



Mark Gordon
Governor
K. Luke Reiner
Director

Wyoming Department of Transportation

AERONAUTICS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES



Sigsbee Duck
Chairman
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I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) Aeronautics Commission was held via videoconference on July 20, 2021. Chairman Duck presided, calling the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Duck led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

The following Commission members were present, constituting a quorum.

Sigsbee Duck, Chairman, District At-large

Steve Maier, Commissioner, District 5

Jerry Blann, Commissioner, District 2

Randy Harrop, Commissioner, District At-large

Bill DeVore, Commissioner, District 3

Director Reiner, Ex Officio, WYDOT Director

Bruce McCormack, Commissioner, District 4

Commissioner Anja Bendel was absent.

IV. INTRODUCTIONS

The following WYDOT staff and guests were present, and participated in the business meeting.

Brian Olsen, Aeronautics Administrator

Mike Kahler, Senior Assistant Attorney General

Cheryl Bean, Planning & Programming Manager

Ryan Thompson, Assistant Attorney General

Phillip Hearn, Engineering & Construction Manager

Shawn Burke, Air Service Development Manager

Sheri Taylor, Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

Kimberly Chapman, Aeronautics Commission

Manager

Secretary

Connie Golden assisted with virtual meeting management.

V. ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Draft Minutes

It was moved by Commissioner Blann, seconded by Commissioner Harrop, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2021, business meeting.

VII. UPDATES/DISCUSSIONS

A. Chairman's Update

Chairman Duck presented the Chairman's Update.

Chairman Duck thanked the Aeronautics Division staff for all of the work they do to coordinate the meetings.

Chairman Duck reported that he, Commissioner Blann, and Administrator Olsen were able to present a plaque to former Commissioner Doyle Vaughan's widow, Diana, during Mr. Olsen's recent trip to Jackson. The plaque was in honor of Doyle's service on the Wyoming Aeronautics Commission and to Wyoming's aviation interests.

B. Director's Update

Director Reiner presented the Director's Update.

COVID-19 Update

WYDOT's total number of COVID-19 cases has increased. The department does not track vaccinations, but the assumption is that the majority of employees sick or in quarantine are unvaccinated. The state ended special leave for COVID-19, so afflicted employees must now use traditional sick or personal leave.

Director Reiner reported that WYDOT is continuing to help around 350 employees complete telework agreements, and most will be approved. The majority of teleworkers are planning to use a hybrid work-from-home model; the work week will be roughly split between telework and time spent in the office. The director recognizes that telework has become the preferred work model for many, and WYDOT must ensure that the proper systems are in place to support teleworkers.

Budgetary Issues

The director updated the Commission on state and federal budgetary issues.

Federal

Reauthorization of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act is still in progress. The House passed the Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America (INVEST in America) Act, but the Senate has yet to pass a surface transportation bill. The current authorization expires September 30, 2021, and if Congress has not passed legislation by that date, a continuing resolution will be needed.

State

WYDOT leadership is currently building the FY2022 budget, which will be presented to the Transportation Commission in September for review and approval.

The Governor's office has published a timeline for the state budget. State agencies are currently developing their budget requests, to be submitted for gubernatorial review in September or October. The Governor must submit the final budget to the Legislative Services Office by early November. The department is on track to complete its budget request according to the timeline.

With the cancellation of the special (legislative) session in July, funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) will be incorporated into the standard budgetary process. The ARPA funds will most likely be a part of the legislative agenda in February 2022.

Director's Trip to Jackson

Director Reiner briefed the Commission on his recent visit to Jackson, July 12-14, 2021.

Wyoming Highway 22 (WYO 22)

The director had many conversations with constituents about the future of WYO 22, which is one of the busiest two-lane highways in the state. To address citizens' concerns, WYDOT has brought forward the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Review Process for WYO 22

by two years, to begin in 2024. Stakeholder input will be a critical component of the NEPA process, but until it commences, citizens are encouraged to brainstorm potential projects, hone ideas, and build coalitions. WYDOT is committed to making no changes to WYO 22 until the NEPA process is completed.

Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant

Teton County, Wyoming, and Teton County, Idaho, jointly applied for and received a BUILD grant for \$20 million from the US Department of Transportation (USDOT). Teton County (Wyoming) has requested WYDOT to serve as the direct grant recipient. After initially denying the request, the county and WYDOT are negotiating an agreement for managing the funds.

Arrestor Test

WYDOT has a catch-net truck arrestor system on Teton Pass for runaway vehicles. After a system failure last year (in which no lives were lost), the manufacturer made improvements and upgrades to the arrestor. At WYDOT's request, the manufacturer performed a system test on July 13, 2021, to increase the traveling public's confidence in the system. The test was successful, and video footage will be shared with the Commission.

Employee Housing

Retaining and recruiting employees is a problem department-wide, but especially in Teton County because of the high cost of living. WYDOT is working with Teton County to find ways to provide (affordable) employee housing. A plan to build employee accommodations at the WYDOT shop in Jackson has been delayed by prolonged negotiations with Teton County and the Town of Jackson.

Legislative Issues

HB0014

WYDOT continues to work through the requirements of HB0014. This act requires WYDOT to obtain a blanket easement for rights-of-way on public roads to facilitate broadband development. The working group has drafted a letter to the federal government as mandated by Section 2 of HB0014.

Related to broadband infrastructure, WYDOT is developing a "dig once" policy to support broadband expansion.

Electric Vehicles

WYDOT formed a Zero Emissions Working Group to develop a plan to install electric vehicle charging stations across the state. The working group's charge is to synchronize efforts by private industry and other entities to ensure charging stations are equitably distributed across the state.

Joint Transportation Committee

The next meeting of the Joint Transportation Committee will be August 17-18, 2021, in Rawlins. The legislators will tour the Rawlins WYDOT shop and construction projects on I-80.

Shirley Samuelson Memorial

A memorial event will be held for deceased WYDOT employee Shirley Samuelson on August 3, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. Ms. Samuelson tragically lost her life last year on WYO 22. Her engraved name will be unveiled on the employee memorial outside of Headquarters in Cheyenne. All commissioners are invited to attend.

C. Administrator's Update

Administrator Olsen presented the Administrator's Update.

Federal Legislative Issues

On June 22, 2021, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) began to distribute \$8 billion of funds from the ARPA to airports in Wyoming and nationwide. Wyoming airports will receive \$13.7 million for operations and concessions use; funds may not be used for capital improvement projects.

The latest framework of the bipartisan infrastructure package includes \$20 billion of funding for airports, and an additional \$5 billion for the FAA to upgrade airspace systems and for research and development. Mr. Olsen will monitor the package as it moves through the Congressional legislative process.

The House Appropriations Committee released their spending proposal for the USDOT on July 11, 2021. The proposal's funding levels for aviation are consistent with previous years: \$3.35 billion for airport improvement and \$400 million for supplemental discretionary funding.

Division Updates

Trip to Jackson

Administrator Olsen and a few other members of executive staff accompanied Director Reiner on his visit to Jackson last week. Mr. Olsen shared that the Jackson Hole Airport is now considered a small hub airport. To earn that designation, an airport must have at least 0.05 percent but less than 0.25 percent of the nation's annual passenger boardings.

Telework

The division has transitioned from emergency telework to the new telework protocols, as mentioned in the Director's report. Most of the Aeronautics staff will telework at least a few days a week.

Fuel Shortages

Wyoming airports, as well as several western US states, are currently experiencing a significant fuel shortage. WYDOT surveyed all of the airports and found two major causes for the fuel shortage: a constrained supply and a shortage of HAZMAT/commercial driver's license (CDL) drivers.

Several of Wyoming's commercial service airports in the state have either run out, or come very close to running out, of fuel. SkyWest has to tanker fuel from Denver for flights to the Gillette and Sheridan airports, which increases the weight of the planes. Heavier planes result in restricted passenger numbers, which in turn impacts the state and local costs associated with the Capacity Purchase Agreement (CPA).

General aviation airports have also been impacted by the shortages. Dubois and Hot Springs County airports are both out of Jet-A fuel. Dubois only has a small reserve of a few hundred gallons for emergency medical flights.

