

Pella Airport Committee Meeting Minutes May 15, 2020

Members Present: Rick Gritters, Dave Barnes, Tom Vander Linden, Ted Zylstra, Matt Hutchinson, Sid Pinney

Members Absent: Dave Erickson

Others Present: Shane Vande Voort, Denny Buyert, Mike Warin, Kyle Reynolds

Approval of Minutes: Motion: The Committee amended and approved the minutes from December 13, motion Ted Z. and 2nd Dave B.

Passed unanimously

New Business:

1. Discussion of allocation for CARES Act grant money for KPEA airport:

Sid Pinney presented an overview of the CARES act funding. Based on airport activity, \$69,000 is coming to the city of Pella. The amount of funds Pella is receiving is more than double that received by surrounding communities, due to the increased impact COVID-19 has had on aviation related activities in our community. Based on the fact that these funds are being made available due to the presence and vibrant activity of the Pella Municipal airport a sub-set of the entire committee, Sid P, Tom VL, and Ted Z, met with Shane VV to discuss opportunities to improve the airport with these funds, beyond them just being earmarked for the general operations fund. This discussion prompted the need to convene this special meeting to further discuss, and Shane was asked to put together a needs list to present to the full committee, ranked on his perspective of need;

1. Improving the large east storage hangar, built in 2008-2009. This building was intended to be temporary, and was never finished out with insulation, adequate lighting or heat. It is estimated it would cost \$60-\$70K to turn this into a storage hangar, that could store transient aircraft overnight, keep them warm, and be used to and de-ice aircraft in inclement weather.
2. Hangar and door improvements on North T-hangars
3. Terminal building remodel to replace old worn out interior décor and address exterior maintenance concerns.

Committee discussion on improvement topics at hand, and how to present the findings of the committee to the Mayor and City Council on how the funds should be allocated. The committee discussed and concluded that item #1 is most beneficial to daily operations at the airport. Corporate representatives from Pella Corp and Vermeer acknowledged, that while vacant corporate hangar space has been utilized for transient aircraft in the past, it is not a private company's job to help out the city due to lack of adequate infrastructure at the airport.

Proposal: Come before the Pella City Council and get on the agenda for Tuesday, June 2 with a recommendation from the Pella Airport Committee to use the CARES act funds, to improve the large east storage hangar to a condition that it can be used for overflow transient aircraft storage, de-icing, and protection during inclement weather by insulating, heating, and adding adequate lighting for a proper working environment. Additionally, any increased utility costs from the improvements will be paid by Classic Aviation and viewed as an additional expense related to their daily operations.

Motion: Brought to the floor by Tom VL, 2nd Ted Z.

Passed Unanimously

2. Recommendation that the Pella Airport Committee resume monthly meetings on the last Friday of every month. Lack of visibility from quarterly meetings, does not allow for timely interaction with the city.

Motion: Brought to the floor by Tom VL, 2nd Rick G

approved 5 to 1

Aye: Rick G, Tom VL, Ted Z, Sid Pinney, Matt H

Nay: Dave B

Project updates: Update by Denny Buyert

Wildlife fence project is going well; cattle / deer guard barrier on site ready to be installed.

Runway Rehab 2020

- Bid Letting Out
 - Two bids received one on budget
- CARES act has increased funding to 100%, equates to an additional \$300K for runway project
- East Hangar door has been addressed by the city

Regional Airport: Update by Dave B

- Property acquisition continues to move forward, roughly 1/3 is purchased or under contract.
- Working with Mahaska County Supervisors over farm to market road issue to try and settle outside of litigation
- Additional land owners are now in active acquisition negotiations, and opinion is that they are ahead of schedule

- FAA is pushing the grant application money to expedite the land acquisition

Airport Managers report to the committee: By Shane Vande Voort

COVID mitigation practices in place

Acknowledgement of cancellation of Tulip Time flight breakfast

Excited to see wildlife fence going up and improvements happening on the field

Council approval on Runway repair later next week

- 60 day closure will be scheduled later this fall

Concrete work in t-hangar

Mowing season is underway, mowers are serviced and operational

Congressional acknowledgement of airport activity and fund available for CARES act

- Activity at airport is recognized by FAA

Fuel Sales and Pilot service have all but shut-off due to COVID-19, revenue is down and runway closure in the fall will impact FBO operations moving forward

Final Comments:

Any faltering of service at the Pella Municipal Airport in the next 5-7 years prior to the new regional airport opening, should be viewed as a failure by the city and this committee. The airport has an economic impact on this community far greater than anyone realizes. It is our duty ensure we don't lose aviation services prior to closure of this airport.

Adjourn: Motion by Ted Z. & 2nd by Dave B.

Passed unanimously

Next regular meeting will take place on Friday, June 26th, 2020.