

**STEVENSVILLE AIRPORT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

**APRIL 13, 2021 – 5:30 P.M.
STEVENSVILLE TOWN HALL**

STEVENSVILLE AIRPORT BOARD:

- Craig Thomas – Airport Board Chairman
- Ron McCann
- Dustin Wood
- Don Whitehair
- Duane Shinn
- Don Lorenzen

STEVENSVILLE AIRPORT REPRESENTATIVES:

- Shaun Shea – Airport Engineer (MMI)
- Tyler Reed – Airport Engineer (MMI)
- Tim Smead – Airport Manager (MMI)
- Brandon Dewey – Mayor
- Dempsey Vick – Town Council Rep
- Robert Underwood – Stevensville Treasurer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Justin Singletary – Montana FWP

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

- Meeting began at 5:30 PM

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Approved minutes from last month.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

- **Low Flying Aircraft Complaints.** Craig Thomas said there have been complaints about low flying aircraft.
- **Guidance from Chairman Craig Thomas.** Craig has spent a lot of time reviewing this. The airport does not have jurisdiction. Craig read the letter he wrote. Mr. Lorenzen objected to inviting anyone with concerns to attend the board meeting. Duane Shinn agreed with that.
- **Thank You Letter to Diane Stilson, FAA.** Craig Thomas drafted up a thank you letter for Diane Stilson (Helena FAA) for all of her hard work during the last project. The letter was passed around and signed.

4. AIRPORT MANAGER’S REPORT

- **Finance.** Robert Underwood explained that on the expenditures side, they are a little skewed – 107% over budget but it will balance back out once the Airport receives their grant from Montana Aeronautics. The airport project is 97% paid out. Duane asked when will the money come. Robert said when the project is complete. Mr. Lorenzen asked where the \$13K stimulus payment was. Robert said he hasn’t seen it in the system yet, it’s still coming. Craig asked what the expected expenditures were. Robert said we’re going to a budget amendment on the project. The goal is to get that money in the bank. Mr. Smead said next month, they should have a good idea what money is coming from Choice Aviation.
- **Engineering.** Mr. Reed told the Board that the Contractor had marked the aprons a few weeks back. The Contractor still needs to apply the second paint application as well as coal tar before the project can be considered complete.

- Operations. Mr Smead explained he is getting a weekly report together which includes tail numbers, and registration for fees. Coca-Cola is coming over tomorrow and having a conversation about installing a vending machine. They cover the cost of the machine, based on what is sold, the airport will receive a small amount from the sales. Could be located inside or outside – preferably outside. Choice Aviation is doing good so far, they plan to be there in 6-8 weeks. Haven't received any complaints from users with Choice. The airport is still on track with the Forest Service coming this summer. First round will be the 26th-30th for rappel training.

5. GUESTS

- **Justin Singletary, Montana FWP.** Craig introduced Justin Singletary, an FWP officer. Craig said the airport has been having deer issues for a while. In 2015, the airport mowed a strip for police to patrol, and herded them a bunch of ways. Duane asked Justin about a wildlife jump - make it so the animal can make it up to the ramp and they can jump out, but it prevents them from jumping back in. On the south side of the fence there is a pretty good drop so this may be a good location for this. Justin - Not sure how effective these are, would suggest speaking to MDT. Duane asked if he had seen them at an airport. Justin had not. This way you can herd them to go out that way, and it teaches them to move to that location. There's no water source. The deer seem content. The question came up if just anyone could shoot the deer except for a designated person? Justin said when he first started working in the Bitterroot, Chief Marble asked for kill permits and it seems like it's been working well. Kill permits are the last resort if you can't get them out of the airport. Whoever the Chief wants to allow to shoot the deer, Justin is good with it. Tim Meade called and ask if the Airport can have anyone kill deer? Justin said whoever the Chief is fine for letting him. The Chief called a few weeks later and asked Justin if he had designated Meade to kill. Justin said he welcomed anyone to obtain a kill permit and kill as long as that person was cleared by the police chief. Justin said you would want a kill permit with you while you're going after deer in case someone asks. The question came up: how are they getting in? Craig - they've been walking across the cattle guards. Justin looked into this, he suggested installing an automatic gate. Justin saw the construction access gate and noticed there was a gap that would maybe allow a deer to pass. Mayor - it's against the Town ordinance to discharge a firearm in town. Dustin - what about archery? The Mayor will look into this. Dusty - if the gate is completely open, then they can walk around the gate. If they place something that stops the gate from opening too far.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. **Discussion/Decision: Lease Renewals.**
 - a. William & Nancy Roschi (exp 7/8/2012)
 - b. Paul O'Leary (exp 7/8/2012)
 - c. Dean Whitesitt (exp 6/24/2013)
 - d. Craig Thomas (exp 10/13/2012)
 - e. Delbert Schwaderer (exp 7/19/2019)

