

MINUTES OF MEETING
JOPLIN AIRPORT BOARD MEETING
July 09, 2020

The Airport Board met in the Second Floor Board Room at the at the Joplin Regional Airport Commercial Terminal Building. The meeting was brought to order at 7:00 A.M.

Item 1: Roll Call and Approval of Minutes from the last meeting.

Board members in attendance included Bob Loudermilk, Richard Russell, Fred Osborn, Kelli Starkweather, Mike Bentley and Randy Moore. Rob O'Brian attended via phone. Staff present included Steve Stockam and Melissa Hunter.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Russell voted to approve the June meeting minutes. Mr. Loudermilk seconded. All were in favor.

Item 2: Old Business

Mr. Stockam gave the board a quick update on airport projects. The pre-construction meeting was held for the **Dennis Weaver Drive Relocation Project**. It was discovered that we had to move the schedule back one week as the Star Gas Co. said they needed to review and make adjustment to easements. The first part of the project will be moving the fence to re-establish the perimeter and that portion is staked, permitted and ready to go.

Mr. Stockam stated that the FAA has released its list of airports that received AIP grants and the Joplin Regional Airport was not listed. We are holding off to see if we can optimize the money we receive for our runway reconstruction project next year. We anticipate seeing that grant offer come through in August, then we will have a short time period to execute the offer. That portion of the project will be at least 7.5 million dollars and we are hoping it will be closer to 9 million which would fund the entire project. That would be huge for the airport he added.

Mr. Stockam stated that regular maintenance will be happening at the airport for the rest of the summer. One maintenance issue that came up was the water line by the GA hangars was recently found to be broken. Also, we took lightning strikes this week so there was some repair work due to that. We have additional preparation for next year's closure which includes repainting 13/31, Echo and Charlie since it will be our main runway during that time.

We are continually working to protect our staff from COVID-19. We did have two staff members test positive recently. Both are doing fine. We are fortunate that we contained it stated Mr. Stockam. We have changed our operational procedures more to split staff up even further. Now, there is a 30-minute gap between employees and continuing the sanitation. With the loss of two individuals to quarantine, we have not run 24-hour operations for the past 10 days with no one here overnight. That had to be approved through the Federal Aviation Administration because it is part of our Airport Certification Manual. We anticipate going back to 24-hour operations a week from Monday. Mr. Loudermilk asked if this is affecting the Airport Police Department. Mr. Stockam stated that it is not. Mr. Stockam stated that everyone understands that the city council passed the mask ordinance that will go into effect soon. The

City will also make an employee policy. Mr. Moore asked what the additional city requirement will be. Mr. Stockam stated there will be additional separation requirements such as two people in the same vehicle will be required to wear masks. It is nothing the general public will notice he added. We have gotten 15,000 masks from the Federal Aviation Administration that we will provide to passengers before their flights. The city will purchase 100,000 masks to distribute to citizens.

Next, Mr. Stockam informed the board about **Air service**. Our total unplanned passenger numbers for the year is almost identical to just one-month last year. Three flights per day started back earlier this week. Since then, we have seen a good response. A lot of people are still willing to travel. The numbers are weak on the outbound afternoon flight, but the inbound numbers are very strong. That means more people are flying back to Joplin in the afternoon according to Mr. Stockam. The next schedule may be a three-month schedule. October was supposed to be the date of opening the international markets. Mr. Moore asked if there was any word on Chicago? Mr. Stockam replied, if you look at what American Airlines is doing, there is no emphasis in Chicago. They are concentrating on Charlotte and Dallas according to Mr. Stockam. It is hard to tell what they are going to do. Mr. Russell asked about Atlanta flights. Mr. Stockam stated that it doesn't make sense to speak to the airline about adding service right now. American has been very aggressive about getting flights back into communities. We want to make sure what we have works well before we ask for more. Mr. Russell asked how our numbers look compared to Columbia and Jefferson City. Mr. Stockam stated as far as our American Airlines operations, it is comparable. United Airlines was also flying out of Columbia, but it didn't work well for them. If COVID hadn't hit, we would be solid and growing in Mr. Stockam's opinion. The other issue we have been watching is delays and restrictions in the coastal markets. Some of the states are being added to quarantine lists such as Arkansas and New Jersey. Flights overall are down 10% according to Mr. Stockam. It is a question, understanding what American Airlines long term plan is. Mr. Stockam had family in China that was able to fly home three weeks ago. They have been trying to get home since January. Due to restricted flights, they traveled through Beijing, Japan, Korea, Germany, Chicago, and Huston which was 41 hours total to get home. There is limited connectivity due to the reduced schedule. Tulsa had 61 flights per day and now they are happy to have 15 flights per day. Mr. Osborn asked how Springfield is doing. Mr. Stockam stated they are at about 1000 passengers per day which has picked up substantially. Obviously, way off from pre-COVID numbers he added. We are at 75% load factor which is about where everyone is at. If we can fill our 3 flights per day, we would be doing very well.

