

City of Winsted
Winsted Municipal Airport Commission Meeting
Winsted City Hall – Council Chambers
Tuesday, February 12, 2013
8:30 a.m.

Airport Commission Members Present: Michelle Baird
Kevin Kubasch
Glenn Weibel
George Schulenberg (Council Liaison)

Staff Present: Brad Martens, City Administrator
Dave Meyer, Maintenance Supervisor
Amanda Zeidler, Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk

1) Call the Meeting to Order

Kevin Kubasch, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2) Approval of Minutes

Michelle Baird made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2012 Airport Commission Meeting. Glenn Weibel seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

3) Financial Report

Brad Martens, City Administrator, reviewed the 2012 and 2013 Airport budgets. The Airport Commission discussed the 2012 and 2013 Airport budgets.

4) Staff Report

Dave Meyer, Maintenance Supervisor, reported on the following:

- Several items have been accomplished since the last Airport Commission meeting.
- Received a call from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). They had a lengthy conversation and asked the Public Works Department to repair several items at the Airport.
- Fixed several lights on the runway.
- Removed snow from the runway and taxiways a few times.
- On January 8, 2013, there was an individual on the runway pulling an I-beam around. Meyer spoke with the FAA and a representative from the FAA informed him that absolutely no one should be on the runway except for the Public Works Department. Meyer added that this guideline will be enforced, and hangar owners should not be on the runway. If there are any issues with the runway, the hangar owners should contact the Public Works Department.

Weibel stated that he has received several compliments regarding the snow removal at the Airport and added that he was asked to pass the comments on to the Public Works staff. Weibel asked if members of the Airport Commission are allowed to check the lights on the runway. Baird stated that any person on the runway must drive a vehicle with a light and a sign on the vehicle, as well as a radio to communicate with air traffic. Weibel asked Martens if he could type a letter to post at the Airport, reiterating the runway guidelines, and regarding the fact that habits will need to change, stating that there is no one allowed on the runway except for Public Works. Martens stated that the process should also be stated regarding lights or repairs for the runway, and to let Public Works know if there are any necessary repairs. Weibel reminded Meyer that the runway can be closed to a certain weight of aircraft when the ground is soft in the spring, rather than closing the runway completely.

Meyer stated that he installed a sign on the gate between the parking area and hangar area at the Airport that states "Close Your Flight Plan". Weibel stated that normally a sign with that wording is placed on the ramp side of the Arrival/Departure (A/D) building for transient pilots. Kubasch made a recommendation to purchase a second sign to be installed on the ramp side of the A/D building. Meyer stated that he has received fewer phone calls asking if a pilot has closed the flight plan at the Airport since the sign has been installed.

Martens commended Meyer for the work that he has done at the Airport since Russ Paschke managed the Airport. Martens stated that he has done an excellent job of taking care of the Airport. Kubasch added that he has also received some compliments in regards to snow removal at the Airport.

5) No Old Business.

6) New Business

Kubasch welcomed the new City Council Liaison, George Schulenberg, to the Airport Commission meeting.

a) Airport Commission Responsibilities

Martens stated that in November, 2012, the City Council adopted a new ordinance establishing advisory commissions as well as the rules and procedures that stipulate how they should operate. Martens reviewed the new ordinance with the Airport Commission, as well as the duties and responsibilities of the commission that are outlined in the ordinance.

