use this for recreation, like myself, one can make that argument. He said that they just really want to get to it. They want to understand what they are up against, and for the city to pay close attention to helping them get those hangars done in the most fair manner we can. He said that he doesn't really honestly think we are going to get it perfect. He said they've built a lot of hangars out there and people seem to just skate on by to the right candidate, and we have been in line and he feels like he is a fair candidate to put a hangar out there. He said he just wants to make sure he is treated in the same way the previous group has been treated, and he thinks precedent can also make things right as well.

Ms. Griffin said that is part of what she wants to talk about with the group tomorrow, but also says that it is not as easy as just building hangar. There is infrastructure, sewer, water...there's about a million dollar investment just to get infrastructure to put the first six in. Plus we have dirt removal. So, there's some work that has to be done and funding that has to be made in order to move that forward. So, there are some other circumstances, and I've met with Mr. Tidwell, but would be very happy to meet and discuss with any of you who would like to meet with me personally, but it's not as easy as can I rent a space and put in a hangar. It has to be protected with water, fire, sewer...all of that has to be considered too. So, we have infrastructure costs on the front side, and we have to look at the price tag, too, and the funding for that, and those are some of the discussions that we need to have. She explained to Mr. Soos that she is committed to having those conversations with him so that he understands what those costs look like outside of just putting in a hangar. Mr. Soos said that he was in full support and very cooperative, but wanted the Board to remember the people that have been working out there have passed on other areas on the other side, in lieu of this master plan to take place. A lot of these costs are not the same costs that we had. We didn't have a pile of dirt there. We didn't have the same costs with all the construction. Five years is a long time. We all sat there and went with the flow and we all believed something would be quite different. And now you waive around these million dollar or half-million dollar investments. They weren't that much back then. So, it is frustrating and we all face the same issues. The rising costs really put us in a difficult position.

Debbie again said that she understands and that she would be happy to discuss these things with him. Mr. Soos thanked her and said that they look forward to working with us. Ms. Griffin thanked him. He said he doesn't want this to become contentious and the sooner we get it done, the longer we'll have to enjoy those hangars, and as prices rise we won't have the same discussion.

Mayor Orman spoke again and wanted everyone to know that we are trying to get through this and put the fairest process in place that we can. She said that the deposits were returned because they we were told by Legal that we could not hold land, per the FAA. She will make sure in the discussion tomorrow to clarify this with everyone. She just wants everyone on the Zoom call to know that we are trying to do everything in the fairest and correct manner around the airport. She looks forward to the meeting tomorrow because of miscommunication. She said she was just now hearing some things that she had not heard before on this call. She apologized for that, but stated that we will work to get this straightened out and to treat everyone in a fair manner.

### Other Business

1. Schedule AAB Meeting for September, 2021

*Proposed Meeting Day: Thursday, September 2, 2021 @ 3:00 pm*

This meeting date and time was approved by the Board earlier in the meeting.

2. Motion to Adjourn

Lisa Kelley made a motion to adjourn and Mike Frost gave a second. Motion passed.

## AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD ATTENDANCE LIST

DATE: 08-05-21

| NAME                       | AFFILITATION                         | PRESENT | ABSENT |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Beverly Shepherd           | Administrative Assistant - AAB       | ✓       |        |
| Chris Sooter               | Ex Officio Board Member              |         |        |
| Dan Weese                  | Bentonville City Engineer            |         |        |
| Debbie Griffin             | Director of Administration - Airport | ✓       |        |
| Dennis Birge               | Bentonville Transportation Director  |         | ✓      |
| Dennis Cherry              | Board Member - AAB                   | ✓       |        |
| Lisa Kelley                | Board Member - AAB                   | ✓       |        |
| Mark Slaughter             | Board Member - AAB                   | ✓       |        |
| Mike Frost                 | Vice-Chairman - AAB                  | ✓       |        |
| Richard Ham                | Chairman - AAB                       | ✓       |        |
|                            |                                      |         |        |
|                            |                                      |         |        |
| <b>MISC. ATTENDEES:</b>    |                                      |         |        |
| Adam White                 | Garver                               |         |        |
| Adam Young                 |                                      |         |        |
| Bradley J. Tidwell         |                                      | ✓       |        |
| Brian Baldwin              |                                      |         |        |
| Chad Cox                   | Bentonville Airport Manager          | ✓       |        |
| Chris Maestri              | Garver                               | ✓       |        |
| Chris Townsley             |                                      |         |        |
| Craig Gourley              |                                      |         |        |
| Craig Soos                 |                                      |         |        |
| Dan Weese                  | City Engineer - Bentonville          |         |        |
| Dave Burris                |                                      |         |        |
| Dave Powell                |                                      |         |        |
| Eric Haskel                |                                      |         |        |
| Gary Loftus/Kathy Franklin | FAA                                  |         |        |
| Mayor Stephanie Orman      | City of Bentonville                  | ✓       |        |
| Mayor's Assistant          | City of Bentonville                  |         |        |
| Michael Ames               | Blue Crane                           |         |        |
| Mike Jones                 | Democrat-Gazette                     |         |        |
| Quintin Hilburn            | Potential Lessee                     |         |        |
| Ramsay Ball                |                                      |         |        |
| Robin Fields & Maverick    | City Goose Dog Handler & Goose Dog   | ✓       |        |
| Tanner Freeman             | (With Quintin Hilburn)               |         |        |
| Will Gunselman             | Summit Aviation                      | ✓       |        |
| Kevin Boydston             | Fire Dept.                           |         |        |
| Camron Wahren              |                                      |         |        |
| Nicholas Clabbers          |                                      |         |        |
| Sarah Wilbanks             |                                      |         |        |
|                            |                                      |         |        |
|                            |                                      |         |        |