

City of Merrill
Airport Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 17, 2019
Merrill Airport Terminal

Members Present: Gary Schwartz (Chairman), Joe Malsack, Gary Schulz, Lyle Banser, Steve Osness (Alderman)

Public Present: Steve Krueger, Larry Wenning, Anthony Kromire (Cameraman)

1. Call to Order – Meeting called to order by Chairman Schwartz at 7:00PM.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 20, 2019 – Minutes from March 20th meeting read. Motion for approval by Osness; second by Banser. All ayes. Motion carried.
3. Approval of Vouchers – Vouchers reviewed and initialed. Motion by Banser to pay vouchers; second by Osness All ayes. Motion carried.
4. Runway 16/34 Project Status – Chairman Schwartz reported there was no progress. FAA is wavering on whether to use operation numbers reported for 16/34 or a more stringent (unable to use 07/25 because of cross wind). FAA is stalling the project
5. FAA Petition for 16/34 – Will remain on Agenda until 16/34 Project approval.
6. Airport Day 2019 – Airport Day is September 7. Malsack reported he submitted ads to numerous publications to promote Merrill Airport Day. AOPA was also suggested to add to the list.
7. Entitlement Grant Projects – Chairman Schwartz reported there was a question on entitlement that was borrowed from Tomahawk. Will know by next meeting.

Schwartz recommended we list priorities for Entitlement use if 16/34 Project doesn't happen soon enough.

Discussed AWOS System and problems we are experiencing.

Schulz made motion to use Entitlement funds to upgrade and buy new equipment necessary to bring AWOS (Automated Weather Observation System) up to new standards; second by Osness. All ayes. Motion carried.

Airport Manager McCullough suggested we look for a new or newer snow plow truck. Also, a SRE (snow removal equipment) building and a cover roof for the fuel truck so it doesn't deteriorate in the sun, snow and rain.

Wenning also suggested additional tie downs at the new terminal/fuel farm area.

8. New AWOS System – Will be updated due to motion made in Agenda Item No. 7.
9. Manager's Report – Manager McCullough reported he visited the High School CAD Design Class. The students are designing a plan to build a glider with an 8' wingspan. McCullough offered to have the students tour the Airport and see what is available at the Merrill Airport.

Schulz reported on a related item: Howell, MI is starting a two-year program for high school students with the goal of interesting new, young, private pilots with the hope that some may move on to become commercial pilots and, hopefully, reduce U.S. pilot shortage and have a great career.

Schulz reported on another related item: Merrill High School has a Fab Lab (fabrication laboratory). They have some state-of-the-art equipment, including a 3D printer in use.

McCullough also reported the lightning project should be done soon. A question was raised on the electrical wiring at the North Gate where frost is heaving a post-up. He will check with Per Mar for a fix or will splice some slack into the wires

10. Airport General Maintenance –

T-Hangar Issues – Water issues are on hold until we consult with City Engineer for opinion. Door repairs on T-hangar units will start soon; being done by McCullough and crew.

Lightning Suppression Project Status/Fiber Optic – McCullough reported Per Mar will finish hookup when conduit is installed; when conditions improve.

Fuel System Update – Is working properly and item will be removed from Agenda.

Updated Plow for Chevy – McCullough reported an agreement to swap our 8' 2" plow with the City's 11' 3" plow. This will benefit both parties.

11. Chairman's Report – Schwartz reported he had recently been contacted about NTC expansion project which will be on the Agenda for May Meeting.
12. Aviation Happenings – Schulz reported on a passenger jet that rolled after takeoff and touched a wing down but was able to complete a go-around and land safely. The pilot

reported that the roll was not because of his input. An investigation is underway. Schulz also reported on a Swiss designed, completely autonomous drone that has three cameras onboard – a thermal, infrared and daylight. It also has facial recognition capabilities and is promoted to be perfect for search and rescue. Technology is moving forward rapidly.

Boeing has come up with a fix for the 737 Max 8 and 9 dealing with the pitch function software.

Also discussed how many fewer pilots are being turned out compared to years ago and how it has caused the current pilot shortage.

13. Public Comment – Krueger reported that he had information on a new fuel to replace 100LL fuel called Swift. Showed an informational video extolling the benefits of the new fuel. It will be added to the May Agenda.
14. Agenda Items for Next Meeting –
 - Garages for snowplow and FBO residence
 - Discussion of Swift fuel
 - Roof repair/replacement on FBO Hangar
 - Discussion of City land for NTC expansion
15. Adjournment – Motion by Malsack to adjourn; second by Osness. All ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Lyle Banser