

City of Winsted
Winsted Municipal Airport Commission Meeting
Winsted Municipal Airport – Hangar #31
Tuesday, January 10, 2012
6:30 p.m.

Airport Commission Members Present: Joe Johnson
 Kevin Kubasch
 Russ Paschke
 Glenn Weibel
 Dave Mochinski (Council Liaison)

Staff Present: Brad Martens, City Administrator
 Amanda Zeidler, Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk

1) Call the Meeting to Order

Russ Paschke, Airport Commission Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2) Approval of Minutes

Kevin Kubasch asked for more information regarding the \$4,500 Airport Access Fee and asked why it is no longer incorporated in the 2012 Fee Schedule. Brad Martens, City Administrator, stated that the Airport Commission had made a recommendation to remove the Access Fee from the 2012 Fee Schedule at the December, 2012 Airport Commission meeting; however, the fee was approved by the City Council at the City Council meeting on January 3, 2012, and remains in effect.

Kubasch made a clarification regarding the origination of the Airport Access Fee. Kubasch explained that a runway improvement project was proposed, but never completed, so there were engineering fees that were not reimbursed by funding from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) because the project was not completed. He stated that the fee was implemented in 2008, and the thought was that the City of Winsted supply the funding to cover the engineering fees, and the new fee would help reduce the engineering fees that totaled approximately \$28,000.

Martens explained that the process for removing the fee was initiated to help spur the building of new hangars at the Winsted Municipal Airport.

Glenn Weibel made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2011 Airport Commission Meeting. Joe Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

3) Financial Report

Paschke asked the Airport Commission to review the financial report.

Kubasch asked for clarification regarding the airport fund and fuel sales. Martens stated that there are still some outstanding bills for 2011 and offered clarification regarding the airport fund and fuel sales and stated that without all of the bills being paid, the airport fund is operating with a positive balance.

4) Staff Report

Brad Martens, City Administrator, reported on the following:

- *2012 Airport Commission Appointments*
The City council approved appointments to the Airport Commission. Martens explained the composition of the Winsted Municipal Airport Commission. Kubasch stated that he had a comment regarding the composition of the Airport Commission. Kubasch stated the City ordinance states, "Absence from three (3) consecutive regular meetings without the formal consent of the Commission shall be deemed to constitute a resignation of a member." Kubasch added that consistency is a big part of being a Commission member.

- *Open Airport Commission Position*

Martens stated that the City of Winsted is looking for someone to join the commission as a member at-large. The person who is appointed to this position must be able to attend nearly all of the meetings. Martens stated that he is looking for a resume or letter of intent from anyone who is interested in filling the position by the end of January, 2012. He added that the Mayor selects the person for appointment to the Airport Commission, and the City council approves the appointment.

Kubasch asked when the definition of a hangar owner was discussed by the City Council. Martens stated that the current definition of a hangar owner was discussed at the January 3, 2012 City Council Meeting. Kubasch asked for some directive regarding the open position on the Airport Commission, and asked if Commissioner Johnson could be considered a member at-large. Martens stated that the council has defined Johnson to be a hangar owner and has appointed him as such. Tom Ollig, Councilmember, clarified that the City is looking for an Airport Commission member at-large to fill the open position.

- *2012 Fee Schedule*

Martens stated that the City Council approved the 2012 Fee Schedule at the January 3, 2012 City Council Meeting. He stated that the Airport Commission recommended a \$200 Specialized Aviation Service Operation (SASO) Fee, and the removal of the \$4,500 Access Fee. Martens stated that the SASA fee applies to Westside Skydivers, Mason Air, and any other commercial operator. Martens stated that the City Council approved the \$200 SASO fee, but they did not approve the removal of the \$4,500 Access Fee. He also added that there has been no change to the Improvement Fee. Martens stated that the City can charge a fee to self-fuel; however, the City Council decided not to move forward with a fee at this time.

- *Flight Instruction Agreement – Mason Air*

Martens stated that a Flight Instruction Agreement has been approved by the City Council; however, Darrin Mason, owner of Mason Air, has asked for more time to review the insurance requirements that are included in the agreement. He added that the City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding so Mason Air can operate until the City Council meeting on February 7, 2012.

- *Aircraft Dealer Agreement – Rod Ibis*

Martens stated that an Aircraft Dealer Agreement with Rod Ibis has been approved by the City Council.

