

City of Merrill
Airport Commission Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2019
Merrill Airport Terminal

Members Present: Gary Schwartz (Chairman), Lyle Banser, Joe Malsack, Gary Schulz (via conference call), Rich McCullough (Airport Manager), Steve Osness (Alderman)

Public Present: Steve Krueger, Anthony Kromire (Cameraman)

1. Call to Order – Meeting called to order at 1900 hours by Chairman Schwartz
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 16, 2019 – January Minutes read and approved. Motion by Osness; second by Malsack. All ayes. Motion carried.
3. Approval of Vouchers – Vouchers presented, received and initialed. Motion to pay vouchers by Malsack; second by Osness. All ayes. Motion carried.
4. Runway 16/34 Project Status – Chairman Schwartz reported that the Bureau of Aeronautics (BOA) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had two Conference Call Meetings of which Merrill Airport Commission was not notified of or invited to participate. After a letter inquiring why the Airport Commission was not allowed to participate and expressing the Commission's displeasure with the progress of the project, a meeting was set up with stake holders in the process for February 12; which had to be canceled because of a winter storm and a new meeting will be held March 6 in Des Plaines, IL. Our intentions are to extend 16/34 by 400' and rebuild all in one project to save the taxpayers money on the project. Should have an update at next meeting.
5. FAA Petition for 16/34 – Schwartz left petition on Agenda as may need additional work.
6. T-Hangar Issues – Chairman Schwartz reported water and ice issues. Discussed ground water coming in through drain holes in extreme cold weather and possible ways to stop it. Also, brought up how slippery the entrance is when water from roof drips down and refreezes at the bottom of hangar doors. He has asked City Engineer for ideas to solve ice problems with hangers. Lease for Judy Hatz hangar rental. Motion by Malsack; second by Banser. All ayes. Motion carried.
7. Manager's Report – McCullough reported that a check on the perimeter fence was done and fence is in good shape, but some trees will be removed in Spring.
8. Airport General Maintenance – Manager McCullough reported problems with plow truck and repairs are increasing. We will look at replacing it before next winter. Drain from Airport residence was frozen. McCullough thawed before any problems.

Lightening Suppression Project Status – Is completed and will be tested during Spring/Summer lightening season.

Fiber Optic – Will continue in the Spring.

Fuel System Update – McCullough reported QT (fuel system support contractor) reported no problems with fuel system.

9. Aviation Happenings - Schulz reported FAA has changed rules on drones. Registration numbers will have to be visible on the outside of aircraft because of drones operating inside restricted airspace and shutting down operations temporarily.

Schulz also reported that Congress is allocating funds for airports affected by Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) dealing with the movement of Airforce 1; and Palm Beach County, Lantana and Sumerset Southby Airports may be receiving some financial aid to make up for business lost during TFRs .

Light, electric, fixed-wing planes are making some interesting progress. Seemans Company has an electric motor which reportedly weighs in under 40 lbs. and can achieve approximately 140 horsepower peak and approximately 90 hp continuous for 3 hours with ½ hour VFR reserve. Recharge time for the batteries is the next hurdle. Also, some commercial carriers (airline companies) are predicting electric will be in there future.

A once popular airport, Meigs Field, in the Chicago Lakefront area is being eyed to reopen. It was closed March 31, 2003, in the middle of the night by order of Mayor Daly, which stranded 16 aircraft at the field.

10. Public Comment – Krueger asked a question about entitlement money which has been building up for 16/34 Runway Project. Funds will be available when project is approved.
11. Agenda Items for Next Meeting – City T-Hangar issues. Airport Day.
12. Adjournment – Motion by Malsack; second by Osness to adjourn. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Lyle Banser