

COUNTY OF MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN

Marquette Sawyer Regional Airport Airport Advisory Committee Thursday, April 11, 2024

Minutes

Members Present: Bob Muelle, Karen Alholm, Scott Bolster, Sarah Skinner, Michael Roe
Staff Present: Duane DuRay, Airport Manager; Bradley Wheeler, Assistant Airport Manager
Public Present: Greg Durand, Bruce Finn, Wayne Theurer

Call to Order: 4:00 p.m.

1. **Approval of the Agenda:** The agenda was moved for approval by Bob Muelle with support from Scott Bolster. All members were in agreement.
2. **Public Comment:**
 - A. None
3. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from March were moved for approval by Karen Alholm with support from Sarah Skinner. All members were in agreement.
4. **Items of Discussion:**
 - A. **Vision/Mission Statement:** Revisiting this item from the last meeting, members and staff heard and discussed some statement proposals brought forward by Bradley Wheeler and Bob Muelle. The Committee decide to move forward with a motion to adopt Bradley Wheeler's Vision Statement and Bob Muelle's Mission Statement. The motion was made by Sarah Skinner with support from Scott Bolster. All members were in agreement.
 - a) **Approved Vision Statement:** The Airport Advisory Committee will employ a forward-thinking, innovative, and strategic mindset with a balanced approach toward planning, staffing, and equipment acquisitions to ensure operational excellence and develop Marquette Sawyer Regional Airport into a best-in-class facility.
 - b) **Approved Mission Statement:** The Airport Advisory Committee will assist and advise the Marquette County Board of Commissioners and airport administration in airport operations, working with Fixed Base operators, hanger owners and renters, airport users and local business leaders. The Committee will work with and advise airport management in seeking operational solutions as well as helping promote a close working relationship between the airport and the surrounding community.
 - B. **Goal Setting:** Bob Muelle described his plans to focus on the viability of an RVR system that could enhance airport operations in inclement weather as well as his hope to reestablish MQT as the airport's identifier. Members also discussed the need to readdress the Airport Master Plan and the ongoing study conducted by Steven Baldwin Associates.
 - C. **MQT Identifier Discussion:** Assistant Airport Manager Bradley Wheeler, provided information that he collected regarding the steps required to change the airport identifier from SAW to MQT. He described the Joint Order 7350.9GG regarding Location Identifiers. A discussion took place regarding the motivation for this change, culminating in the need for consistency, the goal to eliminate the confusion, and the hope to standardize the airport's identity. This will continue to be worked on by Bob Muelle and Bradley Wheeler by developing a survey.
5. **Informational Items & Project Updates:**
 - A. **Hangar 664:** Engineers and staff are working together to complete the final items that experienced delays. Expected project completion in summer 2024.
 - B. **Building 608:** This building functions as a support facility for the Envoy MRO. Through the use of a CARES Act grant, this building received new siding, windows, doors, among other upgrades. This project is at substantial completion, it identified a few minor defects that will be remedied in the coming weeks as weather improves.
 - C. **Argonics Roof Drain Project:** Recurring issue with roof drain system causing floor drains to overflow and flood the facility. This is a CARES Act project with United Contractors completing the work. The project is on schedule to be completed during in Spring 2024.

- D. Building Demolition Project: MRD is working diligently to keep this project on schedule. Abatement is complete and all buildings are completely down except for 725 and 726. Upon completion, all building sites will be leveled off and hydro-seeded. The permanent fencing at 600 and 426 will be completed soon, allowing for removal of the temporary fence. This project remains on schedule for the May deadline.
- E. Terminal Reconfiguration Project: The project bid opening took place and the bid was awarded to Closner Construction and Sales, Inc. The initial Pre-construction meeting will take place in the coming weeks. The plan is for this project to have minimal impacts on airport operations. This project will be funded through airport reserves.
- F. Air Traffic Control Tower: The airport has in the past and continues to pursue grant funding to provide a comprehensive update to the tower, including communications technology, elevator replacement, emergency egress equipment, HVAC, etc. However, due to voice switch equipment failures, the airport has moved forward to purchase a Liberty Star IV voice-switch system from Frequentis Canada. This component of the project will total around \$115,000. This is not reimbursable funding, but will expedite the timeline for completion to where there would be minimal impacts on Summer operations. Installation is planned to start on May 8th.
- G. Selfridge ANGB Refueling Wing Relocation: Selfridge ANGB conducted a site visit on 3/13/2024. Representatives for multiple agencies reviewed facilities, ARFF capabilities, security, fueling items, among numerous other aspects of the airport and its operation. Overall, the site visit was productive and there will be more to follow. All items are on schedule for their operation to land the week of July 9-15.

6. Late Addition:

- A. Board Approval of Engineering and Design Grant for General Aviation Apron. This will include 24,000 square yards of pavement in front of the FBO that will utilize a number of methods to rehabilitate the pavement and another 12,000 square yards to be completely reconstructed to the north. Remaining segments will be abandoned and removed except for a taxi lane to get to the T-Hangars.

7. Public Comment:

- A. Greg Durand: Building new hangars on the abandoned pavement may be a beneficial development. Status of building 600 site development? None at this time. Status of Hangars 400 and 402? Discussion with NFS and other groups are ongoing. Rumor of an Amazon facility? Not to Staff or Committee knowledge. CARES Act funding distribution list. Available upon request. USAF operation changing the FBO hours? Not at present. Karen Interview with Baldwin Associates address governance? Uncertain until interview happens, additional questions to be directed to the County Administrator. InvestUP has some objectives to see this outcome, however the board would like the study complete before forming any opinions. Study participants? Tenant businesses, Airlines, FBO, and other stakeholders. Would like to see open minded approach to the Airport planning.
- B. Wayne Theurer: Asked questions regarding the airport's terminal expansion. Timelines, plans, and potential operational impacts. Additional information will be passed along in airline specific meetings.
- C. Bruce Finn: Ice Hazard on the T-hangars requested that it be on the agenda when updates are available. Asked about the feasibility of the tower to have ADS-B. Scott explained that this is not approved by the FAA and cannot be used for air traffic management operations. Only FAA-certified Tower Radar displays can be used. Hangar space availability concerns, other developers, or structure types? This was something that the County Board did not want to allow due to lack of leases at present time, could be revisited now that circumstances have changed. It must take into account the planning process and airport's future plans. The need for building space for the general aviation clubs, specifically EAA and the Young Eagles is a concern that continues to grow as the airport removed building 600. Frustration of the airport's use of consultants, is this required? Most of these are associated with FAA requirements, additionally independent fee assessments (IFEs) are required for any project conduct with FAA funds.

8. Staff and Committee Member Comment:

- A. Scott Bolster asked about the timeline of installation and training. Airport Manager Duane DuRay stated that the coordination will be confirmed with the installer regarding training as well as potential tower closures, if required. More information will be available as the installation gets closer.

9. Adjournment: Motion by Karen Alholm with support by Scott Bolster. All members were in agreement. Meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.