

MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 4, 2024

Anchorage Fire Department Training Center
1140 Airport Heights Road, Building C, Room 9

The Purpose of the MAAAC is to advise and make recommendations to the Assembly and the Administration regarding the Airport budget and operations.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

Commission Chair, Stormy Jarvis called the meeting to order at 12:03 PM and turned it over to Co-Chair Keenan Zerkel because she was participating via TEAMS.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Stormy Jarvis, Chair (via TEAMS)
Keenan Zerkel, Vice-Chair
David Frazier
John Pratt
Dan Owen

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Marty Edwards (Excused)

AIRPORT STAFF PRESENT

Kolby Hickel, MRI Acting Airport Manager (via TEAMS)
Amy Garcia, MRI Asst. Airport Manager
Julie Hixenbaugh, Commission Secretary

2. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- Keenan Zirkle proposed adding Cares Update to Business Items.
- John Pratt proposed adding the Highway-to-Highway Connection to Business Items.

Motion

- Keenan Zerkel moved to accept the revised agenda.
- Dave Frazier seconded the Motion.
- The Agenda was approved with additions.

3. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion

- Keenan Zerkel moved to approve the revised minutes for the January 4, 2024 and February 1, 2024 meetings and table the March 7, 2024 minutes for revisions.
- Dave Frazier seconded the motion.
- The January 4, 2024 and February 1, 2024 minutes were approved as presented. The March 7, 2024 minutes were tabled for revisions

4. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. CHAIR, Stormy Jarvis

None.

B. AIRPORT MANAGER'S REPORT

Kolby Hickel, Acting Airport Manager-

Airport Manager Position

- The position is being actively recruited.
- Several interviews have been conducted and will be presented to Mayor Bronson for his review.
- An update will be provided at the next MAAAC meeting.

Airport Layout Plan

- Still in progress.
- Airport Management is working with HDL and R&M to get it finalized.

Instrument Flight Procedures

- The IFP's went live on March 21st, 2024.
- Marty Edwards will keep track of the pros and cons and report to the MAAAC with any feedback.

Amy Garcia, Acting Airport Manager-

Hangar Party/Open House

- Merrill Field will host the 2024 Hangar Party/Open House on July 27, 2024 from 10 am to 2pm at the UAA hangar.
- Tables will be available for vendors.
- A Hangar Party/Open House working group meets monthly to finalize all the details, donations are welcome.
- Flyers will be sent out soon to all users and community councils.

Runway 7-25 Rehabilitation

- Design is at 95% moving to 100%with HDL.
- The Runway 7-25 Rehabilitation user group meets monthly before the MAAAC meeting, please contact Amy Garcia for any questions or concerns.

5. ORGANIZATION REPORTS

A. MRI ATCT – Caleb Newville, Operations Supervisor Tower

- There was a landing mishap on Whiskey Strip, it was a misalignment. ATCT will meet for an internal safety review on April 24th with Merrill Field Management and Maintenance staff, and the Anchorage Fire Department. The findings will be presented at the May MAAAC meeting.
- Steve Kegler reported the Whiskey Strip was in fantastic shape.

B. AOPA – Joe Darnell

- AOPA is on the Hangar Party/Open house committee, looking forward to having nonprofit groups and the leaseholders involved in the gathering.
- April 20th AOPA will hold their annual Spring Alaska Aviation Safety Seminar at UAA Aviation Technology Campus at Merrill Field.

C. Lake Hood – None

D. AACA – None

E. Anchorage Community Councils- None

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. CARES Update

- Amy Garcia provided an update of the CARES Grant spending. May 10, 2024 is the spending deadline.
- Gates S6 and N5 are being replaced in their entirety. A request for purchasing has been submitted, and the CARES Grant will cover 100% of the cost.
- Replacing all 32 gates on the field was previously denied by the FAA. The replacement of all the aircraft gates is on a future ACIP project. The Taxiway Quebec aircraft gate has a recurring loop problem, it is being addressed by the manufacturer and Airport Maintenance for a solution.
- The Airport Manager's office; 1025 Orca Street; and the USGS building projects are 90% - 99% complete.
- Amy will send Keenan a report on the proposed CARES money that might have to be given back, rough guess is that it is less than \$500,000.

