

MINUTES OF THE CITY OF WICHITA
WICHITA AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD

Monday, April 1, 2013

Present: Charles Fletcher, U.L. Gooch, Dwight Greenlee, John Hennessy, Carl Koster, Karyn Page, Dr. Thom Rosenberg, Bill Ward, Brent Wooten, Kurt Yowell

Absent: Dave Bayouth, Thomas Pryor

Airport Staff: Victor White, Brad Christopher, Susan Hale, Kathryn Keathley, Traci Nichols, John Oswald, Valerie Wise, Jean Zoglman

City Staff: Jay Hinkel, Deputy City Attorney

Others: Pat McCollom, AECOM
Brian Youngers, Signature Flight Support

Chairman Rosenberg called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Fletcher, second by Greenlee, to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2013, Wichita Airport Advisory Board meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Director's Report – Victor White, Director of Airports

Mr. White and Charles Fletcher attended the Airports Council International-NA/American Association of Airport Executives Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. to speak with our representatives and to hear from the aviation-related transportation committees. They met with Representative Pompeo and the staff of Representatives Jenkins and Huelskamp. Mr. Fletcher noted that they were not able to meet with Senator Moran and Senator Roberts (although they did meet with staff) because they were in session for the amendment to keep the control towers open. Senator Moran led the effort to keep the contract control towers open, and had bi-partisan support, but was not able to bring action to a vote on the Senate floor due to opposition from the Senate Majority Leader.

Mr. White and Mr. Fletcher met with other airport representatives to discuss what actions should be taken if the contract tower closures were not stopped. Spokane, Washington filed the first suit against contract tower closure in federal circuit court, followed by other airports in Florida and Illinois that filed suit in district court. The arguments are that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) failed to implement the safety management system analysis protocol prior to issuing the closure orders and that the FAA failed to complete environmental impact assessments as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The airports that

have filed the suits are hoping that at least it will result in an injunction that will stall the closures until the next federal fiscal year, by which time perhaps other budget solutions will have been found. For FAA managed control towers, such as at Mid-Continent, the budget cuts will result in towers not being staffed between the hours of midnight and six a.m., one day per pay period of furlough through September, no hiring, and no overtime. This will affect all air traffic for a 30 mile radius around Wichita. The Mid-Continent tower manager has been directed to submit a report detailing how the evening closure will affect operations in Wichita. The Airport will be providing information to the tower manager for the report. Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Little Rock will also be closed. The only towers in this region that will continue to be open 24 hours are Denver, Kansas City International, and Kansas City Air Route Traffic Control Center. Mr. Fletcher inquired what action the WAA could take to prevent the shut-down; perhaps write a friend of the court brief communicating the impact to our community. Mr. White stated that the WAA would first need to seek the advice of Jay Hinkel, Deputy City Attorney, but that he did not foresee any liability to the City to file a brief. Mr. Hinkel stated that he would need to review the suits that have been filed to determine if our situation would add support to the case. Typically in these situations, that type of action is viewed more influentially if it is presented by entities that would experience the greatest effects from the proposed ruling.

Mr. White stated that currently there are no scheduled passenger airline flights arriving or departing in the midnight to six a.m. time period, so at this time airline business would not be affected in Wichita. But, the airlines frequently change their schedules, so this could become an issue. Additionally, due to weather or mechanical issues, flights sometimes arrive or depart during midnight regardless of the scheduled time. The cargo carriers have stated that they would continue to fly without direct guidance from the control tower if weather information is provided to them. General aviation in Wichita would experience the greatest negative effects, because those flights can happen at any time. Some of the services that would not be available during the closed hours are current weather observations, emergency dispatch, airfield condition notifications, and equipment monitoring (such as airfield lighting and the instrument landing system). McConnell Air Force Base would be affected because it relies on Mid-Continent's radar approach control. The Mid-Continent closure would not happen until July or August, so there is some time to find solutions.

Bill Ward asked how much of the FAA operating budget comes from aviation customer user fees and how much is general tax dollars. Mr. White stated that approximately 75% of the FAA is funded by airport users, through things such as aviation fuel taxes. The other 25% is from the federal general fund, which is justified by the need to maintain airports in the interest of national security. Mr. Ward stated, then in other words, the FAA has funds, in reserve, to function without federal support. Mr. White stated that Senator Moran had secured bi-partisan support to keep control towers open, but the Majority Leader stopped the vote on the amendment. Some contract towers are working to secure private or state funding to remain open. The estimated amount of savings to come from closing towers is \$50 million. According to Senator Moran, the FAA could easily find that amount in other areas of its budget, but political leaders are keeping the issue from being solved to heighten the impact of the sequestration. Mr. White stated that further effects of the FAA budget cuts are cancellations of appearances of the Blue Angels and the Thunderbirds and other military participation at air shows. Brian Youngers, Station Manager

of Signature Flight Support, stated that the F-18 Tactical Demonstration team will not be at the Wichita air show this fall. To illustrate how the midnight shift closure would affect Mid-Continent, Mr. White stated that, just yesterday, there were several delayed airline flights that landed after midnight. At this time, a decision has not been made about how such situations would be handled.

The budget cuts also affect the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP). For CBP, there will be furloughs and no overtime. The current CBP hours are 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, so Mid-Continent could not accept international arrivals outside of those hours. Airports that have many international flights are even now experiencing long processing delays because of the sequestration. The TSA will also not hire personnel and not provide overtime hours. Keith Osborn, Federal Security Director for TSA at Mid-Continent, has stated in previous meetings that he is managing the situation with scheduling changes because many of his screeners are part-time and he therefore expects security screenings to continue smoothly as normal.