Weibel asked if the Airport Commission has the ability to eliminate safety concerns if a safety issue arises at the Airport. Martens stated that all safety concerns should be reported to Martens or Meyer and they will let the Airport Commissioner know if it is a safety issue that can be dealt with. Martens stated that in order for the City to address any issues or concerns, there is a need to have ordinances and policies established.

b) City Administrator Report

Martens stated that a lot of activity has taken place since the Airport commission has taken a hiatus. Martens reported on the following:

- The City Council adopted a new five (5) year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the Airport after receiving feedback from the hangar owners. The new plan changes direction from paving the runway to rehabilitating the turf, which is significantly less expensive. Martens stated that according to his communication with the FAA and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Office of Aeronautics, the opportunity for a paved runway still exists for the Winsted Municipal Airport.
- Commercial Operator Fees for the Winsted Municipal Airport were established by resolution. This sets a fair and consistent method of charging those who operate a commercial business out of the airport. It is based on actual fees incurred in the previous year, or for new businesses it is based on an agreed upon estimate.
- A new agreement was approved for Winstock to utilize the land south of the existing hangars for camping. The amount increased to \$1,500 for 2013. The amount was \$1,000 in 2012.
- A new fee for late payment of ten dollars (\$10) per month was created for individuals paying their hangar leases late.
- The fuel surcharge fee was increased to sixty cents (\$0.60) per gallon, from fifty cents (\$0.50) per gallon.
- A Commercial Operation Agreement was approved between the City of Winsted and Joe Johnson, Westside Skydivers. The agreement increased fees as well as insurance requirements. Mr. Johnson has not signed the agreement. The agreement includes all of the same terms that took place at the end of 2012, with the exception of much higher insurance requirements.
- A Commercial Operation Agreement was approved between the City of Winsted and Darrin Mason for the operation of a flight instruction business.
- A Commercial Operation Agreement was approved between the City of Winsted and Rod Ibis for the operation of a plane sales business.
- The City of Winsted committed funds toward the paving of the Luce Line State Trail adjacent to the Airport. The City is currently having conversations with MnDOT Aeronautics and the FAA, because if the trail is paved, the alignment of the trail may have to be adjusted to adhere to Airport guidelines.

Kubasch asked for a timeline regarding the adoption of the five (5) year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Martens reviewed the CIP that was approved by the City Council. Martens stated that one item on the list includes lighting replacement and possible turf rehabilitation on the runway for 2014. Martens stated that this is a list that is manageable.

The Airport Commission discussed airport zoning as part of the CIP. Kubasch asked if the City Council is in support of updating the Airport zoning ordinance. Weibel mentioned that the City Council is entertaining the possibility of expanding the industrial park, and added that the Airport zoning ordinance will have to be updated before the expansion can take place. Martens stated that the Airport zoning is tied together with the industrial park expansion, and will be a part of the feasibility study for a new Industrial park. Baird stated that airport zoning is a very important aspect to airport funding.

Schulenberg asked if the Airport Commission would support the solicitation of a new skydiving operation if Joe Johnson does not sign the agreement with the City of Winsted for his operation. Weibel stated that he does not believe that anyone is opposed to commercial development at the Winsted Municipal Airport. Kubasch suggested that the City send out a Request for Proposals (RFP) to attract other businesses to the Airport. He added that this option will put the City in control of what is acceptable, and it could be beneficial for both parties. Kubasch stated that he believes that it is the Airport Commission's job to make sure that the Airport can operate within its own budget. Kubasch stated that the contract with Westside Skydivers is still on the table, and it is up to Johnson to sign the contract.

Martens stated that if the Airport Commission would like the City Council to establish a deadline for offering the contract to Westside Skydivers he could bring that to the City Council's attention. Weibel stated that he believes that the City is due the professional courtesy of accepting the contract or not, while still allowing ample time for Joe Johnson to make that decision.

Weibel made a motion to recommend that the City Council terminate the agreement offer to Westside Skydivers if it is not signed by April 1, 2013. The motion was withdrawn by Weibel, in light of the fact that there is no proration in the contract.

The Airport Commission discussed the possibility of establishing a deadline to sign the contract between Westside Skydivers and the City of Winsted.

Weibel made a motion to recommend that the City Council consider attaching an expiration date to terminate the agreement offer to Westside Skydivers if the agreement has not been signed. Baird seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

c) Sign Ordinance

Martens stated that the Planning Commission is currently reviewing draft replacement language for the City's Sign Ordinance. He added that within this draft language is a section related to signs at the Winsted Municipal Airport. Martens made a request for the Airport Commission to review the language and provide any comments to bring back to the Planning Commission.

