

AVIATION AND TRANSIT BOARD MINUTES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

The Aviation and Transit Board met in the Administration Conference Room at the Billings Logan International Airport on Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 4:00 pm. Those in attendance included:

Aviation and Transit Board Members

Steve Tostenrud
David Hummel, JR.
Chuck Tooley
Barbara Schneeman
Megan Bostrom
Denis Pitman

City Staff

Jeff Roach, Director of A & T
Shane Ketterling, Assistant Director of A & T
Rusty Logan, Transit Manager

Guests

CALL TO ORDER

Steve called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

A public comment period was offered, no public comments received.

COURTESIES

The board was introduced to Ron Smith, Airport Operations Supervisor. Jeff recognized Rusty Logan for his 10 Year Anniversary.

Informational Items

Jeff gave the board a quick update on Air Service Development. The Air Service Committee will be meeting with Mead & Hunt, the Airports Air Service Consultant, on May 7, 2024. Trina with Mead & Hunt announced that she will be leaving the organization. Trina will be introducing her replacement, Jay Richardson at this meeting. Jeff will be attending the Jumpstart Conference, in Washington DC, May 19-22, 2024. Jeff reminded the board of the two new flights that will be starting in May, PDX and LAX on May 16, 2024. Starting May 23, 2024 United will start their fifth flight a day to Denver, that service will end in October. This additional United flight will add 3,000 additional seats per month. Jeff reported that all of this additional Air Service is bringing the Airport to 18% above seat capacity compared to last year. He believes that if we stay on track the Airport will exceed the 2019 numbers.

Jeff reported to the board that in March the enplanement numbers were about the same as last year; however, for the CY July-March we are up 6.8% for 2023, at about 100,000 passengers. Jeff talked about how domestic air freight is down. Fewer operations and fewer tons but the fuel flow was up. Jeff reported that the fuel flowage was up 7.86% for the fiscal year.

Jeff reported that the Airport has been charging \$0.08 for fuel flowage since 1982, he will be increasing the fuel flowage fee starting July 1, 2024.

Jeff also reported that the square footage rental rate will be decreasing for the airlines, currently the airlines are being charged \$43/sq. foot, which will go down to \$30/sq. foot. Jeff stated that keeping the charges lower will not be a huge hit to the airlines and not a negative perception to the public.

Jeff and staff will be presenting the Aviation and Transit Budget to the City Council on May 6, 2024, with approval on June 10, 2024.

- Budget Update**

Rusty announced some positive changes that he had to the MET Budget.

- **Construction Update**

Shane stated that the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the new Concourse B was a success. The board members will be going on a tour after the meeting. He informed the board members that Sun Country, Allegiant, United, and American Airlines will be operating out of Concourse B. Currently the airlines are working out IT issues with moving their computers and other electronic devices from Concourse A to B. United is the first airline that will be operating out of their new gate, the goal is May 8, 2024. The final Jet Bridge, B4, should be installed by May 23, 2024. Unfortunately, the restrooms are not available on Concourse B, the contractors are hoping to be able to get the restrooms opened soon. Shane mentioned that the rest of the lobby area is also being finished with the goal of May 31, 2024.

Shane updated the board on the Cargo Ramp Slot 5 Project. Unfortunately, right before the meeting Northwestern Energy's contractor hit the airfield lighting circuit while boring under the taxiway. This has put a hold on the project with Knife River.

Shane reported that BIDS came in for the IP-9 Building Window Project, the lowest BID came in from Automatic Doors at \$120,000.

Shane also reported that the Aviation Place Road Rehabilitation Project will begin in June.

Rusty informed the board that the Transit construction project will begin on May 13, 2024, the demolition of the building will begin on May 20, 2024. MET staff will start to pack things up and will be working out of an onsite mobile office, with some staff members working out of the Downtown Transfer Station. The tentative date of completion is November 22, 2024.

Rusty informed the board that bids came in for both the EV Charging Stations and for the Facility Camera Upgrade. Millennium Electric will be doing the work for the EV Charging Stations and Telenet Systems will be doing the Facility Camera Upgrade.

- **Airport Administrative & Operational Reports**

Shane reported that the Master Plan kick off meeting was on April 8, 2024, with Morrison & Maierle (M&M). The FAA approved the Master Plan award. M&M will come in and brief the board as well as the public and stakeholders.

Shane stated that with the help of M&M the Airport just recently applied for a NOFO (Notice of Funding Opportunity).

Marita Herold, the Business Manager, has been spending countless hours working on the new Lease Management Software program ABRM through Tadera. This will be an amazing asset to the Airport for Accounting and Leases.

- **Transit Administrative & Operational Reports**

Rusty acknowledged that Sarah Graham completed the Automated Passenger Count Authorization with the Federal Transit Administration. This will eliminate the manual counting of the passengers and will also report passenger miles traveled.

Rusty stated that the new buses are getting closer to being on the streets.

Two of the new Paratransit vehicles have arrived. There is more work to be done on the vans before they can be used, hopefully by the end of May they will be in operation. Rusty showed the board members pictures of the vans.

Rusty reported that they are in the final stages of Google Maps enrollment, this will provide real time navigation for passengers in their travels. It will also let the public know the ETA of the bus and let the public know how full the bus is at the time. Rusty is hopeful this will be ready by next week.

Denis asked Rusty how he plans to introduce all the new technology to the public. Rusty stated that it will be posted on the MET's social media pages, it's on the buses, and he will be working with Victoria Hill, Public Relations Officer, to have a Press Release.

Rusty let the board members know that he attended a Burn the Point meeting and there is a suggestion to have MET transport the public from a parking lot to the parade. He will keep the board informed as the time gets closer to the parade.

Rusty met with School District 2 on an Emergency Plan in the event there is an evacuation and First Student is unable to transport kids to a safe location.

Josh Smith and Mike Pope both attended some CDL Training in Helena.

Rusty reported that there are currently three Operating vacancies, and one in training. The one in training should be done by next week.

Rusty reported that there was a 34% increase in ridership compared to April 2023. The average growth is 10%, and Rusty believes MET is on track for the next calendar year. Rusty mentioned that the new Heights connector to downtown has really grown in popularity. Paratransit showed a 10.1% increase on weekdays and 16.1% on weekends.

Jeff informed the Board that the Teamster Negotiations will start on May 6, 2024.

Items from the Board

Jeff talked to the board about the art wall in the new terminal. The Airport has a policy for temporary art to be displayed and there hasn't been any interest from the public. Jeff will continue to discuss the possible options to move forward in the future to look at something outside of the policy for temporary display at no cost to the Airport.

Jeff followed up with Denis about the USS Billings that is displayed in the Library. Jeff found out that it was first at the Airport and then moved to the Library. The thought was maybe having it displayed at the new City Hall building and not the Airport.

Jeff and the Board discussed the Art Policy at great length. David and Steve will talk to Jessica with the Yellowstone Art Museum.

Tour of New Concourse B

Steve adjourned the meeting at 5:06 pm

jm

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