Carl Koster asked about the reaction of FedEx and UPS to the potential loss of overnight control tower service. Mr. White stated that the cargo carriers have not made any public statements on the issue. Dwight Greenlee asked what the FAA response has been to not providing required impact assessments before taking action to close control towers. Mr. White stated that the FAA Administrator did not provide a defense for not completing the impact assessments. Mr. Greenlee asked what the response of AAAE, ACI, or the airlines has been to the situation. Mr. White stated that AAAE, as owner of the Contract Tower Association, has taken a lead in fighting the closures, but has not made any headway. The airlines do not expect the reduction in services to be a problem for their operations, since many smaller airports are closed in the evening already, and the airlines are not commenting on predicted cancellations of flight service. Mr. White stated that it appears that general aviation, business aviation, and military aviation will have to take the lead in fighting the closures since they will be affected the most.

Karyn Page stated that she is concerned about the affect of the sequestration on commerce in this region. Customers have come to expect deliveries to reach them in time on short notice, so delays in shipping caused by potential reductions of air freight services will be a big issue for this region. Local businesses are just starting to see an increase in sales from the economic downturn, and if commerce were impeded now there would be negative consequences. Mr. White stated that the media and politicians are more concerned about the contract tower closure than the reduction in services at the FAA towers, and even the most recent AAAE bulletin was focused on action related to the contract towers, but there are many safety implications. It appears that so much attention is being paid to the tower closures because it is an example that more clearly illustrates to the public the safety risks of the budget cuts. Mr. White stated that he will keep in touch with the congressional delegation on the issue, and provide reports as additional information is available.

The Kansas House of Representatives has introduced a bill that would make it a criminal offense for TSA security screeners to touch passengers at the checkpoint and/or remove a child under the age of 18 from the physical control of his/her guardian. The intention to prevent potentially

offensive contact is understandable, but the implementation of this bill would prevent the TSA from being able to do physical screening of passengers. Individuals that do not pass the metal detector screening, which is on average about 20-30% of passengers, would have no other screening options, and subsequently be barred from boarding aircraft in Kansas. There are serious implications for ADA compliance. Lobbyists that work on aviation issues do not anticipate that this bill will be passed, at least this session. The Airport has communicated with the Kansas federal delegation about this proposed law, since it affects TSA as a federal agency. It is expected that the TSA will write a letter of objection to the legislature.

Parking and Rental Car Facilities Project Update – Brad Christopher, Asst. Dir. Airports

On Friday, March 29th, bids for the parking and rental car facility construction were opened. The apparent low bidder is Crossland Construction of Columbus, Kansas. It is anticipated that the bid of \$33.9 million will be accepted at the Wichita City Council meeting on April 2nd. Only the base bid will be accepted; the bid did not come in low enough to add any of the alternate items to the project. Crossland has comparable experience with cast-in-place structures. The estimated date for Notice to Proceed #1 is April 29th, which is the contractual start date for the project. Notice to Proceed #2 should be issued around June 3rd, at which time work will begin on site. Mr. Fletcher asked why Alternate #1 (covering for top level of parking garage) could not be included in the project, since the project cost is \$40 million, and the low bid is \$33 million. Mr. Christopher stated that the rest of the project budget is planned for other components beside the facility construction, for example design costs and the parking access revenue control system (PARCS) implementation. The Airport anticipates completing the Alternate #1 work at a later date, if funds become available. U.L. Gooch asked how the disruption to public parking during the construction phase would be handled. Mr. Christopher stated that nearly all of the short term parking and about 25% of the long term parking would be eliminated during the construction phase. The Airport is providing public notice of the change and encouraging customers to use the Park & Ride Lot, which is large enough to replace the temporary reduction in the Short Term and Long Term Lots. Chairman Rosenberg recommended the Airport consider offering a valet parking service for handicapped customers. Mr. Christopher stated that the Airport will leave as much ADA parking close to the terminal as possible. The Airport would want to determine if a valet service would be supported by the community. Mr. Ward asked who would be managing the coordination between the terminal and the parking facility construction. Mr. Christopher stated that Pat McCollom, ACT 3 Project Manager, would be the liaison for the two contractors.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the parking & rental car facility is planned for April 24th.

ACT 3 Project Update – Pat McCollom, AECOM

The terminal project is at 686 days to substantial completion. The steel structure is 30% complete. The basement and tunnel work is 70% complete; some basement floor slabs have been poured, and the steel frame for the basement walls will be installed next week. Change Order #7 was issued last month, which allowed savings that have been realized to off-set the cost of other project components. It is expected that the Apron Phase 3 project will be advertised for bid before June, to meet the deadline for use of FAA discretionary funds. The preliminary

designs for the revised baggage handling system have been submitted to the TSA for approval, after which HNTB will produce the final plans. The IT/Communications component, which will bring together systems from both the terminal and the parking facility, is expected to be bid in July. Work that is scheduled to be completed soon includes the basement tunnel, after which the rest of the steel work can be completed in late May or early June, installation of mechanical and electrical systems in conjunction with the floor slabs, and installation of skylights prior to placement of roof membranes. There will be another meeting for the tenant design manual this week.

Mr. McCollom and Mr. White plan to tour the new terminals at Santa Barbara and Los Angeles in early May to learn how they have incorporated new technology and design, particularly glass loading bridges and other bridge enhancements at Santa Barbara.

Other Business

The next WAAB meeting will be Monday, May 6, 2013 at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Kathryn Keathley, Clerk