5) Old Business

a) 2011 Airport Improvement Project Update

Martens gave an update regarding the 2011 Airport Improvement Projects. He stated that the Arrival/Departure (A/D) building is nearing completion. A building walk-through was held on Wednesday, January 4, 2012, which outlined the necessary items remaining for completion and is being forwarded to the contractor. Martens stated that the A/D building is currently unavailable for use until the additional work has been completed.

Martens stated that the contract states that the building must be “substantially completed” by December 31, 2011. He added that City staff has informed the contractor and architect that the City does not believe that substantial completion has been met. Martens stated that the contract also outlines that there are liquidated damages of \$500 for each calendar day that the work is not substantially complete. He added that there are several hoops to jump through to obtain the liquidated damages, so it is not clear if the City will be reimbursed for the liquidated damages.

Martens stated that finishing work will include a new conference table and a sign on the south exterior of the building. There is no funding available for the additional furniture; however, a hangar owner has offered to donate new furniture to the City for the new A/D building. Martens added that the City is incredibly fortunate to have such a donation offer. Martens stated that a key pad was installed at the entrance with a temporary code, and the contractor is hoping to move the computer system into the new building.

Martens stated that the wiring for the weather system was not included in the original design of the building, so there are plans to add the connection and additional wiring for the system, and the architect is asking the City to pay the amount it would have originally cost to have it installed, and the remaining cost will be covered by the architect. Weibel and Kubasch both commented that the architect is responsible for the mistake, and should be

paying the full amount for the repairs, since it was their responsibility to include the wiring in the original plans. Martens stated that since the City signed-off on the original plans, he does not know what action the City can take. Kubasch stated that the weather system was discussed at design meetings with the architect, so it should have been included in the original plans.

Martens stated that the next step for the improvement project is to agree upon the work that needs to be completed and for the contractor to complete that work. He added that there are some items, such as landscaping and additional brick work, that will need to be completed in the spring.

b) 2012 Airport Event

Weibel stated that it has been discussed among several individuals that the Winsted Municipal Airport used to have an annual event for the public, and it would be great to re-establish an annual event.

Tom Ollig was present to represent the Winsted 125th Anniversary Committee. Ollig stated that several events are being planned for Winsted's 125th Anniversary, and they will be held in conjunction with the Winsted Summer Festival in August, 2012. Ollig stated that years ago, there was an event held at the Winsted Airport each year, and there would be skydiving, and other special events. Ollig asked the Airport Commission and hangar owners if there is any desire to have an event at the Winsted Airport in 2012, because if there is interest, the event could be included and advertised with the other 125th Anniversary events. Ollig stated that the Winsted Summer Festival will be held August 10, 11, and 12, 2012, and recommended having the Airport Fly-In the weekend before, in order to tie in with the events of the 125th anniversary and not compete with the Winsted Summer Festival.

Weibel asked if there is any interest in hosting an event at the Winsted Municipal Airport. Martens stated that according to Kubasch, other airports are hosting fly-ins, but they are farther away and should not create any competition with the Winsted Fly-In. Ollig stated that it does not have to be a full-blown fly-in, but it could be another event at the Airport. Weibel stated that if something is going to be done, he would suggest holding the event on Saturday, August 4, 2012, and recommended holding a golf tournament in conjunction with the fly-in. Ollig stated that the committee is planning a 125th golf tournament, so it could be tied in with the fly-in, or not, either way is fine.

Paschke asked how soon the 125th Anniversary Committee would need to know if the event is going to take place. Ollig stated that he would like to know by June 1, 2012, in order to start advertising the events of the 125th anniversary. Weibel stated that a decision should be made in February, 2012, in order to advertise in the *Minnesota Flyer* magazine.

Kubasch asked Ollig about insurance requirements for a fly-in at the Airport. Ollig stated that if the event is held in conjunction with the Summer Festival and 125th Anniversary, the Winsted Summer Festival Committee is a committee of the City, so the event should fall under the City's insurance policy. After some discussion regarding the insurance options and requirements, Martens stated that he would research the insurance options and requirements. Kubasch asked who would receive revenue from the fly-in. Ollig stated that all of the revenue would go to the Airport, or a group at the Airport. Mochinski stated that if they have a group set-up at the Airport, such as a pilot association, the group would have to supply its own insurance for the event, and would not be covered under the Summer Festival Committee, or the City's insurance policy.

Weibel asked the audience if there is any interest in forming a pilot association at the Winsted Airport. Weibel stated that it could be informal, and the group could do an occasional project or event. Weibel stated that most of the airports that he has traveled to have a local pilot association. Weibel informed the pilots and hangar owners that he would be willing to help start an association, and asked them to contact him if they are interested.

