



Mark Gordon  
Governor  
K. Luke Reiner  
Director

# Wyoming Department of Transportation

## AERONAUTICS COMMISSION



Sigsbee Duck  
Chairman  
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### MEETING MINUTES

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Aeronautics Commission was held via a videoconference on June 15, 2021. Chairman Duck presided, calling the meeting to order at 1:30 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	Bruce McCormack, Commissioner, District 4
Anja Bendel, Commissioner, District 1	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

#### IV. INTRODUCTIONS

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

Brian Olsen, 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) Manager	Kimberly Chapman, Aeronautics Commission Secretary

*Susan Elliott and 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 McCormack, seconded by Commissioner Maier, and carried to approve the minutes from the May 19, 2021, business meeting, as corrected.

#### VII. UPDATES/DISCUSSIONS

##### A. Chairman's Update

Chairman Duck presented the Chairman's Update.

Chairman Duck reported that he and Commissioner Blann attended former Commissioner Doyle Vaughan's memorial service on June 11, 2021.

**B. Director's Update**

Director Reiner presented the Director's Update.

COVID-19 Update

Director Reiner reported that employees are expected to return to work on July 1<sup>st</sup>, unless they have signed a new telework agreement. The department is encouraging employees who wish to telework to consider a hybrid approach: a few days in the office combined with a few days at home.

WYDOT recently had one positive COVID case in one of the Cheyenne offices. Director Reiner reported that while the department is not tracking employee vaccinations, he assumes that department vaccination rates are roughly equivalent to state rates.

Travel to District 3

Director Reiner reported that summer construction season is underway. WYDOT currently has 65 construction projects, but is projected to have 90 projects by the end of summer. The director traveled to District 3 this week, and he had an opportunity to visit a couple construction sites on I-80.

The director is also taking the opportunity to visit with state legislators while he is in the different districts. The goal of these meetings is to build relationships, to share information about WYDOT, and to gather legislators' thoughts and concerns.

Legislative Issues

The director updated the commission on several state and federal legislative issues.

State

*Joint Transportation Committee Meeting*

The director attended the Joint Transportation Committee Meeting in Casper on May 18 and 19, 2021. As a result of the meeting, the committee decided to form a subcommittee to write a fuel tax bill for the next legislative session. The director anticipates fewer bills, particularly revenue bills, to track during the next session.

*Electric Vehicles*

A small, interagency working group has been formed on electric vehicles. WYDOT is taking the lead on the issue to help coordinate efforts amongst various state agencies.

*Special Legislative Session*

There will be no special legislative session this year. This means that any unresolved revenue issues, especially with the American Rescue Plan, will be incorporated into the governor's budget process during the 2022 Budget Session. WYDOT has submitted some ideas, and the governor has shared some initial thoughts on the budget, which included a possibility that the department could obtain Rescue Plan funds for air service/the capacity purchase agreement.

Federal

*American Jobs Plan*

President Biden is still negotiating with Senate and House Republicans on his infrastructure spending plan. Wyoming had previously submitted a list of projects for funding, but the outcome of the bill is still unclear.

*Reauthorization of the FAST Act*

The reauthorization of the FAST (Fixing America's Surface Transportation) Act is progressing. The FAST Act is a five-year plan to fund federal highway and public transportation systems. The director is hopeful to see a bill by the end of the fiscal year and that WYDOT will see more funding than in previous years.

**C. Administrator's Update**

Administrator Olsen presented the Administrator's Update.

Federal Legislative Issues

The American Rescue Plan included funds totaling about \$8 billion for airports, but Mr. Olsen is still waiting to hear how much will be apportioned to Wyoming airports. He hopes to have more specifics to report at the July Commission meeting.

There are currently a number of plans and proposals being debated around the American Jobs Plan. Each proposal is different as it relates to aviation so Mr. Olsen will continue to closely monitor the issue.

Meeting with Senator Lummis

Members of the Aeronautics Division, commercial service airport operators, and other WYDOT personnel recently met with Senator Lummis for a roundtable discussion on aviation issues in Wyoming. The group discussed air service and infrastructure needs, how the pandemic affected aviation, and future projects.

Department Updates

WYDOT has been working on its strategic plan for some time. The department is in the process of presenting the plan to leaders across the organization, and it has been successful.

The division is currently transitioning back to the office ahead of the July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. As mentioned by the director, with the telework policy there will be opportunity for employees to continue teleworking. Division staff have been teleworking for over a year now, and Mr. Olsen commended them for the exceptional customer service they provided during trying times.

**D. Air Service Development Program Update**

Mr. Burke presented the Air Service Development Program Update.

1. General Matters

a. May Traffic

Mr. Burke reported that the state was up 11% in traffic compared to May 2019, mostly due to increased traffic in Jackson. Wyoming was the only state to gain traffic in 2021 according to TSA Throughput. Wyoming was the only state in the nation to gain passenger traffic in May 2021, compared to May 2019 numbers, as measured by TSA Throughput. Nationally, domestic traffic is still down about 22 percent; international traffic is down 47 percent. Transatlantic and transpacific traffic has not recovered, but traffic between the US and Latin America and Mexico has increased.

b. Future Bookings

Mr. Burke reported that the advanced purchase date is averaging 45 days. This figure indicates regained confidence in the marketplace, and people are increasingly confident when they book a flight it will actually take place.