One possible strategy to mitigate the issue is increased working hours for CDL drivers. WYDOT has drafted an hours-of-service waiver for the Governor to sign, should it become necessary.

Following a question from Commissioner McCormack, Mr. Olsen updated the Commission on the Cheyenne Runway Project. Due to a shortage of low-alkali cement, a new mix had to be developed for runway concrete. It was approved by the FAA upon the completion of alkali-silica reactivity testing, and the contractor will start paving soon.

D. Air Service Development Program Update

Mr. Burke presented the Air Service Development Program Update.

1. General Matters

a. Summer Booking Trends

Tourist-driven traffic resulted in increased passenger traffic in June. Jackson's total passenger numbers were up 26 percent compared to June 2019. Sheridan bookings are up 266 percent compared to June 2019, and Riverton is up 151 percent. Business travel is still slower to recover, which is impacting the Rock Springs, Gillette, and Casper airports. Overall, passenger traffic in the state was up 11.3 percent.

Mr. Burke shared that commissioners may expect to see the 2nd Quarter Report in the next couple of weeks. Additionally, a per-passenger subsidy report will be prepared and sent to the Commission soon.

2. Standard Reports

a. ASEP Budget Forecast Report

Mr. Burke reported no changes to the ASEP Budget Forecast Report.

b. CPA Budget Forecast Report

Mr. Burke reported no changes to the CPA Budget Forecast Report. SkyWest's 2nd Quarter Statement was received after the deadline for the July packet mailing, so commissioners may anticipate changes to next month's report. Mr. Burke informed the Commission that WYDOT came in under the total contract guarantee for FY 2021. Those funds will roll over into next year's budget for the CPA program.

c. Percent of Grant Projects by City Report

Mr. Burke reported no changes to the Percent of Grant Projects by City Report.

E. Engineering & Construction Program Update

Mr. Hearn presented the Engineering & Construction Program Update.

1. General Matters

a. Crack Seal and Seal Coat and Mark Updates

Mr. Hearn reported that the Crack Seal Project has concluded, and final inspections have been completed at all but a few airports. Those remaining inspections will be completed soon. The Seal Coat and Mark Project is progressing well; temporary markings should be completed by late August and final markings by late September.

2. Standard Reports

a. Change Orders Report

Mr. Hearn reported two new change orders.

b. Statewide Line Items Report

Mr. Hearn reported three new line items for aviation encouragement and marketing grants.

- c. Bid Summary Report
Mr. Hearn reported no new bids. Corrections to last month's bids were included.

Mr. Hearn reported that the Saratoga project was re-let because the original bid was too high.

F. Planning & Programming Program Update

Ms. Bean presented the Planning & Programming Program Update.

1. General Matters

- a. 2021 Wyoming Aviation Capital Improvement Program (WACIP) Update Process
Ms. Bean reported that Wyoming airports have been invited to update their FY 2023-27 WACIP. Aeronautics staff are arranging individual meetings with each participating airport, the FAA, sponsors, and consultants to discuss CIPs and potential projects. Ms. Bean, Mr. Hearn, and FAA staff will present a workshop on the WACIP update process on August 4, 2021.

The process will be launched by next week via an email to the airport sponsors, and WACIP updates are due to the division on September 3, 2021.

- b. Staffing Update

Ms. Bean informed the Commission that she was able to hire a temporary planner on a one-year contract. The new planner will start in August.

2. Standard Reports

- a. Administrative Approvals Report

Ms. Bean reported there were no administrative approvals this period.

- b. Recovered State Funds Report

Ms. Bean reported the Recovered State Funds Report reflects one project recovery for \$14,792.

The total recoveries to date for this fiscal year are \$59,609.

G. UAS Program Update

Ms. Taylor presented the UAS Program Update.

1. General Matters

- a. General UAS Trends Among State DOTs

Ms. Taylor reported that recent surveys by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) have found that drone use for state DOT operations is increasing. The surveys also found that the most common types of UAS missions flown by state DOTs are: photo/video, surveying, infrastructure inspections, emergency response, and public education and outreach.

