

AVIATION AND TRANSIT BOARD MINUTES

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

The Aviation and Transit Board met in the Administration Conference Room at the Billings Logan International Airport on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 at 4:00 pm. Those in attendance included:

Aviation and Transit Board Members

Chuck Tooley
David Hummel, JR.
Megan Bostrom
Denis Pitman

City Staff

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

Guests

Debra Jackson

CALL TO ORDER

Chuck called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Debra Jackson attended the Board meeting to listen to the MET presentation. Denis asked Debra how she would rate the MET system; she said she would give it a 150%.

COURTESIES

None

Informational Items

- **Air Service Update from Jumpstart Conference**

Jeff presented a FY 2025 Air Service Development Support/Jumpstart Conference Updates handout to the board members. He talked about his goals for the new routes and carriers in FY 2025..Jeff stated that overall the ASD Committee is happy with the marketing in Billings. Seattle numbers are down slightly, and the PDX numbers have increased. American Airlines started their seasonal flights to Chicago on June 5, 2024, that flight will continue until October 26, 2024. Jeff announced that Sun Country's Inaugural flight is on June 19, 2024. The Air Service Communication Committee will be handing out Welcome Bags to the first arrival flight, and the Water Canon for the first departing flight. Jeff mentioned that Southwest is having some significant financial difficulties, unfortunately that means there won't be anything from Southwest until they turn around financially.

Jeff talked about the Montana Rendezvous. He went over the agenda with the board and invited them to the Tuesday August 20, 2024 dinner at the Edwards Jet Center. Jeff mentioned that currently he is aware that, Allegiant, Delta, and WestJet (based out of Calgary) will be at the Rendezvous. He is working with the community for multiple different daily activities for both Monday and Tuesday of the Montana Rendezvous.

- **Transit Facility Addition & Remodel**

Rusty showed the board members pictures of the areas that are under construction at the Transit Facility, the ground breaking on construction started on May 20, 2024. He stated that there were a few delays with a hazards report, but the results came back sooner than expected. A power line was going to be redirected, however Northwestern Energy found that the lines could not be sliced. Rusty and some of the other Administration staff are currently working out of the Downtown Transfer Station, which Rusty stated is somewhat nice for citizen training. The EV installation is executed and the contractor is waiting for supplies. The Telenet security cameras are fully executed and they will start to coordinate with the main contractor.

- **Teamster Contract Negotiations**

Rusty informed the board that he has been in Teamster Contract Negotiations since the first part of May. Things are still moving along, the Teamsters and the City Admin are trying to come to an agreement.

- **Airport Construction Update**

Shane gave an update on five different Airport Construction projects.

The first one is the parking lot project for the Air Traffic Control Tower. That project will be completed in two weeks and unfortunately, the trucks have to enter and exit through the Terminal loop road.

Another project that is finally moving forward is the Cargo Ramp Slot 5 project. After the underground boring incident with the contractor, they had a temporary solution in place to lay a cable on the ground for a few hundred feet to power all of the Airfield lighting. The permanent fix will occur when the lighting work for the Cargo Ramp and taxiway takes place. Knife River has hauled out over 1,000 truckloads of dirt to the north side of RWY 25 for the extension project. Shane plans to give the board members a tour of all construction projects at the August meeting.

Shane reported that Aviation Place Road rehabilitation project will begin after July 4, 2024.

The Terminal Expansion Project, unfortunately still continues. The contractors are currently working in the lobby area. The construction wall is set to be removed next week so that they can finish tying in the West side to the East side and Shane is hopeful that this will be finished by the beginning of July. The bathrooms on B Concourse are still currently closed; they will not open until the end of July. The plan is to finish the men's side first and then open it up as a unisex bathroom so they can finish the women's restrooms. Various work is still happening on the roof, the siding, and underneath the B Concourse. The contractor did finish the B4 jet bridge, which is now operational for all of the airlines using B Concourse.

Finally, the IP 9 window replacement project will begin after July 4, 2024.

- **Airport Administrative/Operational Reports**

Shane informed the board that the Budget presentation to City Council went well and the final approval should take place on June 6, 2024. Shane also reported that on May 22, 2024, the Air Traffic Control Tower held the annual Runway Safety Action Team (RSAT) meeting and it was more informative than anything else. On May 23, 2024, Ron Smith held the annual Aircraft Rescue Firefighting tabletop exercise as required by the FAA. Ron did an amazing job presenting and covered many items that would come up during an accident. Ron was very interactive with the group and obviously has a lot of experience.

The airport has started rates and charges discussions with all the Airline Corporate Real Estate Managers. So far, everything is going well and there hasn't been any questions or concerns from the Airlines.

Shane announced to the board that there is going to be a Retirement Celebration for Mark Evangeline on July 12, 2024. Everyone will be receiving an invitation soon.

Jeff and Shane recently recognized Mark and his crew with a STAR award for all their hard work they have done on the Terminal Construction Project. Specifically, they assembled more than 1,000 seats in the hold room that saved the Airport \$140,000, which is what the seating contractor would have charged to put seats together.

Chuck asked Shane if the new members could possibly receive a tour of the Air Traffic Control Tower. Shane will get something scheduled.

- **Transit Administrative/Operational Reports**

Rusty talked about the budget presentation and questions that City Council had for him regarding MET's finances. Council discussed the MET reserve account in great length regarding balance and expected expenditures.

Rusty reported that things are going well regarding ridership numbers. June has historically been a slow month due to schools being closed in the summer months, but so far, ridership appears to be maintaining at a slightly decreased level. In April, the fixed-route ridership increased by 44.6% over the previous year and paratransit increased by 20.2% from the same month.

Rusty also reported that MET went live with Google Maps for fixed-route trip planning; Rusty showed the board members a quick tutorial on how the feature works.

Denis wanted to let Rusty know that Jena, Transit's Advertising and Marketing Specialist, is doing an amazing job on the public service announcements for customer service; Rusty stated he will pass the message on to Jena.

Rusty indicated two more of the new paratransit vans are anticipated to be in service in the coming month.

The Transportation Security Administration Ground section will be meeting with Rusty and his team soon to relay updated information regarding available support activities and training.

Regarding personnel, Rusty informed the board that MET currently has vacancies for one driver, one dispatcher, one road supervisor, and a seasonal facilities support position.

- **No July Meeting**

Jeff informed the board that there will not be a July meeting, due to the July 4, 2024 Holiday. The next meeting will be on August 7, 2024.

Items from the Board

Denis thanked Jeff for attending the Funeral Director Meeting to discuss the transporting of Human Remains. Denis also asked Jeff and Shane if they could look into designating compact car spots in certain areas of the short-term parking lot.

David asked if there was an increase in parking because of the new flights, Jeff replied that when things fill up there is an overflow lot, that usually happens maybe a half a dozen times in a year.

Chuck adjourned the meeting at 4:55 pm

jm

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