



**AVIATION AND TRANSIT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, October 2, 2018**

The Aviation and Transit Commission met in the Administration Conference Room at the Billings Logan International Airport on Tuesday, October 2, 2018. Those in attendance included:

**Aviation and Transit Commission Members**

Peggie Gaghen, Chair  
Dan Farmer, Vice Chair  
Ken Behling  
Ron Spence  
Mark Astle

**City Staff and Guests**

Kevin Ploehn, Director of Aviation & Transit  
Shane Ketterling, Assistant Director of Aviation & Transit  
Mick McCarthy, Airport Operations Supervisor  
Paul Totton, Airport Operations Supervisor

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

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

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW AIRPORT OPERATIONS SUPERVISORS**

Mr. Ketterling introduced the two new Airport Operations Supervisors, Mick McCarthy and Paul Totton. He explained that Mick has worked as an ARFF/Airfield Maintenance Lead Worker at the Airport for the past 25 years; therefore, he is a seasoned veteran who understands how we do everything, he should be able to hit the ground running, and will do well in the position. Paul has a bachelor's degree in Fire Service Administration and previously worked for us from 1985–1999 as the ARFF Supervisor. Paul left the Billings Airport as he was offered the Assistant Fire Chief position for Rural Metro in Scottsdale, Arizona from 1999–2004. Paul then pursued additional interests and he moved to Dallas, Texas where he was hired to be the ARFF Sales Manager for Crash Rescue Equipment Services from 2004–2011. Most recently, Paul was the president of Coventry-Wren Associates where he provided Airport consulting services to small airports in order for them to maintain their Part 139 compliance as required by the FAA. Mick and Paul provided some additional background information on themselves and answered questions from the Commission.

**AVIATION AND TRANSIT GRANT UPDATES**

Mr. Ploehn provided an update on the grant status at the Airport and MET Transit. He started by telling the Commission that MET had been chosen for a grant through a competitive process for the replacement of five buses. The grant also had funds in it to replace the old bus lifts in the bus maintenance area. In previous years, MET had applied for this grant seeking funds for new buses but was unsuccessful. In this application MET applied for money for rehabilitated buses seeking to get more bang for the buck, or five refurbished buses versus three brand new buses. He also reminded the Commission that besides the normal bus and facility grant that MET receives annually, an additional \$195,000 was transferred to the MET. He indicated that they are waiting on the details for the competitive grant and would determine very shortly how the grant funds would be allocated. Mr. Ploehn then discussed the FAA AIP grants for FY 2018 where the Airport received \$3,221,000, most of which will cover the Terminal Expansion design fees. Mr. Ploehn went on to explain that in the omnibus bill from last Summer, \$1 billion in supplemental discretionary funds was allocated to the FAA for Airport projects to be used over the next few years. In the past, the Airport has rarely pursued discretionary funds because of the need to get into a four year waiting cycle for

high priority projects. Historically, Billings Logan International Airport (BIL) has been a small hub and was not eligible to seek discretionary funds for terminal construction work. The omnibus bill gave funding priority for these discretionary funds to small hub and non-hubs. BIL is currently in an interesting position, as it slipped into the non-hub category for the next year, making discretionary funds eligible for the Terminal project. Subsequently, staff is submitting additional grant applications for the supplemental discretionary grants, one for the Terminal and one for the design of the ramps impacted by ASR and the Terminal project, and is hopeful that BIL might be successful on one of those projects.

## **AIRPORT AND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATIVE/OPERATIONS REPORTS**

- ▶ Mr. Ploehn reported on the statewide bus rodeo competition that took place September 15 on the cargo ramps at the Airport. MET had a good showing with our operators winning rookie driver, 1st place in the paratransit division, and 3rd place in the bus division.
- ▶ Mr. Ploehn reminded the Commission that there would be an open house to show off the Terminal design as it currently stands, and to listen to the public comments on what they felt should be included. Mr. Ploehn then proceeded to show the Commission some of the architectural mock ups.
- ▶ Mr. Ploehn informed Commissioners that after 25 years Kim Annin, the Airport's Engineer, was retiring and they were all invited to come up and celebrate with us on Friday afternoon, October 5, between 2:30 and 4:00 p.m.
- ▶ Mr. Ploehn told the Commission that MET was in the final stages of readying the Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) system to go live. Mr. Ketterling showed a live demo of the buses on their routes and explained how the program works. Mr. Ploehn said next week was going to be a week of debugging the system, and then we were going live on October 8. Advertising has been scheduled for that week and a media release will go out as well.
- ▶ Mr. Ploehn discussed the recent Essential Air Service (EAS) meeting with Cape Air and the communities they serve. The communities being served had nothing but positive comments for Cape Air. Cape Air did a presentation and showed that the Montana market represented 15% of their business and they would like to continue. They showed some pictures of the new aircraft that they would start receiving next year, which is the TECNAM P2012. Billings should see these aircraft during 2019. Additionally, Mr. Ploehn and Morrison-Maierle met with Cape Air's operational folks to discuss the Terminal project and the need to relocate their aircraft and hold room to the west end. After showing them the proposed aircraft parking positions, they were all in agreement that this may actually be better for their operation and would gladly relocate.
- ▶ Mr. Ploehn reminded Commissioners Spence and Astle that their first term was expiring and the position vacancy was advertised in the paper. They both indicated that they were going to reapply.
- ▶ Mr. Ketterling briefed the Commission on the September 12 gyrocopter crash at the general aviation hangars. He described the events surrounding this unfortunate fatal accident to include what took place, airport staff involvement, scene security, and the possible cause of the crash. The FAA and NTSB investigated immediately afterwards, but the final report may not be available for approximately 12 to 18 months.
- ▶ Mr. Ketterling updated everyone on the status of our current construction projects. He explained that unfortunately due to the inclement weather and extended forecast the contractor in the long term parking lot, Askin Construction, is shutting down work for the year. Although phase one has been completed, phases two and three will have to wait until next Spring because they cannot currently obtain slurry seal due to the cool/wet weather. Mr. Ketterling identified that we recently awarded a contract to Empire Heating & Cooling for replacement of makeup air units that are on the roof of the Terminal and resupply fresh outside air to the kitchen. The existing units are twenty-five years old, have suffered repeated failures, and cannot sufficiently serve the kitchen area any longer.

- ▶ Mr. Ketterling informed the Commissioners that Rocky Mountain College is hosting a collegiate flight competition at the Billings Airport from October 6–11, 2018, and that five other flight schools would be participating. Mick McCarthy explained that the event would take place at the west end of the Airport and participants would use our small general aviation Runway 28L/10R. He outlined everything Airport Operations would oversee, which includes airfield safety and security, parking, escorts, coordination with the Air Traffic Control Tower, and many other items.
- ▶ Mr. Ketterling pointed out that our snow removal crews had to plow twice during the month of September and that we have not seen snow that early for approximately 20 years; hopefully, it is not a sign that it will be a difficult Winter like last year. Additionally, our two new multi-tasking snowplows will arrive sometime in November and we will plan to show these to the Commissioners at the December meeting.

### **DISCUSSION OF NOVEMBER MEETING ON ELECTION DAY**

Mr. Ketterling identified that the November Aviation and Transit meeting falls on Tuesday, November 6, which is Election Day; therefore, everyone agreed to meeting the following day.

### **ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Spence updated everyone on the role he has taken on to help coordinate the local fund raising efforts for the USS Billings.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

KP:mdb

cc: Aviation and Transit Commission  
Chrono  
City Administrator  
Mayor  
City Clerk