

City of Merrill
Airport Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 21, 2022
Merrill Airport Terminal

Members Present: Gary Schwartz (Chairman), Joe Malsack, Lyle Banser, Gary Schulz, Mark Weix Jr. (Alderman), Rich McCullough (Manager)

Public Present: Larry Wenning

1. Call to Order – Meeting called to order by Chairman Schwartz at 18:00.
2. Approval of August 2022 Minutes – Motion by Malsack; second by Banser to approve minutes. All ayes. Motion carried.
3. Approval of Vouchers – Vouchers reviewed. Motion by Banser to pay vouchers; second by Malsack. All ayes. Motion carried.
4. Runway 16/34 Project Status – Schwartz reported on a meeting with FAA, Airport District Office (ADO) staff from the Great Lakes Region. ADO sent the data they were using for review at 95.15 crosswind component. In reviewing Merrill Airport's AWOS (Automated Weather Observation System) it is noticed that the time of their weather or wind observation is different by 5 – 6 hours, depending on Daylight Savings Time or Standard Central Time that we are in because this data is reported to them in ZULU Time (Greenwich Mean Time or Universal Time). This is significant because FAA engineering guidance allows a process of (weighting) the traffic by the time of day the traffic is happening. Schwartz, Becker Hoppe is sending the document with Merrill Airport wind data using the weighted traffic and corrected time zone numbers which rates Merrill at 94.8 crosswind component to Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics and Karl Lewis, AOPA (Airplane Owners and Pilots Association) to keep them up to date with the process. It has been observed that anything needing BOA processing is moving very slowly because of the backlog of work caused by the Covid Pandemic Shutdown of State workers and then the working from home process. We are anticipating things to return to an acceptable normal in the near future since the recent announcement of the Pandemic being over.
5. Update Entitlement Projects 2022 – It has been determined by Farhner, the asphalt reconditioning contractor, that it is too late in the year to get our projects done, so they will be pushed to 2023, except possible crack filling.
6. Discussion/Decision Airport Signage – No report. Banser and McCullough will be working on the F-84 painting and restoration. The plane will need a lot of pre-paint work and painting and display mounting by Spring 2023. Weix suggested we have Merrill's Communication Marketing Person work with us on the project. Will also be

contracting the Friends of the Airport Representatives Group and work on funding solutions.

7. Repairs to Runway 16/34 – Malsack reported the mastic project to seal cracks on 16/34 first week in October.
8. Airport General Maintenance – Maintenance of Repair Hangar Walk-In Door – Contractor hasn't had time yet. No lights replaced yet. Tractor was back but was returned for PTO shaft fix. The New Holland has 7000 hours on it now. Mower is back and working well. The purchase of a compact tractor and related equipment mower and loader was turned down by City officials. Discussion followed about trying to do the work around the Airport with contractors which is the most expensive versus hire the City with their equipment and employees which are less expensive; or do it with Airport equipment and contract personnel, which is the least expensive. In relation to this topic, equipment that is scheduled to be replaced is deferred to a later date to save money when we determine when equipment still has a useful service life. (i.e., 2008-one ton pickup and 93 plow truck). In response to the Hatz Hanger with roof damage, he is to be talking to building inspector and set date for repairs.
9. Chairman's Report – Schwartz reported visiting with Mayor Hass, who has suggested a two-year extension to his term. The October Meeting will have an agenda item for nomination, and vote for Commission Chair.

All entitlement projects have been approved and all entitlement money is going to be available, including one year of entitlement that timed out. This will be replaced with AIP money from BOA. Approval for a new Master Plan has been given by the BOA which hires a private firm to do them. We have asked that Beecher and Hoppe engineering who has done all of the engineering work for Merrill Airport to be involved and provide historical and technical data for the Master Plan. Schwartz has requested that this Master Plan have a stand alone Economic Study of the Merrill Airport to be able to demonstrate its economic value to the City.

Discussed City Hanger #4 rental for October 1. Craig Hanig is next on the list for the City hanger and has consensus approval for October 1 possession. Formal motion and vote to follow at October Meeting.

Schwartz reported FAA is coming to look at the wrecked Sundowner and having a Lycoming Tech representative tear down the motor to determine the cause of loss of power. Plane can then be removed.

10. Aviation Happenings – Schultz reported approval of STC (Supplemental Type Certificate) for the use of GAMI (General Aviation Modification Incorporated) which is a premium unleaded fuel for replacement of the current 100LL. Fuel can be mixed or added to existing fuel supply. When it becomes available, 100LL will be discontinued. No dates are known for supply of new fuel yet.

Schultz discussed a mid-air crash at North Las Vegas. The determination was made that the airport was not structured properly for current standards of parallel runways because its construction dates back to the WWII timer period. The runways will have to be

reconstructed to comply with new standards.

Crop seeding has been happening in the area using an Ag Cat, a plane that is capable of operating from the Merrill Airport, seeding and spraying crops at low altitudes.

11. Public Comment – Question was asked about Economic Benefit Study. 2012 was the last Economic Benefit Study. That Study was done by BOA. Would like to have a more current report done this year, if possible.
12. Agenda Items for Next Meeting – Approval for City Hanger #4 to Craig Hanig. F-84 Agenda item. Vote for Commission Chairman.
13. Currently meeting at 6:00 PM. (winter hours)
14. Adjournment – Malsack motioned to adjourn; second by Wiex. All ayes; motioned carried.

Minutes prepared by Lyle Banser