



Billings Logan International Airport
Aviation and Transit Department
1901 Terminal Circle, Room 216
Billings, MT 59105
P 406-657-8495

Travel With Us

AVIATION AND TRANSIT BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

The Aviation and Transit Board met in the Administration Conference Room at the Billings Logan International Airport on Tuesday, February 7, 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

City Staff and Guests

Jeff Roach, Director of Aviation & Transit
Shane Ketterling, Assistant Director of Aviation & Transit
Rusty Logan, Transit Manager
Mark Evangeline, Airport Facilities Superintendent

The Board began with a tour of Airport Construction and Terminal Remodel Projects.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

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

INTRODUCTION AND BRIEFING FROM THE NEW AVIATION AND TRANSIT DIRECTOR

Jeff Roach introduced himself as the new Aviation and Transit Department Director and provided the Board with a little background information. Mr. Roach comes to Billings from Nashville, Tennessee where he was Executive Director for the John C. Tune Airport. Previously, he was the Airport Manager for Fairbanks International Airport. He brings more than 30 years of experience in transportation, aviation, and airport management to Billings. Mr. Roach joined the military right out of high school, has a commercial, instrument helicopter pilot license, and has served 37 years in the Alaska Army National Guard. Mr. Roach is very happy to be here.

AIRPORT AND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATIVE/OPERATIONS REPORTS

- ▶ Mr. Roach explained that the Airport just signed a five-year contract with Mead & Hunt for Air Service consulting services to oversee and help the Airport with air service development. Mr. Roach mentioned that John Brewer with the Chamber and Allison Corbyn with Big Sky Economic Development attended the annual Mead & Hunt conference where you meet with airlines to promote your airport to the airline representatives; they met with five airlines and is looking forward to receiving a report on those meetings.
- ▶ Mr. Roach mentioned that unfortunately Billings has moved to the fourth busiest airport in Montana. Staff is working with the carriers that serve the Airport to maintain the service we already have and build on that with additional air service; stating there is a meeting this week with Southern Airways to discuss service.
- ▶ Mr. Roach advised the Board of the five items on the February 13 City Council Agenda:
 - Baggage Claim Restroom Remodel - low bid was Morgan Contractors for \$361,707.
 - The BLM IP-3 Lease in the Airport Business Park to expand their lease area.
 - Amendment 5 for the Mid Field Service Road Project and Amendment 6 for the Commercial Aircraft Ramp Replacement project for engineering services with Morrison-Maierle.

- Annual acceptance of the Airport Improvement Program Grant funding, we are looking at up to 12.8 million dollars with 2.3 million local match for the coming year.
- Staff has the Airport's engineering firm, Morrison-Maierle, working on a CATEX for four pieces of airport equipment. CATEX is a categorical exclusion and environmental document required by the Federal government for use of Federal funds.
- ▶ Rusty Logan presented the Board with a slideshow on the 5307 grant funding updates. MET received overall annual apportionment information from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regarding the annual grant MET receives directly from the FTA, which MET typically uses that as a portion of MET's operating budget. The funding is coming in relatively close to the projected rates, with about a two and one half percent increase year over year. To summarize the 5307 apportionments are relatively on track with the estimates, the allocations on 5303 are pretty much the same as what MET was receiving, therefore no significant change, and the 5239 levels are relatively stable.
- ▶ Mr. Logan stated that MET is still waiting for quotes from two vendors on the diesel buses. The FTA announced the Low-No (low and no emissions) Grant funding opportunities, the levels did increase this year. There is actually \$1.22 billion available for electric vehicles or related projects. MET's proposed projects include:
 - Electric Paratransit Vans
 - Passenger amenity improvements at Downtown Transfer Center
 - Shelter and on street amenities for support of Transit Development Plan rollout
- ▶ Mr. Logan informed the Board that MET had submitted their Triennial request for information to the FTA for the upcoming review. The Triennial is a review by the FTA that MET has every three years on all aspects of the agency to make sure MET is adhering to Federal regulatory requirements and execution of the services. The packet that MET submitted yesterday was over 2,700 pages of information. The onsite meeting will take place the week of March 20.
- ▶ Mr. Logan advised that MET has advertised a Request for Proposals for a Computer Aided Dispatch and Automatic Vehicle Location System; MET is in the final year of the current contract with DoubleMap, which ends June 2023.
- ▶ Mr. Logan advised that the Administration II position started on January 31. Currently have three operator and one supervisor vacancies.
- ▶ Mr. Logan provided the following ridership information:
 - Fixed route saw an overall increase of 15.7% on weekdays and 21.5% on weekends.
 - Paratransit saw a 19.9% increase over last year on weekdays and 7.5% on weekends.
 - Overall growth for the system is now 8.8% (up from 8.6% last month) compared to this time last year. MET is now projecting grand total ridership at around 365 thousand for the current fiscal year, which is a gain of 5,000 from December.
- ▶ Mr. Logan stated that they have two items on the February 27, 2023 City Council Agenda. The Annual Resolution Authorizing the Filing and Acceptance of Transit Grant Funds and Related Documents and Updated Public Transit Agency Safety Plan 2023.
- ▶ Shane Ketterling advised the Board on the following:
 - On January 13, the Airport had a site visit with the Blue Angels and the Airshow Committee.
 - TSA brought in their Public Information Officer and met with the media regarding no guns allowed in carry-on bags.
 - The carpet project will start next Monday and will be done at night so there is little to no disruption to passengers.
- ▶ Shane Ketterling mentioned the Chinese Spy Balloon and Mr. Roach informed the Board on how he was notified. Mr. Roach stated that he was at a conference and had received a phone call from Larry Mayer, photographer for the *Billings Gazette*, asking why there was a ground stop at the Airport. Mr. Roach called Shane, who also was not aware of the ground stop, as the Air Traffic Control Tower had not notified us. The Airport then got the information out as soon as

possible. The ground stop lasted for about two hours and affected two inbound flights and one outbound. Staff will be having a conversation with the Tower regarding better communications.

- ▶ Shane then mentioned the young man that had mistakenly booked a flight intended for Sydney, Australia to Sidney, Montana instead. An American Airlines agent, Carol, spent three hours with him getting it all straightened out. The Airport will be recognizing Carol for this and thanking her at an upcoming airline meeting.
- ▶ Mr. Ketterling mentioned that there would be another Global Entry Event at the Airport March 21-23.

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE MEETING TIMES/DATES

Mr. Ketterling then mentioned that due to scheduling conflicts, staff recommended discussing the possibility of changing the meeting times and dates. Staff proposed moving the meetings to the first Wednesday of every month and starting the meeting at 4:00 p.m. All those present were agreeable to moving the meetings to the first Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m.

ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

- ▶ There was a question on the status of the open Marketing and Advertising position. Mr. Ketterling stated that staff had just discussed that issue and with some recent changes that were made, the Department currently has three companies that it has agreements with to do a lot of the marketing and advertising; therefore, no longer see a need for that position.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

MDB

cc: Aviation and Transit Board
Chrono
Via E-mail: City Administrator
Mayor
City Clerk