6) New Business

a) Open Forum

Paschke and Weibel asked for feedback from the pilots and hangar owners.

Dave Hanus, hangar owner, asked what the Airport Access fee is. Martens stated that the Access Fee is charged when a person constructs a new hangar at the airport, and added that it is a one-time fee that goes directly into the airport fund. Hanus asked if the Access Fee and Improvement Fee are both used to fund airport maintenance. Martens explained that the Improvement Fee is used for capital improvements and is used to fund city's five percent (5%) share of federal funding for capital improvement projects. Kubasch clarified that the Access Fee is deposited in the general fund for the Airport.

Hanus asked if the Airport Commission is looking into paving the airport runway in the future. Weibel stated that for the long-term economic development of the airport and the surrounding area, it would be beneficial to pave the runway. Weibel stated that there are people, such as the area legislators, and government committees who are ready to get involved and support the project. Weibel stated that he would like to see a hard surface runway as well as an adjacent turf runway.

Martens stated that there is currently a five (5) year capital improvement program that is in effect and it does address moving forward with the pavement of the runway. Martens stated that the FAA will not support having both a hard surface and a turf runway that are adjacent to each other. Johnson stated that it is his understanding that the City of Winsted would have to resign from the federal funding program, and then use funding from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDot) Aeronautics with only fifty percent (50%) funding. Weibel suggested constructing a hard surface runway with federal funding, then getting out of the federal funding program and using funding from MN Dot Aeronautics to construct an adjacent turf runway two (2) years later. Johnson stated that the City must abide by FAA regulations if it accepts federal funding for a project, and if the City should leave the federal funding program and pursue funding from the State of Minnesota to build a turf runway, it is his understanding that the City would be responsible to reimburse the federal funding that was used to build the hard surface runway, since the FAA does not support having both types of runways.

Martens stated that constructing a hard surface runway is a large project that involves land acquisition, and moving roads and power lines. Hanus stated that he is concerned about who would be paying for a hard surface runway. He is also concerned about whether or not the Airport would have to be closed, or if the pilots would still be able to utilize a portion of the Airport. Johnson stated that he fully supports leaving the federal funding program, and utilizing fifty percent (50%) funding from MNDot Aeronautics, so the Airport can remain open. Martens stated that one of the items on the City's work plan for 2012 is to determine if the City is going to move forward with the construction of a hard surface runway, or not.

Hanus asked if there is any possibility of getting wireless internet at the Airport. Martens stated that it is a possibility and could be explored. There was discussion as to what type of equipment could be used and where some of the equipment could be placed at the Airport.

Burt Ackerman, hangar owner, asked if it would be possible to get some black dirt and dormant grass seed placed on the runway since the winter weather has been mild, so new grass will grow in the spring. Johnson stated that there needs to be a maintenance program established to regulate the proper maintenance of turf runways, and also consider rehabilitating the runway. Johnson stated that the City can utilize a maintenance program that has been developed by the University of Minnesota. Hanus stated that there is an opportunity to close half of the runway because it is so wide, in order to repair it, and allow pilots to continue flying. He stated that something needs to be done to rehabilitate the runway. Kubasch stated that the crown of the runway needs to be rebuilt and maintained. Johnson stated that lowering the outside edges of the runway, rather than bringing in new materials would help to rebuild the crown on the runway. Johnson stated that construction of a hard surface runway is still at least five (5) years out.

Jay Ferrell, pilot and airport user, asked where the University of Minnesota study regarding the maintenance of turf runways can be found. Johnson stated that the study is available on the internet. Martens stated that he could get the information and forward it to the Airport Commission to discuss at a future meeting.

Rick Stodola, hangar owner, asked what protocols will be implemented regarding the use of the runway in the spring. He stated that the majority of the runway is black dirt, it is being used in the spring, and it is tearing up the runway. Martens stated that there is a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) that is used for soft conditions. He added that the plan is to use the NOTAMs and stick to them. Martens stated that City staff will have to stay on top of the runway conditions and stick to the NOTAMs that are issued. Stodola stated that the condition of the runway will have to be monitored on a daily basis. Kubasch stated that a process has been established at City Hall and the City

Council has appointed Russ Paschke, Airport Commission Chairperson, and Dave Meyer, Public Works Lead, to be in charge of issuing NOTAMs. Martens stated that there are also pilots who do not follow the NOTAMs and continue to fly, even if there is a NOTAM stating that the Airport is closed. Martens stated that he has considered implementing an administrative fee for pilots who are in violation of a NOTAM that has been issued. Stodola stated that there can be a lot of damage done to the runway in a short amount of time. Johnson stated that he does not want to have the runway closed for a long period of time and does not want to make the same mistakes and affect the condition of the runway. Johnson stated that he is willing to use a Cessna 182 instead of a caravan airplane to operate his business when the runway conditions are soft. Johnson stated that a regular maintenance program should be followed to fix and maintain the runway.

