

**CITY OF MERRILL
AIRPORT COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024 MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING MERRILL AIRPORT TERMINAL 6:00 PM**

I. Call to Order:

- 1. Voting Members: Gary Schwartz (Chairman), Lyle Banser, Joseph Malsack, Gary Schulz, Mark Weix Jr. (Alderman) - Roll Call:**
Present: Schwartz, Schulz, Alderperson Weix Jr., Malsack, Banser
Public Present: Mark Gracykowski BOA, Larry Wenning, Craig Hanig

II. Consider approving minutes from the previous meeting: January 17, 2024: Malsack made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2024 meeting. Alderperson Weix Jr. seconded and the motion carried.

III. Approval of Vouchers - budget discussion: Schulz made a motion to pay the vouchers. Malsack seconded and the motion carried.

IV. General Agenda Items for Consideration:

- 1. Runway 16/34 Project Status** - Chairman Schwartz reported no changes but has been talking with staff from two Senators and three House members. In talks with these staffers, there was some surprise about the issue of crosswind runway approval, and people expressed interest in the issue. They are also planning to contact more Senate offices, including Maria Cantwell, the Senate Transportation Committee Chairperson. Many organizations are involved. AOPA (Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association), EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association), WAMA (Wisconsin Airport Managers Association), and others are involved and talking about the crosswind runway issue.
- 2. Discussion/Decision Fuel Farm Maintenance** - Chairman Schwartz explained the expenditure for fuel hoses to replace outdated hoses on 100LL and Jet A pumps. The was previously approved.
- 3. Jet A Fuel Truck** - There may be some interest in our fuel truck from other airports, which will be followed up on.
- 4. STOL Competition at Merrill** - Malsack spoke to personnel at the four airports that have hosted the STOL (Short Take Off and Landing) Competition. They reported it was hard to break even on the two-day event. Several people from Merrill will attend the 2024 STOL events to evaluate the feasibility of the event in 2024.
- 5. Update F-84 Monument** - Nothing new with the grant from the Air National Guard yet.
- 6. Airport General Maintenance** -

- a. **Acquire used box snow blade for our tractor** - Checking used snow blade equipment. Brush cutting is about over for the spring and it looks good along 16/34. Also, we discussed the upcoming replacement of the large tractor, the possibility of a compact tractor, and the time of the tractor purchase.
- b. **AWOS** - No report
- c. **Beacon** - No report

V. Chairman's Report:

- 1. **Master Plan** - Chairman Schwartz reported that the Master Plan is being worked on. The next update is at March's meeting.
- 2. **Economic Impact Study Aviation** - Aviation is producing the study. They are using different criteria to determine what operations are being counted for the Economic Impact Study.
- 3. **Maintenance Hangar** - Chair Schwartz is working to get the funding for projects done ASAP to try to get an earlier start on the Maintenance Hangar. Chair Schwartz, thanked the Mayor for his help in this regard. We are hoping to start the Maintenance Hangar construction in late 2024. Mark Gracykowski came to the meeting from the BOA (Bureau of Aeronautics) and explained the process of prioritizing projects around the airport and how entitlements can be combined over several years for big projects and will have the flexibility to change to other projects when they are approved. Discussed AWOS (Automated Weather Observation System) and will do some checking into the age of AWOS components to determine whether they can be replaced at a later date. Also, we discussed the delay in correcting the approximate 4-degree error in the alignment of the system. The FAA has asked Merrill to correct it numerous times.
- 4. **Balloon Fest** - Chair Schwartz reported the City was contacted about possibly hosting the Balloon Fest in Merrill. It was determined that the area around the airport was not preferred by the Balloon Fest promoters (too many trees in the Merrill area). The start-up cost was high, so Balloon Fest will not be in Merrill. Chair Schwartz also reported that 100LL is getting down to the point that we could buy a full load of fuel. It is a good point with current pricing to keep selling fuel in Merrill at a competitive price.

VI. Aviation Happenings: deferred to the March meeting

VII. Public Comment: There was no public comment

VIII. Agenda Items for Next Meeting:

IX. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00 PM:

- X. Adjournment:** Malsack made a motion to adjourn. Alderperson Weix Jr. seconded and the motion carried.
Minutes prepared by Lyle Baner and published by City Clerk Anderson-Malm