

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

Thursday, October 6, 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 and Jim Cihak.

Members Absent: Committee Members Charles Bergdahl, Scott Schulz and and Steve Rodgers.

Staff Present: Scott Erbisch, Director of Operations and Interim County Administrator, and Keith Kaspari Airport Manager

Staff Absent: N/A

Guests Present: N/A

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Benzie at: 4:10.

2. Approval of the Agenda:

Committee Member Cihak made a Motion to Approve the Agenda, with Committee Member LaCourt providing a second of approval.

Motion passed.

3. Public Comment: None Noted

4. Approval of Minutes:

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

A motion was offered to approve the September minutes by Committee Member Cihak, with a Second of Support offered by Committee Member Rosado.

Motion Passed.

5. Items for Discussion:

A. General Aviation T-Hangar Backup Power

Staff and committee members discussed at length, the incident regarding the recent and extended loss of electrical power for the General Aviation T-Hangars.

Most likely caused by the high winds that swept through Marquette County on Thursday, September 29, it is believe the high winds caused a power outage for the General Aviation T-hangars, with the electrical power coming into the hangars via a power pole located on 4th street.

No other electrical problems were reported by airport staff or by any airport tenant personnel.

Mr. Kaspari provided comment that he would contact a local electrician to see what the cost would be to provide connections to the main power source to allow tenants to access their aircraft.

Significant additional and high-spirited discussion ensued.

B. Sawyer Airport Department Budget Update

- Mr. Erbisich provided an update to the Committee Members regarding the status of the department budget for upcoming FY-2012, with the fiscal year beginning on January 1, 2012.

The Marquette County Board of Commissioners is reviewing the department budget for the airport, and is recommending a transfer of approximately \$200,000 to the airport stabilization fund for FY-2012.

- Mr. Erbisich provided an update to the Committee Members regarding the current status of the renewaFUEL facility.

Additional discussion ensued.

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

Airport staff presented a revised draft 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 was provided.

Staff expressed their concern, due to the potential and future lack of future AIP discretionary funding for the completion of the two major projects, as follows:

**1. FY-2012, Runway Lighting and Shoulder Rehabilitation.
Engineer's Estimate: \$2,560,000.**

This project will now require staff to complete the project within two construction seasons, as staff was advised that Sawyer will not receive any AIP discretionary funding for this project.

Additionally, for this project, we will be required to reduce the shoulders from the current 75-feet wide, to an FAA-standard 25-feet wide.

Note: Staff requested an additional 15-feet to allow heavy equipment to get behind the runway edge lights due to heavy snow accumulations and easier snow removal operations.

The additional 15-feet of runway shoulder would be allowed, but allowed at 100% of the cost to the County of Marquette – estimated at approximately \$500,000.

Therefore, a reduced shoulder width from 40-feet as originally requested, to an FAA standard of 25-feet, should bring the project budget closer to a revised engineer's estimate of \$2,100,000 in contrast with a current estimate of \$2,560,000.

Due to the requirement to proceed with a two-phase project for completion, staff will be required to completely re-prioritize the projects within the 10-year plan, prior to final submittal due on or before December 15, 2011.

**2. FY-2014, Runway Asphalt Pavement Rehabilitation.
Engineer's Estimate: \$4,360,000.**

Staff was advised that this project is still competing for AIP Discretionary funds.

Staff and the Committee continued discussion regarding the possibility of completing the rehabilitation of Taxiways Echo and Foxtrot prior to the rehabilitation of the asphalt section of the runway.

Additional revisions to the plan would be made for a draft presentation to the Committee Members for the November meeting.

Mr. Kaspari provided an additional update on the possible funding status with AIP Discretionary funding for the as-projected FY-2014 project for the rehabilitation of the asphalt pavement on the runway that has a current engineer's estimate of approximately \$4,360,000.

One of the major projects as requested of the Committee, would be to provide for a future turf crosswind runway for light aircraft.

Mr. Kaspari was advised by FAA officials that if Sawyer wanted a turf crosswind as described in the September minutes, that Marquette County would be required to fund this project at 100%.

This was due to discussion that the turf runway would not compete for the level of justification needed to expend a minimum of \$800,000 of Airport Sponsor AIP Entitlement funds for the construction, with additional funds needed for project design.

Extensive discussion ensued, regarding the concept of a future crosswind runway (turf or pavement), in addition to on-going discussion on the current and future length of Sawyer's runway.