Stodola asked who will be in charge of monitoring the conditions of the runway. Martens stated that he; Paschke; Meyer; Jamie Stotko, Public Works Lead; John Schlechter, Public Works; and Deb Boelter, City Clerk-Treasurer, are all authorized to issue NOTAMs for the Airport. Stodola stated that Johnson will have to work with the rest of the pilots to maintain a decent runway. Weibel stated that the conditions of the runway will be monitored closely in the future.

Ferrell asked when the last time the runway was seeded with grass and maintained. Paschke stated that a fertilizer and grass mixture was applied to the runway approximately five (5) years ago. Weibel asked if the improvement fees that are paid by the hangar owners could be used to purchase grass seed and supplies to rehabilitate the runway. Mochinski stated that the improvement fee was established to utilize federal funding. Kubasch stated that the \$200 Improvement Fee is currently placed in a separate account and used for a five percent (5%) match with ninety-five percent (95%) funding from the FAA; however, the fee sunsets in 2013, and if the Winsted Airport is not doing any large, federally funded projects, the fee can be designated to a different fund or project.

Stodola inquired about parking regulations for the parking lot that is adjacent to the A/D building. Stodola stated that he is concerned about maintaining a fire lane in case of an emergency. Stodola stated that a lane should be clearly marked as a fire lane. Weibel stated that until the parking area is marked and painted, Johnson should ask his customers to keep a lane open in the parking lot to be used as a fire lane. Stodola stated that an area should be marked off with cones or markings. Martens stated that the Public Works Department may have cones available to mark a fire lane.

Kubasch asked if the striping plan for the parking lot could be reviewed before it is completed. Martens stated that a parking plan has been reviewed and approved by the Airport Commission, so there is a plan on hand. Weibel asked if Johnson's proposed hangar will require any changes for parking plan. Martens stated that there is no issue with Johnson's hangar, because the site plan has not been approved at this time, and any parking spaces that are used due to the construction of the hangar are required to be relocated and replaced.

Stodola asked if the restrooms in the new A/D building will be available for the skydivers to use, or if they need to find their own restrooms. Martens stated that this item would need to be discussed when a formal use policy is drafted for the A/D building.

Hanus asked if there will continue to be key pad access to the A/D building. Martens stated that key pad access will continue and it will be given a permanent security code.

Weibel asked if the Airport Commission will have a say in the furniture that is selected for the new A/D building. Stodola stated that Dave Millerbernd is donating furniture for the new A/D building, and they discussed purchasing a couch, chair and coffee table, as well as the conference table and chairs for the building. The conference table must be bolted to the floor in order to receive federal funding from the FAA.

b) Young Eagle Day/New Eagle Program

This item was discussed with an earlier agenda item. Weibel added that he has access to two (2) items that can be used at events and fly-ins that will help the public to understand more about aviation and flying.

c) NOTAM Review

This item was discussed with an earlier agenda item.

d) Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson Election

Martens stated that the ordinance that establishes the Winsted Airport Commission states that the Commission shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from among its members. He stated that no term limit is established for these positions; however, an annual election should take place. Martens asked the members of the Airport Commission to nominate and vote on a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2012.

The Airport Commission members nominated Russ Paschke for Chairperson and Kevin Kubasch for Vice Chairperson of the Airport Commission. A motion was made and carried 4-0.

7) Other Business

- a) Weibel introduced Michelle Baird, a candidate for the open Airport Commission position. He stated that she has an extensive education and background in aviation and would be a good fit for the Airport Commission. Baird stated that she is a resident of Winsted Township and shared some information about herself. Kubasch asked if Martens has everything that is needed from Ms. Baird to be considered for the Airport Commission. Martens stated that he does have the information needed from Baird; however, he will accept résumés or letters of intent until the end of January, 2012, for anyone who is interested in the position. Martens added that it is up to the Mayor to select a candidate and the City Council to appoint the candidate to the Airport Commission.
- b) Martens stated that he would like to create a formal use policy for the A/D building at the February, 2012 Airport Commission Meeting.

8) Adjournment

Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Weibel seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Brad Martens

Brad Martens,
City Administrator
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Amanda J. Zeidler

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