Ms. Taylor updated the Commission on UAS Program activities. Currently, the Wyoming Highway Patrol (WHP) is flying one to two missions per week; examples of their missions include accident reconstructions, tower inspections, and miscellaneous missions flown for other state/local entities. Public Affairs is going through the procurement process to purchase a drone and hopes to be flying missions within the next

month or two. Several WYDOT districts and programs have budgeted to purchase a drone platform in the near future.

Ms. Taylor plans to compile a report to provide to the Commission sometime next year on WYDOT's UAS Program. The report would identify how and where drones are being used, cost efficiencies resulting from drone use (time and money), and how drones improve safety.

Ms. Taylor reminded the Commission of the demonstration taking place on Thursday, July 22, 2021. A vendor will be demonstrating their product and will provide all collected data to WYDOT. Four missions will be flown during the demonstration: the Laramie rock fall, a bridge survey on Happy Jack Road/WYO 210, a road survey in Cheyenne, and an emergency communications tower scan in Cheyenne.

Ms. Taylor reported that while WYDOT does not currently conduct bridge inspections with drones internally, consultants are occasionally using drones on WYDOT projects.

IX. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Consideration of the FY21 WACIP Budget Modifications

The 100 percent federal ARPA operations and concessions grant allocations have been incorporated. Additionally, ongoing allocation adjustments for 100 percent federal match on Airport Improvement Program (AIP) projects allows state funding to be reallocated to other projects.

The remaining balance in FY21 is \$709,056 in state funds.

Action: It was recommended by Ms. Bean, moved by Commissioner Harrop, seconded by Commissioner Blann, and unanimously carried to approve the FY21 WACIP Budget Modifications as presented.

B. FY22 WACIP Budget Modifications

Ms. Bean reported that there were no modifications this period.

The remaining balance is \$258,634.

C. FY23-26 WACIP Plan

Ms. Bean reported that the FY23-26 plan was shared for informational purposes only.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration for Final Approval of Priority Rating Model (PRM) for Air Service Development

A draft of the PRM updates was previously approved at the May business meeting. No comments were received from the public during the public comment period.

Action: It was recommended by Mr. Burke, moved by Commissioner DeVore, seconded by Commissioner McCormack, and carried unanimously to approve the final 2021 Air Service Development Priority Rating Model as presented

B. Consideration for Final Approval of PRM for AIP

A draft of the PRM updates was previously approved at the May business meeting. No comments were received from the public during the public comment period.

Action: It was recommended by Ms. Bean, moved by Commissioner McCormack, seconded by Commissioner Blann, and carried unanimously to approve the final 2021 Airport Improvement Program Priority Rating Model Update as presented.

C. Consideration for Final Approval of Commission Policy Updates

A draft of the Commission policy updates was previously approved at the May business meeting. No comments were received from the public during the public comment period.

Action: It was recommended by Ms. Bean, moved by Commissioner Maier, seconded by Commissioner Harrop, and carried unanimously to approve the final updated Aeronautics Commission Policy Guidelines as presented, with associated state match decreases provided in Policy AIP8 to be effective beginning in FY23.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no need for an executive session.

XII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS

A. Commission Activities

Ms. Chapman announced that the Commission's next business meeting would be held on August 17, 2021, at 1:30 p.m. via teleconference.

B. PFAS

Commissioner Blann reported on recent decisions made by the Jackson Hole Airport Board regarding PFAS remediation. The airport commissioned various well studies in the Snake River Alluvial Aquifer to locate the plume (of potential PFAS pollutants from the airport). After reviewing Environmental Protection Agency guidelines and regulatory frameworks from other states, the board decided to provide filters and filtration systems to anyone located in the plume down to 10 parts per trillion.

C. B-24J Remembrance Events

Director Reiner informed the Commission of two upcoming events to honor the crew of a B-24J Liberator that crashed outside of Casper in January 1945. There will be a dinner for 76 family members of the crew at the Ramkota Hotel in Casper on Friday, July 23, 2021. An open house and wreath-laying ceremony will be held the following day at the Wyoming Veterans Memorial Museum, and all are welcome to attend.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

A. It was moved by Commissioner Blann. Chairman Duck adjourned the meeting at 2:53 p.m. on July 20, 2021.