Martens stated that as it is drafted right now, there is one portion of the ordinance that states that "signs placed on municipal property, other than official signs for City of Chamber of Commerce use and signs located in the A Airport District as regulated by section 1501.023, letter J, number 3b of this chapter."

Martens reviewed the following language, which has been proposed in regards to Airport signage:

Airport signs.

- 1) The number of freestanding wall, canopy or marquee signs shall be limited to one (1) per tenant space and one (1) freestanding sign located on airport property.
- 2) The tenant's business shall be located on municipal airport property.
- 3) The freestanding wall, canopy or marquee sign(s) shall be located only on the exterior wall of the tenant space to which the sign permit is issued, but is (are) not required to face a public street.
- 4) Each sign shall be limited to the maximum sign size permitted in section 1501.023, letter J, number 3a of this chapter.

Martens stated that the proposed language would allow for one (1) free-standing sign at the Airport. Martens stated that if the City would want to erect a monument sign at the entrance to the Airport, in which tenants could advertise their businesses, there would be one (1) sign allowed for all of the Airport public property and condenses it to one (1) sign location.

Martens stated that the maximum sign size is basically limited to twenty percent (20%) of the hangar façade. Overall, the ordinance would allow for one (1) monument sign for the entire Airport at the entrance to the Airport, and each tenant would be allowed to have a sign on their hangar as well. Marten's asked the Airport Commission if the tenant signs should have certain restrictions. Baird stated that it should be a business sign. Martens stated that he could check to see if there is a way to regulate so only businesses can have a sign versus allowing the general public to have a sign on the hangar.

The Airport Commission discussed allowing novelty signs at the Airport. Martens made a recommendation to allow commercial operators to have a sign for their business and then add another small section to the ordinance regarding novelty signs. Baird asked if hangar owners or business owners would be required to complete a sign permit application prior to installing signs at the Airport. Martens stated that a permit would be required for any sign placement at the Airport.

The Airport Commission discussed the possibility of allowing existing signs to be grandfathered in. Kubasch stated that he does not want the ordinance to cause any issues for commercial operators, and he does not believe that the general airport public will be an issue. Weibel stated that one single airport sign, and then allowing airport businesses to install signs below the main sign, seems to be the trend at other airports.

The Airport Commission discussed options for signage on individual hangars, including existing signs and replacement signs. Baird agrees with allowing one sign at the entrance to the Airport, and then allow room for airport businesses to place a sign below the main sign. Baird added that she also agrees that anyone can place a sign on their hangar as long as the sign meets all of the requirements, since they are paying a lease for their hangar. The sign should look nice and meet the requirements of the ordinance.

Martens informed the Airport Commission that the Planning Commission will review the sign ordinance one (1) more time, and then the proposed ordinance will be passed on to the Winsted Area Chamber of Commerce for review, since the ordinance is an important business issue. Martens reiterated that the proposed ordinance would remain the same, and there will be more time to discuss the ordinance at the March, 2013 Airport Commission meeting, if needed.

7) Other Business

Weibel stated that the previous Airport Commission held quarterly meetings at the Airport in order to keep the tenants up to speed. Kubasch stated that he agrees with keeping the hangar community informed and made a recommendation to conduct meetings at the Airport two (2) times a year. Kubasch added that there tends to be a decline in attendance if there are more than two (2) meetings held at the Airport during the year. Weibel agreed with the recommendation, and asked if the minutes of the Airport Commission meetings could be posted at the Airport. Weibel made a recommendation to conduct the meetings in April and October. Martens stated that he would take the recommendation as direction to staff.

8) Adjournment

Weibel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Baird seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Brad Martens

Brad Martens,
City Administrator
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Amanda J. Zeidler

Amanda J. Zeidler,
Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk
City of Winsted