There are a several people are in arrears. Craig asked how the board should address the renewals. Robert - need to make a recommendation to renew. 30 years. New rate will be 14 cents/SF. Motion for blanket renewal recommendation, motion approved.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Discussion/Recommendation: Possible revenue options for the airport.** Craig contacted the County about the existing gravel pit. The County had just had a meeting about the lifespan and it was determined it has about 2 more crushings and it'll be exhausted. They're looking at another location to be used. Duane hates gravel pits and he would be against gravel pits. Mr. Lorenzen asked why. Duane said it's an eyesore. The gravel pit would be north of the extended runway. This would create some income. The question was asked what would be the lifespan of the gravel pit? Craig still needs to look into it. Duane - what about dust? Craig said they would probably crush once a year. Could require them to use water. Lorenzen - made motion for it to be explored / continue to explore the possibilities. Motion approved.
- a. **Discussion/Recommendation: New Lease & Building Approval for Randy Okon.** New Lease & Building Approval for Randy Okon. Block 1, Lot 10. Looking at 60' wide x 50' . Motion was approved. Will have to follow building codes - 22nd is when they approve the lease. Council will approve that.

- b. **Discussion/Recommendation: New Lease & Building Approval for Charlie Hall.** Charlie is interested in Block 3, Lot 1. Motion Passed.
- c. **Discussion/Recommendation: Airport Handbook review and revisions (1981 edition).** Craig does not have a copy, he will email it to everyone.
 - i. **Discussion: Board member liability.** Mr. Lorenzen had understood that the board would be briefed on the FAA meeting but they were not. Lorenzen was upset that the letter was not read to the Board about the complaints. He's been in commercial insurance for 27 of those years. As volunteers, the board is liable for actions and inactions of the board. He gave an example of volunteers being sued from building a church. In our situation, if there are deer on the runway, a plane could land and kill people and the attorney bank will start filling up. The attorney could ask why the advisory board wasn't made aware of this. Say there's a 2M settlement, they could find the city 50% liable, say airport board is found 20% liable, some people may not have enough coverage. Mr. Lorezen recommends the board is briefed on the FAA's complaints. It allows the Board to participate and make valid responses which could help. Dustin - people have been receiving texts and this is correspondence. It needs to be brought to the board. Craig said he'd take responsibility on this. Robert - what Smeade did last Saturday was good and helped. Duane and Don didn't get the emails. McCann - if there was a way the Board could get a separate correspondence. Mayor - when you speak to liability... Lorenzen - that doesn't fly in a court room. In a court, they would pump it up.
- d.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Craig Thomas said the FAA visited the airport. He had an hour and half discussion about anonymous phone calls and emails the FAA had been receiving. The FAA said the airport looks pretty close to excellent. They said thanks for your volunteer efforts at this airport.

8. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting was adjourned at about 7:00 pm.

Next Meeting – Tuesday, May 11, 2021 @ 5:30 P.M. (Town Hall).