

Pella Airport Committee Meeting – February 24, 2023

Members Present: Matt Hutchinson, Rick Gritters, Joel Weiler, Eric Recker, Trevor Nikkel

Members Absent: Jeff Bollard

Others Present: Denny Buyert, Shane Vande Voort

Approval of Minutes: November 18, 2022 minutes reviewed.

Motion to approve Recker, Support Rick. Passed unanimously.

Report from Matt that Ted Zylstra has declined to enter a new term on the committee. Joel Weiler renewed his 6 year term starting on 1/1/23.

Preliminary Tulip Time planning discussion, no major changes needed aside from a small amount of gravel to fill a low spot in the parking area that caused issues with the rain last year. Plywood will also be needed to span the grate under the entry gate.

Motion by Hutchinson to request a working session with the City Council to discuss and advise on the current state of the airport, with a focus on short term needs to maintain effective operations at PEA regardless of whether or not the SCRA proves to be viable. Support Weiler. Passed unanimously.

To the best of the committee's knowledge the most recent FAA approved ALP for PEA was completed in 1999. Advances in aircraft technology have lowered the number of Category C operations at airports such as PEA and the FAA's stance on instrument approach category requirements has softened which has the potential to significantly lessen the cost and implications of making PEA a viable long-term solution in its current location with the aid of 90/10 FAA funding. The committee also believes that making an educated decision on the future viability of the SCRA is impossible without an up-to-date ALP for PEA. Delaying the creation of a new ALP increases the risk of generating additional expenditures by the City without the aid of FAA funding to maintain effective operations at the Pella Airport.

Motion by Nikkel to recommend the City Council proceed with a new FAA approved ALP for PEA in 2023. Support Recker. Passed unanimously.

Airport managers' report to the committee February 2023

As reported by Shane Vande Voort

Equipment Update: The equipment has been working well overall this winter. The rotary broom is showing its age and we have parts on order for some needed repairs. The new truck and walk behind snowblower are great and the plow truck is working well. We have an urgent need for a riding mower in the spring and are glad to see it in the proposed budget.

FBO operations: Classic Aviation remains busy, and staffing is still an issue. We are excited to be adding a parts/facilities management specialist next month. As we try to attract and retain mechanics in a competitive environment shop size becomes a major issue. As the airport manager I'm aware and concerned that we don't have nearly as much heated shop space as comparable airports. As the FBO owner I continue to struggle with a lack of additional heated

hangar space that we were promised in 2021 and have been working on since 2008. We have seen up to a 40% increase in the cost of part time labor while operating on a fixed contract. Pella remains an active facility and an attractive destination and we are working hard as an FBO to meet airport user's expectations.

Hangar and ramp space: The new ramp is working wonderfully. It does take substantially more effort to plow and if we are eligible for FAA funding for an end loader, I think it should be considered. Hangar space is still a major need and a viable plan for the future of the airport should include adding significant hangar space without losing airport tenants or capacity in the process.

Special Events: Planning should begin for the annual Tulip Time Flight breakfast with an emphasis on auto parking issues that occurred last year.

Project and focus on improvement: DNR mandated modifications to the fuel tanks have been completed. Ongoing consideration of remodeling of the terminal including windows, carpet, and furniture is important.

Iowa Economic Impact study: Although the final version of aviation economic impact study has not yet been released, we want to continue to emphasize that the Draft shows that PEA contributes \$7million in total economic activity, has 23 on airport jobs, 60 job impacts, and 2455 visitors per year.

Preliminary discussion on recommendations to replace Ted Zylstra on the committee were discussed. This will be discussed further at the next meeting as no names were ready to be presented to the Mayor.

Adjourn: Motion by Recker. Support Gritters. Passed unanimously.

Next regular meeting will take place on March 24, 2023 7:00 AM.