

Minutes Merrill Airport Commission

Wednesday November 16, 2022

Present: Joe Malsack, Gary Schwartz, Lyle Banser via phone, Rich McCullough (Airport Manager), Mark Weix Jr (Alderman). Also present: Larry Wenning, Bev Schulz, and Draco Fink (Cameraman).

1. Gary Schwartz called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. October 2022 minutes were reviewed. Item 8 correction found for Kraig spelling wrong. Joe M. made a motion to approve the minutes, Mark W. seconded. Motion passed.
3. Vouchers were passed around and discussed. Joe M. made a motion to approve paying the vouchers, Lyle B. seconded, Motion passed. We are currently under budget.
4. Runway 16/34 project: Gary Schwartz stated David Greene Director of the Bureau of Aeronautics DOT sent a letter to the FAA Great Lakes ADO requesting that FAA ADO reverse its previous denial of our request to reconstruct 16/34 based on the wind analysis performed by Becker Hoppe Associates. We are now waiting on the answer. The wind coverage of 7/25 is currently at 94.8% which meets funding levels without wind gusts. If we add the gust factor in, we are at 86%. We are the tip of the spear on this nationwide crosswind runway issue. There are potentially 30 other crosswind runways in Wisconsin that may need replacement in the future. Nationwide there could be as many as 1000 runways in the same position as Merrill. Merrill is at the forefront of this huge nationwide FAA issue.
5. Update Entitlement Projects 2022: Crack filling for the whole airport is done with the exception of runway 16/34. All the other approved projects will continue next spring.
6. Update airport signage: Joe M. reported that he has had discussions with Karl Kemper at BHA that signs could be rolled into the 16/34 project so we should hold off for a while. Signs on 7/25 show taxiway A -Term (Terminal). He will be working on the signs for outside of airport. Fuel signs will run approx. \$1500-2000 per sign.

7. Repairs to runway 16/34: The County and City finished the mastic patching, crack filling, and repainting of the center line. They will have the billing done for December Meeting. The Commission is grateful for the County and City support on this issue.
8. Discussion/Decision of sale of RRL/FBO Hangar: There was a lot of discussion about selling this hangar. Rich does not have enough room to get all the aircraft in for maintenance. We are looking at an 80x100 ft building to replace it. We would use the proceeds to provide the match required by the FAA and the State for airport projects over the next few years. We are just looking to even see if it is possible, this is not a decision here tonight to sell. Schwartz will need to get thru all the city, state and federal levels to make this proposition work. For every \$100,000 we get for the building we can support \$2,000,000 of projects. So, the idea is to help fund the new FBO hangar, 16/34 reconstruction, and a new t-hangar. We currently have 46 aircraft based on the field and have 18 on the hangar waiting list. Rich checked on FBO rents and, found that all other airports do not charge rent for FBO hangars. Rich states helping people at the new terminal side of the airport is a problem, it would be more convenient being next to the terminal and fuel farm. There are only 5-6 repair shops within 100 miles. Most are getting ready to retire. Only 1 other shop is full time at CWA. Six other airports have contacted Rich to move to their airport. Rich has added staff and needs to grow. Building is too small. Bathrooms for east side of the airport will be the biggest issue for the east side tenants. Costs of heating new building and rent will be looked at. Advancing the city forward is the main goal of this new building. We are seeing more corporate planes fly in. They will not tell us who they are visiting, or why they are in Merrill, but most corporations locate within 10 miles of a business class airport such as Merrill for ease of access. Joe M. made a motion to move forward and look into the possible sale of the FBO hangar. Mark W. seconded. Motion passed.
9. Update F-84 Monument: Rich has been in contact with Merrill Iron and Steel for getting estimates.
10. Manager's Report: They have all the equipment ready for snow removal.
11. Chairman's Report: Gary stated the Bureau of Aeronautics DOT has now agreed to do a Master Plan, and ALP. Two firms submitted bids. Coffman and Assoc. was selected. They will also be providing an economic impact study for

the City of Merrill. The BOA is funding the master plan and studies, which means no or minimal cost to the city. Approximate cost of the plan project is \$200,000.

12. Aviation Happenings: No report.
13. Public Comment: Bathroom availability for the east side of the Airport if the FBO building sold.
14. Agenda Items for Next Meeting:
15. A motion to adjourn was made by Joe M., seconded by Mark W. Motion passed.

Minutes submitted by Joe Malsack