

**Aviation Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2012 – Palmer, Alaska**

Meeting held at New Horizons Telecom - Palmer, AK

Meeting called to order by Chairman Lee Ryan at 10:03 a.m.

PRESENT: Lee Ryan, Jim Dodson, Tom George, Steve Strait, Frank Neitz, Mike Stedman, Dave Karp, Tom Nicolos, Judy McKenzie, Ken Lythgoe, Bob Hajdukovich (via phone)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Marc Luiken (DOT&PF), Steve Hatter (DOT&PF), Byron Huffman (FAA), Mike Coffey (DOT&PF), Becky Iles (DOT&PF), Linda Bustamante (DOT&PF), Ethan Birkholz (DOT&PF), Jessica Della Croce (DOT&PF), Bill O'Halloran (DOT&PF), Allen Kemplen (DOT&PF), Megan Byrd (DOT&PF), Judy Chapman (DOT&PF), Todd Hanley (DOT&PF), Verne Skagerberg (DOT&PF), Joy Journey (Alaska Air Carriers Association), Jane Dale (Alaska Airports Association), Archie Giddings (City of Wasilla), Brad Sworts (Mat-Su Borough), Debbie Passmore (Mat-Su Borough), Dave Palmer (Mat-Su Aviation Advisory Board), Mike Weller (Mat-Su Aviation Advisory Board), Steve Colligan (Mat-Su Assembly)

MINUTES: Motion: Judy McKenzie moved to accept minutes with no changes, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Chairman Ryan – Welcomed all and reviewed board's agenda. Jim Dodson and Steve Strait asked to add resolutions to the agenda. Dave Karp moved to accept the revised agenda, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Luiken – Welcomed board and visitors. Thanked staff for all of the work setting up the meeting, and New Horizons Telecom for the use of their meeting space. He spoke about the progress being made with the Alaska International Airports System, and his trade mission to China with Deputy Commissioner Hatter. He also briefly touched on the Capital Budget, the Aviation System Plan, Willow Lake, Service Based Budgeting, and the newly published video - Aviation – Alaska's Lifeline.

AGENDA:

Statewide Aviation Issues: Deputy Commissioner Hatter updated the board on the following key topics with ensuing questions and comments noted:

- Willow Airport – goal is to start the summer season with proactive communications with all users of this multi-use seaplane base to preempt or mitigate conflicts that have occurred in previous years.
- Bypass Mail – Senator Issa's reform act has been put on hold, but Legislators are still looking for ways to trim the USPS budget. Even though the act did not pass this year, it will be likely to come back in the future.

- FAA-
 - Reauthorization Bill: Economic stress has caused a reduction in funding of \$15-20 million dollars, but Alaska still did very well.
 - Deputy Administrator Christa Fornarotto – will be visiting Alaska again in May. Her visits are very important to getting Alaska’s message back to Washington D.C.
 - FAA Regional Airports Conference will be May 6th and 7th

- Northway Lodge – no indication of interest in buildings and no third party interest to date in starting up fuel sales business.

- Alaska International Airports System
 - Moving forward with the Strategic plan, and very pleased with the course it is taking.
 - Budgeting and Planning process is underway. The Airports Airline Affairs Committee is considering a 10 year fee schedule, which the state feels shows great trust in the administration.
 - Cargo Transfer – Hoping that the recent trade missions to China will show a shift in carrier business models. There will be another Cargo Summit in September.
 - Statistics are showing a 10% decrease in cargo, but it looks like the numbers are starting to come back up.

Alaska Aviation System Plan Update:

Jessica Della Croce (DOT&PF) shared a teaser for the next System Plan video which will focus on the challenges and costs of building, maintaining, and operating Alaska’s rural airports.

Northern Economics is developing a study of the Bypass Mail system; the team said that the study is the most complicated they have ever worked on, but they are moving ahead. Needs vs. Funding task group is trying to get a more comprehensive look at the needs of Alaska Airports. The information collected, which should be released late summer, is intended to support the Service Based Budget effort.

AASP website is updated regularly with 5010 inspection data, the additional system planning data update is expected early summer, and the pilot reporting feature is being discussed with pilots to find what the needs/uses of the data collected would be.

Central Region Airports Update:

Allen Kemplen gave a Central Region aviation update. He spoke to the potential aviation challenges facing the Mat-Su Borough with 200 private airports and a steadily growing population. It is expected that there will be twice the number of operations in the area by 2025, and a 250% increase in based aircraft. With the growth of the population, and construction squeezing out the private airstrips, the demand on public airports is expected to increase.

Maintenance and Operations Update:

Mike Coffey gave a presentation on Service Based Budget. The focus has shifted to needs vs. funding. Service based budgeting is not just about the amount of money given, but using that money in the most effective way.

Todd Hanley was introduced to the board as the latest addition to the M&O Team. Todd will be in charge of training efforts.

Mike shared a draft copy of the Rural Airports Maintenance Manual, and a portion of the new training video for high speed snow plow operations. He also told the board the state will be holding its first Maintenance Leadership Academy in September, which will be a 5 day training course.

Land Use Compliance Part 4:

Becky Iles gave a presentation on Land Use Compliance that included case studies from around the state.

Mat-Su Aviation Advisory Board:

The Mat-Su Aviation Advisory Board gave a presentation on aviation in the Matanuska Susitna Valley.

Resolution Request:

Jim Dodson asked the board to submit a letter to Lt. Gen. Hoog requesting that the comment period be extended for the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex draft EIS comment period. The military in Alaska is a huge economic engine. The Department of Defense plans on moving aircraft out of Eielson AFB to JBER due to budget cuts.

Motion to submit the letter was made by Steve Strait, seconded by Frank Neitz, and passed by the board.

Steve Strait asked that he be given time at the next meeting to present his resolution request.

FAA:

Byron Huffman gave a presentation on the Airport Improvement Program and how the airport capital improvement plan identifies, prioritizes, and assigns funding. He also provided an overview of AIP projects in Alaska.

Final Comments:

Judy McKenzie said she appreciated the efforts and transparency on the states part to work with the AAAC in the Operating Agreement negotiations.

Tom George commented that while people think progress is slow, we can see by the Mat-Su Aviation Advisory Board's presentation that progress on a number of aviation issues is being made. He encouraged everyone to participate in the Mat-Su Midair Pilot Survey.

Jim Dodson thanked the Mat-Su Aviation Advisory Board for their work on safety issues. Thanks to Marc Luiken and Steve Hatter for all their efforts in Alaska aviation.

Frank Neitz gave thanks to everyone. He said that he supports training at the rural airports and in the future would like to see the village contracting award go to the contractor that offers the best value rather than to the lowest bidder.

Tom Nicolos thanked the DOT&PF staff for their work on bringing the meeting to Palmer. He suggested the State work on a guideline for the boroughs to use for their own Airport Master Plans to provide uniformity throughout the state.

Steve Strait spoke about the change in Lake Hood management with the retirement of Andy Hutzal, and CR Leasing Chief Tina Schimschat also recently moving on to a new position. He praised Jessica on her work with the Lifeline video and system plan. He also mentioned that the concept of turning the AIAS into a port authority had come up during the ANC airport master planning efforts.

Steve Hatter gave thanks to Palmer participants for attending meeting and to New Horizons for allowing us to use their meeting space.

Lee Ryan spoke about how valuable the Bethel areas rural airport maintenance has been the past year during the hardest winter the area has seen in 50 years.

A discussion of possible locations for the next AAB meeting included Dutch Harbor, Kotzebue, Barrow, Dillingham and Cold Bay.

Meeting Recessed at 5:28 p.m.