The FAA is continuing to only provide future FAA funding support to 9,000 feet, or to the intersection of Taxiway Bravo.

Additional discussion continued regarding information contained in the plan, as well as staff's comments and concerns on the letter of memorandum.

Staff and the Committee continued discussion of the ACIP regarding possible future funding limitations due to the call for decreasing discretionary and non-discretionary federal spending.

It is the opinion of staff, that the FAA will not approve the expenditure of Sawyer's annual AIP Entitlement funds for the design and future construction of a turf crosswind runway due to the requirement to complete higher priority projects.

6. Informational Items:

A. FY-2011 Capital Projects Update (Snow Removal)

Staff updated the Committee Members on the status of the purchase of a snowblower. This is the second highest priority project for staff for FY-2011.

Staff advised the Committee that the FAA issued Grant No: 3-26-0153-3511 to the County of Marquette for the purchase of the snowblower and two plow blades, and that a Purchase Order has been submitted to Industrial Marketing.

This grant will provide a total of approximately \$835,000 (including state and local funding), with the balance of the needed funding (approximately \$58,740 being derived via the FAA's future transfer of approximately \$180,000 +/- of Sawyer's FY-2009 Entitlement funds, with the balance (+/- \$121,260) being re-directed to SAW's FY-2012 program.

Staff remains optimistic that the airport will be able to take delivery of the two plow blades in time to put them into service for the upcoming winter season.

Staff anticipates delivery of the snowblower in the late spring or early summer of 2012.

B. Trip Report: 2011 Fall Conference, MAAE

Mr. Kaspari provided a verbal report regarding the 2011 Fall MAAE Conference.

Discussion ensued.

7. Public Comment: None.

8. Staff and Committee Member Comment:

- Mr. Erbisch provided comment to the Committee regarding news reports on American Airlines and their parent company, AMR.
- Mr. Erbisch provided comment to the Committee regarding personnel changes for the department, and the future retirement of Jesse Carlson.
- Mr. Kaspari provided a handout of the cost of fuel, which is estimated to not include local and state taxes.
- Mr. Kaspari provided a copy of the quarterly marketing update from Cheryl Cox on the airport staff.

Ms. Cox mailed 579 notices to aircraft owners regarding the winter hangar opportunity for the storage of non-Sawyer based aircraft.

Ms. Cox directed her correspondence to those aircraft owners located in the Upper Peninsula and Northern Wisconsin.

Unfortunately, Ms. Cox received no respondents.

- Mr. Kaspari provided an update on the status of the former Environmental Assessment that Mead & Hunt completed many years ago, as follows:
 - The update of the EA could be completed within 18 to 24 months;
 - The life span of the EA is approximately three-years, but could possibly be extended to five years; and,
 - The cost for the EA update would range between \$150,000 to \$200,000.

Mead & Hunt officials provided additional comment that the airport would need to justify to the FAA regarding the purpose and the need.

- Mr. Kaspari provided an update regarding Sawyer's application to the USDOT Small Community Air Service Grant program, for intra-state service to Lansing.

Sawyer was not selected as a recipient of the grant funds, whereby other Michigan airports were, as follows: Kalamazoo, Escanaba and Manistee.

- Mr. Kaspari provided comment to the Committee Members regarding the future need to complete a Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) selection process that Sawyer staff would need to complete for the future selection of an Engineering, Consulting and Planning firm.

Marquette County has contracted for services with Mead & Hunt since approximately 2006.

With a QBS selection process, and after the engineer has been selected, MDOT would then complete the reviews to ensure that the fees proposed by the professional consulting firm, are appropriate and comply with MDOT's requirements, and would then issue their recommendation to support the selection of the consulting firm to the airport.

- Mr. Kaspari provided additional comment regarding the pattern work of a specialized aircraft.

Committee Member Frank Rosado, who is SAW's Air Traffic Manager, and who was on-shift that day, provided air traffic safety services to a Boeing 757 from Andrews AFB.

- Committee Member LaCourt provided comment on the stop signs adjacent to the renewaFUEL facility.
- Committee Member Benzie provided a comment regarding the popularity of the Ford Airport Days event located in Iron Mountain.

9. Adjournment

Chairman Benzie requested a call for adjournment.

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

Motion Passed.

Chairman Benzie adjourned the meeting at 5:36.