

Montana Aeronautics Board
Montana Department of Transportation; Auditorium
2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT
Wednesday, January 17, 2018

Aeronautics Board

Tricia McKenna, Board Chair
Chris Edwards, Vice-Chair
Robert Buckles
Dan Hargrove
Bill Hunt, Jr
Fred Lark
Roger Lincoln
Walt McNutt
Jeff Wadekamper

Department of Transportation

Mike Tooley, MDT Director
Tim Conway, MDT Aeronautics
Wade Cebulski, MDT Aeronautics
Effie Benoit, MDT Aeronautics
Carol Grell-Morris, MDT Legal

Guests

Webb Brown, Chamber of Commerce
Lance Bowser, Robert Peccia & Associates
Scott Eaton, Federal Aviation Administration
David Hartmann, Armstrong Consultants

Kevin Myhre, Century Company, Inc.
Eric Rink, Armstrong Consultants

Call to Order / Approval of Minutes

- Chairman McKenna called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m., opening with the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Introduction of all board members to the public.

Walt McNutt made a motion to approve the June 6, 2017 board minutes as presented. Fred Lark seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

MDT Update – MDT Director, Mike Tooley

- Budget - MDT has an overall sound budget. In the special session in November, the Governor's office removed reserve funds from non-restricted accounts. MDT experienced an \$8 million reduction, affecting mostly the Maintenance Division. Aeronautics was not affected, and the Yellowstone Airport is in the black. MDT will work with the budget office, as necessary, to ensure adequate budget for MDT and Aeronautics.
- Beacons - The MDT decided the state is getting out of the beacon business. Aeronautics and the Aeronautics Board decided to keep three beacons; Strawberry and Spokane for a couple of years and MacDonald Pass a little longer. With the exception of the MacDonald Pass beacon, Aeronautics is to decommission the beacons by 2020 with the MacDonald Pass beacon being decommissioned by 2022. Aeronautics will look for nonprofit agencies, groups, or individuals that want to adopt them.

- Aeronautics Administrator - Tim Conway is the Acting Aeronautics Division Administrator. MDT is conducting a nationwide search for three weeks. The Aeronautics Board Chair is part of the selection committee.

Aeronautics Update - Tim Conway, Acting Aeronautics Division Administrator

- Wade Cebulski is the Acting Airports /Airways Bureau Chief.
- Introduction of Jake Hemphill, Safety and Education Bureau Chief.
- Jan Smith, Aeronautics Mechanic, had turned in his resignation and Aeronautics moved forward with filling the position, offering the position to a candidate who turned it down. Since then, Jan has decided to stay with Aeronautics.
- The loan interest rate is 2.25 percent, which is half of the prime rate.
- Airport Grant Audits
 - Fort Benton - The audit was completed in June 2017 with no findings.
 - Havre - The audit was completed in April 2017. The audit found that there was not a close out form submitted, which has since been submitted.
 - Canyon Ferry - The audit was completed in August 2017 with no findings.
 - St. Ignatius - The audit was completed in October 2017 with no findings.
- Aeronautics is projected to be out of cash in fiscal year 2020 and is looking for ways to fund ongoing operations.
- Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) - Aeronautics has enrolled with the FAA as an interested party of the UAS Integration Pilot Program. The program is an opportunity for state, local, and tribal governments to partner with private sector entities, such as UAS operators and manufacturers to accelerate safe UAS integration into the national airspace. Aeronautics has been contracted by three firms interested in partnering. Big Sky UAV is interested in using UASs for mapping wildland fires and weed control. The FAA will select at least five firms for testing with a decision expected in May of 2018. There were roughly 1,600 applicants the last time Aeronautics checked the number of applicants.
- Yellowstone Airport -
 - Terminal Area Master Plan Study - The study was initiated in 2016, is on hold pending 2018 enplanement numbers.
 - Deed restrictions - Posted to the federal register on December 20, 2017 to request the lifting of the deed restrictions. The comment period ends January 19, 2018. Aeronautics has received one comment so far.
 - Hangar construction - A new hangar is being constructed for AirMethods, a medical evacuation company, to remain at Yellowstone year around with helicopter. Half of the siding is on the hangar and the roof is on.
 - Enplanements - SkyWest is not interested in extending the current operating season but may add flights during the existing season next year. 8,727 enplanements in fiscal year 2017.
 - Internship program - We are planning to hire an intern again this year at the airport. Funded by NWAAAE and MAMA internship programs. The program helps with manpower at the airport.