B. Highway to Highway Extension

- John Pratt discussed a recent Anchorage Daily News article regarding the Alaska Department of Transportation's (DOT) initiative to connect the Seward and Glenn Highways.
- <https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/anchorage/2024/03/22/major-projects-would-reconnect-the-seward-and-glenn-highways-but-a-smaller-idea-has-traction>
- It has four proposed routes; two would significantly impact Merrill Field.
- The public comment period ends on April 7th DOT will hold key stakeholder workshops in May and June in addition to.
- MRI should make sure to reach out and be placed on those stakeholders list.
- The MAAAC supports any route that does not affect Merrill Field
- Merrill Field Airport and the MAAAC encourages everyone to please submit comments on the topic to DOT.
- <https://sewardglennconnection.com>

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Removal of Trees at the end of RW 34

- Mike Spernak asked when the trees at the end of runway 34 would be removed from the glide path.
- Amy assured the users that they are on the list to be removed and will use CARES money.

Security Cameras

- Marshall Severson – would like to have public access to all the security cameras. Could CARES money be used for this? (Amy Garcia) FAA funding is no longer available for security cameras. The platform is no longer being paid for and would probably have to be paid for with money from Merrill Field operational budget.
- Keenan – suggested to have Merrill Field investigate having a website to support public camera access for the users.

Highway-to-Highway

- Marshall Severson – The Rogers Park Community Council has a resolution to keep their park a park in relation to the Highway-to-Highway Extension Project. The community councils are keeping abreast of this project.

8. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Iditarod Airforce

- Keenan Zerkel: Great job on the Iditarod Airforce participation at Merrill.
- Two days of flying; 16 aircraft, four checkpoints and over 64 missions.
- Delivered 17,000+ lbs of dog care supplies, 900 pounds of trail marking supplies and 2,000+ lbs of checkpoint gear flown out.
- Received positive feedback from participants and Airport Management is anticipating to host for years to come.

New Instrument Flight Procedures (IFPs)

- Dan Owen has had his pilots chastised by a controller for asking for an approach because it shuts down Anchorage International. He was informed that the newly approved IFPs have been denied clearance for several reasons:
 - Shuts down Anchorage International Airport (34 and the Yankee approaches)
 - Missed approach into Elmendorf airspace
 - Causes opposite direction traffic conflicts at MRI
 - ATC was not involved in airspace planning.
- Dan would like to work with ATC, AOPA and AACA to work through these issues come up with a plan to get these new approaches implemented at Merrill Field.
- Caleb Newville – spoke to a couple of requests made for the new IFPs:
 - One approved for Yankee
 - One denied because there were six other planes doing pattern work on RW-25
 - All requested approaches should be evaluated by occurrence.
- Keenan – Asked why would an ATC deny a request just to deny it? Requested Caleb facilitate a discussion with the TRACON Supervisor and Dan Owen to discuss this matter.
- Kolby – Merrill Field would like the ATC Supervisor to coordinate with TRACON to figure out a solution to the problem of denying an approach just to deny it.

9. UPCOMING MEETINGS

- ➔ **Airport User Group Meeting:** Wednesday, July 10, 2024, 12:00 PM
Airport Manager's Office and TEAMS
- ➔ **Runway 7-25 Working Group:** Thursday, May 4, 2024, 11:00 AM
Anchorage Fire Department Training Center
1140 Airport Heights Road, Building C, Room 9and TEAMS
- ➔ **MAAAC Meeting:** Thursday, March 7, 12:00 PM
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10. ADJOURNMENT at 1:05 pm