Tickets sold by US travel agencies is still down about 66 percent, so corporate traffic still has not rebounded as quickly as leisure traffic.

c. Resumption of Cheyenne Air Service

Mr. Burke reported that service is expected to resume with in-bound flights on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Departing flights will resume on September 2<sup>nd</sup> following the completion of the runway construction project.

2. Standard Reports

a. ASEP Budget Forecast Report

The ASEP Budget Forecast Report reflects the following changes:

FY 2022 was changed to show -

Forecasted grant support increased \$240,000 with the Cheyenne (CRAFT) grant approval last month resulting in a forecasted ending balance of \$1,935,633.33.

b. CPA Budget Forecast Report

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

c. Percent of Grant Projects by City Report

The Percent of Grant Projects by City Report reflects the following changes:

Cheyenne's approved FY2022 grant now shows on the report.

**E. Engineering & Construction Program Update**

Mr. Hearn presented the Engineering & Construction Program Update.

1. General Matters

a. General Projects Update

Mr. Hearn reported that there are 16 active construction projects including crack-seal and seal, coat, and mark projects that happen at multiple airports each year.

For the Cheyenne runway project, FAA specifications require the use of low-alkali cement, and it is currently in very short supply. When the contractor and engineer became aware of the shortage, they started working together to create and test a new mix design to use in place of the limited low-alkali cement. The new mix will require a modification to standard, but it will still meet the FAA specification.

b. Escalation Clauses

Mr. Hearn reported that contractors (across many WYDOT projects) have run into issues with significantly higher costs of materials after submitting bids on projects. Mr. Hearn asked the FAA about including escalation clauses in contracts, and the FAA does not allow their use.

2. Standard Reports

a. Change Orders Report

Mr. Hearn reported one new change order for an end-of-project adjustment.

- b. Statewide Line Items Report  
Mr. Hearn reported two new line items for grants: marketing and aviation encouragement.
- c. Bid Summary Report  
Mr. Hearn reported 10 new bids. There was much variation in the amounts that contractors were over and under on bids. Mr. Hearn said from his research there was no clear reason for this; he felt it was down to the volatility of the market.

Following some concern from the commissioners about single-bidder projects, Mr. Hearn shared that with a single bidder, typically negotiations take place between the airport and the consultant and the contractor. These negotiations ensure that the department is securing the best possible prices and value. Mr. Hearn also shared that the FAA's funding schedule could complicate the bidding process for contractors.

**F. Planning & Programming Program Update**

Ms. Bean presented the Planning & Programming Program Update.

1. General Matters

a. WACIP Update Process 2021

Ms. Bean reported that staff are currently scheduling meetings for the WACIP Update. A two-part workshop will be offered on July 14 to help airports learn and complete the process. One-on-one meetings with the airports and the FAA to discuss projects and Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) will take place in August. Updates made to the CIPs are due September 3, 2021.

b. American Rescue Plan Act Funds

If operations and concessions amounts are available soon, an interim meeting may need to be scheduled before the regularly scheduled business meeting in July.

c. Douglas Fly-in

Ms. Bean reported that she, along with Commission Secretary Chapman, attended the Douglas Fly-in on Saturday, June 12, 2021. It was the first fly-in to be held in Douglas in many years, and it was well-attended. WYDOT staff attended to provide support to the airport and to distribute materials on aviation in Wyoming.

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 no changes.

The total recoveries for this fiscal year are \$44,310.

**G. UAS Program Update**

Ms. Taylor presented the UAS Program Update.

1. General Matters

a. Drone Platform Demonstration for WYDOT Staff

Ms. Taylor is partnering with Skydio to offer a demonstration to WYDOT programs/employees on July 22. Skydio drones will be flown on three different missions during the demonstration: bridge, worksite, and tower inspections. These demonstrations will provide more information to WYDOT programs about the type of drone best suited to their needs. Skydio's drones cost anywhere from \$2,000 to \$15,000.

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

There were no old business matters to discuss.

**IX. REGULAR BUSINESS**

A. Consideration of the FY21 WACIP Budget Modifications

The staff continues to reallocate funding as project bids come in and allocations are adjusted to 100% federal funding from Coronavirus Response and Recovery Supplemental Appropriations Act.

The remaining balance in FY21 is \$389,632 in state funds.

Action: It was recommended by Ms. Bean, moved by Commissioner Blann, seconded by Commissioner Harrop, 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**

There was no new business.

**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 would be held on July 20, 2021, at 1:30 p.m. via teleconference.

B. PFAS Update

Commissioner Blann reported that the Jackson Hole Airport Board met yesterday but did not come to agreement on levels of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) mitigation. Many airports across the nation are currently grappling with this issue as PFAS are a common ingredient in firefighting foams.

Administrator Olsen reported that for the two National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) committees he serves on, PFAS mitigation is a monthly topic. The committees continue to work towards finding solutions for the nation's airports.

C. Airport Issues

Commissioner Blann reported that staffing issues felt statewide have hit the Jackson Hole airport. There is a shortage of TSA agents at the airport.

Another issue is the scarcity of rental cars, which leads to cost escalations and issues for travelers.

D. Cody Terminal

Commissioner McCormack updated the commission on the efforts to rename the terminal in honor of the late Senator Hank Coe. He will represent the Commission at a Cody City Council meeting on June 15 to endorse the renaming.

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

- A. It was moved by Commissioner Blann, seconded by Commissioner Bendel, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting. Chairman Duck adjourned the meeting at 2:31 pm on June 15, 2021.