



Billings Logan International Airport
Aviation and Transit Department
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Billings, MT 59105
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Travel With Us

AVIATION AND TRANSIT BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, January 3, 2023

The Aviation and Transit Board met in the Administration Conference Room at the Billings Logan International Airport on Tuesday, January 3, 2023. Those in attendance included:

Aviation and Transit Board Members

Dan Farmer, Chair
Ken Behling, Vice Chair
Chuck Tooley
David Hummel, Jr.
Steve Tostenrud
Barbara Schneeman
Allison Corbyn

City Staff and Guests

Kevin Ploehn, Director of Aviation & Transit
Shane Ketterling, Assistant Director of Aviation & Transit
Rusty Logan, Transit Manager

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

A public comment period was offered. No public comments were received.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Barbara Schneeman and Allison Corbyn are the Board's new members. Ms. Schneeman is the Vice President, Communications and Public Affairs, at RiverStone Health and Ms. Corbyn is the Director of New Business Recruitment, Outreach & Economic Development Policy for Big Sky Economic Development.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chair Farmer noted that the Board needed to hold the annual election of officers. Board Member Behling nominated Dan Farmer to continue as Chair and Chair Farmer nominated Board Member Behling for Vice Chair. Motions were seconded, and the Board unanimously approved the elections.

NEW DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT RECAP

Mr. Ploehn stated that the City had two candidates come in from out of state for interviews. One from Nashville, Tennessee, Jeff Roach, and the other from Casper, Wyoming, Glenn Januska. Jeff Roach was selected and due to start January 16.

AIR SERVICE RFQ SELECTION PROCESS

Mr. Ploehn advised the Board that staff had advertised a Request for Qualifications for a firm to provide Air Service Consulting Services for a five-year period. Three proposals were received and Mead & Hunt was chosen and is set for approval at the January 23 City Council meeting.

AIRPORT AND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATIVE/OPERATIONS REPORTS

- ▶ Mr. Ploehn shared a few recent headlines: "More than 17,000 Flights Canceled in Five Days Around Christmas," "Far From a Shock, Southwest Meltdown Was 'Perfect Storm' of Well Known Vulnerabilities," "Southwest Employees Caught up in Cascade of Cancellations," and "Should Southwest Airlines Reconsider its Point-to-Point Route System?"

- ▶ Mr. Ketterling provided an update on the following projects:
 - Two bids were received for the Steam Boiler Replacement project, one from G&T Plumbing for \$185,000 and the other from Williams Plumbing and Heating for \$290,000. This is on for City Council approval on January 9 and the plan is to do the project next Summer.
 - The world's largest belt buckle that was built by Montana Silversmiths has arrived and will be set up by the Gift Shop. It is 10' 6" x 14' 6" and weighs 1,000 pounds, and will be on display for about one year.
 - Staffing updates, the Airport is still short two custodians, and Airport Police is extremely short staffed with one vacancy due to an officer that retired and three officers out for various reasons.
 - Terminal construction updates. Contractors are currently working in three separate locations: The food court and restaurant area, Concourse C (Cape Air), and the old TSA screening location that will become the new lobby. Concourse B construction is also underway.
- ▶ Mr. Logan provided a presentation on the released Census 2020 numbers regarding the Billings Urban area. As formula funds are based on both population and population density numbers, these results will have an effect on Federal funding for operations and capital. Both Helena and Bozeman now meet the urbanized area populations levels, meaning both will qualify for formula funds; how this change will affect overall capital funding available for the State is currently unknown as the Federal Transit Administration has not yet released annual funding information, but should be available at the February meeting.
- ▶ Mr. Logan informed the Board on the following:
 - The electric bus and charger purchase contract was approved and signed by Council, locking in existing pricing to avoid a 3% overall increase. Looking at an 18-24 month timeframe for delivery of the buses.
 - Simulator Training and Maintenance and Safety Training package purchase was approved by Council with delivery within 150 days.
 - Transit Development Plan was approved by PCC in December. Once Transit has the FFY 23 apportionment amounts staff will have a better picture of whether or not the system will be implemented as designed or with modifications due to budget constraints. Estimates for apportionments were determined by using data provided by the American Public Transportation Association.
 - Congress passed the funding bill and staff should see the annual apportionment information by the end of the month. Staff is working on putting together potential projects for funding. Some items being investigated are improved passenger amenities at the transfer centers, including restrooms, shelters with heat, and passenger notification systems, and additional bus shelters.
 - Staff met with Kinetic Marketing last week to discuss the MET and Airport's needs in regard to the advertising, marketing, and outreach programs. Staff will have one of the agencies start focusing on helping staff put together a 50th anniversary type of theme, since 2023 is MET's official 50th anniversary.
 - MET currently has two operators and a supervisor position vacant. Staff is reviewing applications for the Administrative II position and will set up interviews. The facility support positon has been filled and the new employee starts next week and brings 20+ years of experience with him.
 - Fixed route ridership saw an overall increase of 4.1% on weekdays and .5% on weekends. Paratransit had a 25.2% increase over last year on weekdays and 8.2% on weekends. Overall growth for the system is 8.66% compared to this time last year, with MET still projecting a grand total ridership at around 360 thousand for the current fiscal year.
 - MET is updating their Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan that will be taken to Council the end of the month, which required that we have a safety committee; MET already has a

committee just need to officially include it in the plan. MET is also updating the safety promotion program.

- ▶ Mr. Ketterling informed the Board of Kevin Ploehn's retirement party that will be held on Friday, January 13 in the restaurant from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m., and everyone is welcome to attend.

ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

There were no items from the Board.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

KP:mdb

cc: Aviation and Transit Board
Chrono

Via E-mail: City Administrator
Mayor
City Clerk