- Seasonal winter testing - Yellowstone still does seasonal winter testing with select companies and those monies are used to fund the Yellowstone Airport and cannot be moved to Aeronautics.
- Aeronautics funding - A member of the board asked if the funds that Yellowstone Airport had could be used to help with Aeronautics' funding situation. Since the Yellowstone Airport is a proprietary fund, monies cannot be transferred to a state special revenue fund (Aeronautics). The Yellowstone Airport is on its way to being self-sustaining.

Board Updates

- Each board member gave a brief update for the Aeronautics Board.

Review of Loan/Grant Applications

- **Cut Bank Municipal Airport** applied for a \$65,000 grant and a \$65,000 loan to rehabilitate the apron. FAA funded project, no questions from the Board.
- **Ennis - Big Sky Airport** applied for an \$84,250 grant to construct and rehabilitate the taxiway, rehabilitate the apron, and rehabilitate the runway. FAA funded project, no questions from the Board.
- **Fort Benton Airport** applied for a \$15,000 grant and a \$15,000 loan to construct the taxiway. FAA funded project, no questions from the Board.
- **Hamilton Airport** applied for a \$94,377 grant to rehabilitate the taxiway to install or rehabilitate airport beacons. FAA funded project. Board question regarding land; land will affect later projects, but not this one.
- **Havre City-County Airport** applied for a \$100,500 grant and a \$100,500 loan to rehabilitate the taxiway. FAA funded project, no questions from the Board.
- **Laurel Municipal Airport** applied for a \$57,969 grant to construct the runway. FAA funded project, no questions from the Board.
- **Lewistown Municipal Airport** applied for a \$92,000 grant and a \$92,000 loan to rehabilitate the runway, taxiway and apron. Application was modified because all projects were lumped as one, Aeronautics broke the project into separate projects with engineer assistance. FAA funded project, no questions from the Board.
- **Livingston - Mission Field Airport** applied for a \$7,000 grant and a \$7,000 loan to conduct and update the airport master plan study. FAA funded project, no questions from the Board.
- **Scobey Airport** applied for a \$60,000 grant and a \$100,000 loan to rehabilitate the runway and rehabilitate the runway lighting. Application was modified because all projects were lumped as one, Aeronautics broke the project into separate projects with engineer assistance. FAA funded project. Scobey had asked for grant funds for the project previously, but not last year.
- **Twin Bridges Airport** applied for a \$115,850 grant to extend, widen and strengthen the taxiway, extend, widen and strengthen the runway, install taxiway lighting, install runway lighting, construct a taxiway, expand the apron, rehabilitate the runway, rehabilitate the taxiway and to rehabilitate the apron. Application was modified because all projects were lumped as one, Aeronautics broke the project into separate projects with engineer assistance. FAA cannot fund to extend, widen and strengthen the runway or install runway lighting, other projects are funded by the FAA. No questions from the Board.

- **White Sulphur Springs Airport** applied for a \$15,000 grant to conduct and update the airport master plan study. FAA funded project, no questions from the Board.
- **Wolf Point- L.M. Clayton Airport** applied for a \$61,054 grant and a \$18,271 loan to construct, expand, improve, modify and rehabilitate the airport building and to rehabilitate the runway lighting. Application was modified because all projects were lumped as one, Aeronautics broke the project into separate projects with engineer assistance. FAA will fund partial construction on one portion of the building, but not the other portion. Other projects are funded by the FAA. The hangar project is a retroactive project. No questions from the Board.

Tricia McKenna, Chairman

Roger Lincoln, Secretary