Next Mr. Stockam mentioned that he is on the committee for the **new city branding**. A new logo will be easy for us to keep individual identities by department but be recognizable as part of Joplin according to Mr. Stockam. Our current logo is over 12 years old he added. The committee is also reviewing color schemes and all departments will use all the same colors. Also, they are completing an inventory about where all the logos will be located such as letterhead, business cards, websites, vehicles etc. Mr. Stockam added this won't be something done quickly, but over time as new equipment is purchased. Mr. Russell asked if this information been discussed with the City Council. Mr. Stockam stated the new branding was approved by council first and their blessing was given to proceed. As far as the airport is

concerned, we need to make sure our website is accessible and make sure we still have the same connectivity. We don't want to change site names and links, just the look of the website.


Item 3: New Business

According to Mr. Stockam there was a push in Washington D.C. to force airlines to reduce loads due to COVID-19. As of July 1st, American Airlines is fully loading aircrafts again. Airlines break even at 70% loads in addition to reducing prices, it is difficult to turn a profit. If you are going to board an airplane, understand that you will be sitting near other people Mr. Stockam said. Sanitizing, cleaning and wearing masks is a personal responsibility and this will be the way of life for a while in his opinion. We have put up shields, American Airlines has made changes and people are adjusting on the fly. Mr. Russell asked how this will affect the pilots and attendants' jobs. Mr. Stockam replied that American Airlines will furlough 2500 pilots. Mr. Bentley stated that United Airlines announced in October that they will cut workers by 36000 people as well. Mr. Stockam stated, it corresponds with when they took federal money. For the Joplin Regional Airport, we will not furlough our employees. In Tulsa and Kansas City, there are still 100's of planes parked. Mr. Bentley flew into the Dallas airport and stated there were United Airlines planes parked everywhere. Mr. Stockam stated that everyone is beginning to add flights back. We hoped that nationwide we would have seen a bigger jump, but we have sat the same for about 3 weeks now at 600,000 passengers. We don't know if it is because of the uptick in COVID cases. Part of reason for the plateau may be because of capacity being held back. We will have to wait and see Mr. Stockam added. Last month capacity was our issue because our flight was full every day. Mr. Russell asked if freight remained the same. Mr. Stockam answered that the airline side freight hasn't been an issue, people have been using FED-EX and USPS etc. for freight more often recently. Those avenues are much more solid than using the airline for freight. The animals have stopped for this time of the year due to ramp temperatures he added.

Mr. Bentley asked if the hay that they took off the airport is the same program as last year. Mr. Stockam stated that is. He added that we get paid for each bail taken off the airport. We have asked the bailer to move the airfield bails as soon as possible to help the air traffic control tower with their view since that was requested in the recent RSAT meeting. Another issue discussed in the RSAT meeting was signage. We didn't realize there was an issue for planes moving in a certain direction. Next year we would like to do what we can to get more pilots and tenants active in the RSAT meeting. We plan to have hamburgers and hot dogs to generate a bit more people to attend meeting. This year attendance was 7 with additional FAA folks who attended via telcon. We received good feedback as a result of the meeting despite the low attendance.

Mr. Moore voted to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Loudermilk 2nd.
The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 am.

Approved,


Melissa Hunter, Airport Clerk


Kelli Starkweather, Chairman of the Board