

**COUNTY OF MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN  
Sawyer International Airport  
Airport Advisory Committee**

**Thursday, December 1, 2011, 4:00 P.M.**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Second Floor Conference Room  
Airport Services Center  
Gwinn, MI 49841**

- Members Present:** Committee Members Fred Benzie, John LaCourt, Frank Rosado, Andy Sikkema, Scott Schulz, Steve Rodgers and Charles Bergdahl.
- Members Absent:** Committee Member Jim Cihak.
- Staff Present:** Keith Kaspari, Airport Manager
- Staff Absent:** Scott Erbisch, Director of Operations and Interim County Administrator.
- Guests Present:** Roger Bentlage, Bill Landry, Fred Joyal and Ann Joyal.

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Benzie at 4:04.

**2. Approval of the Agenda:**

Committee Member Sikkema made a Motion to Approve the Agenda, with a second of support by Committee Member Bergdahl.

Motion passed.

**3. Public Comment:** None Noted

**4. Approval of Minutes:**

Committee Members reviewed the minutes from the Advisory Committee meeting held on Thursday, October 1, 2011.

Committee Member Sikkema made a motion to approve the September minutes as revised with corrections.

A Second of Support was offered by Committee Member Rosado.

Motion Passed.

**5. Items for Discussion:**

**A. Backup Emergency Power: General Aviation T-Hangar**

Staff and the committee members continued discussion from the October meeting regarding the power outage that occurred to the General Aviation T-Hangars due to the high winds experienced in late September.

The power outage resulted in the rescheduling of flights for a Young Eagles event sponsored by the local chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association.

During the October meeting, staff was directed to provide a cost estimate to install three transfer switches so that in the event of a future and extended power outage, staff would be able to provide emergency backup power to those GA T-Hangar tenants that need access to their aircraft with the use of a mobile generator.

Staff provided the cost estimate from one local Marquette based electrical company with a cost of \$12,795 to conduct the following work:

“Provide and install (3) manual transfer switches and outlets for emergency generator tie-in.”

Price quoted included all materials, prices, labor, and electrical permits.

Chairman Benzie made a motion to spend \$12,795 to provide for transfer switches to the general aviation t-hangars.

Chairman Benzie provided a summary to Committee Member Rodgers due to his absence for the October meeting.

Additional discussion ensued, with the committee requesting of staff to ascertain the possibility of providing a separate “transfer switch” to each of the 40 GA T-Hangars.

Mr. Kaspari commented that in the event of future power disruptions to the airport facility, and that staff will ensure that all areas of the airfield, including general aviation T-Hangars, will be checked to ensure that power has been restored.

With no second of support to the Motion, the Motion failed.

**B. Sawyer's 10-Year Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP)**

Airport staff presented a revised and final copy of Sawyer's 10-year Airport Capital Improvement Program for FY-2012 thru 2022.

A handout of the 10-year plan and letter of memorandum to justify the projects as requested in the plan, was provided.

It was communicated that this plan will be submitted to the County Board for review and approval at their meeting scheduled for December 6.

Significant discussion ensued.

Chairman Benzie questioned the removal of the Concept Budget Report project estimated for FY-2018 at less than \$30,000.

Due to the FAA's communication at the September Michigan Airports Planning Meeting, it was communicated that for Sawyer to receive a turf runway, the entire costs of that project, would be 100% on the cost to the County of Marquette.

Committee Member La Court offered a motion to recommend the submittal of the plan to MDOT and the FAA.

A second of support was provided by Committee Member Rosado.

Motion passed with Chairman Benzie voting naye.

**C. Crosswind Runway Concept**

Staff and members of the committee discussed the concept of a future crosswind runway at Sawyer.

Committee Member La Court inquired as to what the rules would be, to allow an aircraft operator to land in the turf areas of the airport.

Committee Member Rosado, who is also the Control Tower Manager, provided a response, in that no clearance would be provided for that operation.

Mr. Kaspari replied that since any design and construction for a future turf runway would be at 100% cost to Marquette County, staff made the decision to remove the project until further notice.

Additional discussion ensued.

**D. Discussion: Length of Sawyer's Runway**

Staff and members of the committee continued discussion from prior meetings regarding the length of Sawyer's runway at 12,366 feet long, and the cost to maintain the 3,366 feet length of runway.

With the discussion completed regarding the discussion point for the crosswind runway, Chairman Benzie requested that this agenda item be carried over to the meeting scheduled for January 5, 2012.

**6. Informational Items:**

**A. Trip Report: 2011 Air Service Workshop**

Staff updated the Committee Members on a recent trip report to the 2011 Air Service Workshop hosted by the Sixel Consulting Group.

Mr. Kaspari attended this workshop and provided an update to Members of the Committee regarding a meeting with four small(er) airlines for the intra-state air service concept between Marquette and the Upper Peninsula, and Lansing.

Mr. Kaspari provided a summary of his meetings with the airlines, and remains hopeful that staff can encourage a future meeting and visit to showcase Marquette County and Sawyer International Airport.

**B. Sawyer Capital Plan Submittal:**

Mr. Kaspari provided a verbal report regarding the submittal of Sawyer's Capital Plan for Fiscal Years 2013 – 2014 & 2015. Discussion ensued.

Committee Member Rosado offered a Motion to recommend the submittal of the plan to MDOT and the FAA on or before December 15, 2011.

A second of support was provided by Committee Member Rodgers.

Motion Passed.

**7. Public Comment:**

Fred Joyal provided comment regarding the recent power outage to the General Aviation T-Hangars, and questioned why it took UPPCO so long to respond.

Roger Bentlage and Bill Landry provided examples for the means to provide backup power.

**8. Staff and Committee Member Comment:**

- Committee Member Schulz provided comment regarding the pricing of fares for a member of his family flying in to Escanaba in contrast with flying in to Marquette.
- Airport Manager Keith Kaspari provided an update regarding the materials or handouts that were provided, as follows:
  - MDOT passenger report for Michigan’s commercial service airports;
  - Air Traffic Operations for 2011 thru November;
  - Air Transport News, December 1, 2011, “AMR and American Airlines Receive Court Orders Enabling Continued Normal Business Operations;”
  - American Association of Airport Executives, November 30, 2011, from Spencer Dickerson, regarding a story in the Washington Post on potential cut-backs to the FAA’s Contract Tower Program; and,
  - CY-2011 passenger totals thru November.
- Committee Member Rodgers provided an update on the recent notice of the AMR Corporation, the parent company to American Airlines, to reorganize under Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings.

For Sawyer, Mr. Rodgers commented that there is no intention to plan for any schedule changes to Sawyer’s existing service to Chicago O’Hare.

Mr. Rodgers provided additional comment that in mid-November, American Eagle’s CRJ-700 aircraft type is now being routed to Sawyer to receive scheduled maintenance.

This aircraft type was relocated from Abilene, Texas to Sawyer.

- Committee Member Rosado provided comment regarding air traffic operations.

**9. Adjournment**

Chairman Benzie requested a call for adjournment.

Committee Member LaCourt offered a motion to adjourn the meeting, with a second of support by Committee Member Bergdahl.

Motion Passed.

Chairman Benzie adjourned the meeting at 5:24