



Mark Gordon
Governor

WYOMING Aeronautics DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Commission

Sigsbee Duck, Chairman

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MEETING MINUTES

A workshop for the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) Aeronautics Commission was held in the I-Room at the WYDOT-U Training Building on February 21, 2023. The workshop began at 1:00 p.m.

The following commission members were present, constituting a quorum.

Anja Richmond, Commissioner, District 1	Steve Maier, Commissioner, District 5
Jerry Blann, Commissioner, District 2	Randy Harrop, Commissioner, District At-large
Bill DeVore, Commissioner, District 3	Sigsbee Duck, Chairman, District At-large
Bruce McCormack, Vice-chairman, District 4	

Commissioners Blann, McCormack, Maier, and Duck participated via Zoom.

The following WYDOT staff were present and participated in the workshop.

Brian Olsen, Aeronautics Administrator	Jim Elwood, Jackson Hole Airport, Director
Mariah Johnson, Air Service Development Manager	Tim Bradshaw, Cheyenne Regional Airport, Director
Glenn Januska, Natrona County International Airport, Director	Kimberly Chapman, Commission Secretary
Aaron Buck, Yellowstone Regional Airport, Director	

Other attendees included: Phillip Hearn, Engineering and Construction Manager, WYDOT; Cheryl Bean, Planning and Programming Manager, WYDOT; Mike Kahler, Senior Assistant Attorney General; MacKenzie Sewell, Assistant Attorney General; Sheri Taylor, UAS Program Manager, WYDOT; A.J. Schutzman, Senior Planner, WYDOT; Greg Hampshire, Aeronautics Analyst, WYDOT; Tim Dolan, Airport Engineer, WYDOT; and Melissa Palka, Project Engineer, WYDOT.

Airport Presentations

Natrona County International Airport

The first presentation to the commission was from Glenn Januska, airport director at the Natrona County International Airport, and the topic was the Casper air traffic control tower (ATCT) replacement project. Airport leadership has spent 16 years developing plans to replace the 69-year-old tower, which has significant structural and systems issues that put it beyond its useful lifecycle. The project was not eligible for traditional AIP funding, but it is eligible for Airport Terminal Program (ATP) funding. The ATP a competitive grant program funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

There are three possible sites to construct a new tower. Each site has its advantages and challenges, but initial cost estimates suggest that Site 1 would be the least expensive option. The airport has entered into a FAA Siting Services and Reimbursable Agreement to complete a formal siting study.

Mr. Januska reported that the airport applied for funding through the ATP in October 2022. The airport has requested \$14.6 million of federal funds, leaving the non-federal portion at \$6 million. Mr. Januska and his

team are completing a Financial Plan to adequately account for the non-federal portion. The airport is making contingency plans for the local match, in case the FAA awards less federal funds than the requested.

Mr. Januska will travel to the Airport Facilities Terminal Integration Laboratory in August 2023 to complete the AFTIL 2.0 Process, which will simulate conditions, layouts, and orientations for all three sites. The Safety Risk Management Panel will select a final site based on modeling and simulations. Mr. Januska reported that a final funding decision will be made following this process.

Following a question from Commissioner DeVore, Mr. Januska is confident that the Casper ATCT replacement project will be compete well against other projects seeking funding. He felt that a cost-benefit analysis would provide adequate justification to fund the project. The tower's lack of ADA accessibility will also be a compelling factor.

Following a question from Mr. Olsen, Mr. Januska provided an update on the minimum revenue guarantee (MRG) for air service in Casper. The airport is still working with SkyWest and Delta Airlines to bring in a larger aircraft for the Salt Lake City service. While the use of larger aircraft appears likely, Mr. Januska does not believe the expanded service would begin until July 2023. If that estimate is correct, the airport will need apply for further ASEP funding.

Jackson Hole Regional Airport

Jim Elwood, airport director for the Jackson Hole Airport (JAC), updated the commission on recent construction projects. Over the past two years, JAC has completed eight projects totaling \$115 million, and all were completed on time and on budget. These projects included the runway reconstruction, a security checkpoint renovation, holdroom expansion, the construction of additional gates, a ticket counter upgrade, a marketplace addition, and an automated exit lane.

Mr. Elwood presented information and pictures on each of the projects. He also shared a time-lapse video showing all of the work that occurred during the runway reconstruction project. The airport was able to retain all staff during the runway reconstruction and engage most in projects outside the scope of their job descriptions.

Mr. Elwood shared information on current and future projects. A \$32 million hangar complex is currently under construction and when complete will offer three large hangar spaces and a ground support equipment (GSE) building, which will be able to service electrified GSE equipment. Designs are complete for a new FBO facility, additional hangars, and a new general aviation (GA) administration building and will be constructed at a later date.

The expansion of the de-icing pad is JAC's next major project, and it will go out for bid in the next 30 days. The project will increase the pad's capacity from three to five aircraft and add a supplementary taxilane behind the pad.

Following a question from Chairman Duck, Mr. Elwood shared that Aviation Security Management will take over security screening at the airport on May 1, 2023. He shared that there is still concern over the new company's ability to operate effectively based on the total contract award.

Yellowstone Regional Airport

Aaron Buck, airport director at Yellowstone Regional Airport, provided an update on recent airport projects.

In 2021, the airport reconstructed the wildlife fence around the perimeter of the airport to prevent collisions between aircraft and wildlife. Also in 2021, the airport constructed a quick turnaround rental car wash using Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds. Mr. Buck shared that the car rental facility charge is supporting operation and maintenance at the airport.

Mr. Buck and his team are currently working on an approach lighting project, which will allow more aircraft to safely land at the airport in adverse weather conditions. The \$3 million project was subsidized by CARES Act funds and allowed for the installation of medium-intensity approach lighting systems (MALSF and MALSR) on runways 04 and 22. Installation is complete, but the airport is awaiting FAA certification of the system.

Another major airport project is the extension of GA taxilanes to additional hangar spaces. The project would allow for the construction of 16 new 60' x 60' hangars and two t-hangars. Four hangars were built by private owners while the taxilanes were under construction. Four more spaces have since been leased and only eight remain available.

Construction is ongoing on the terminal expansion and remodel project. The holdroom was too small and often over capacity, especially in the summer months. A roll-up door was installed in the wall between the holdroom and the restaurant to address this issue. When the holdroom is full due to concurrently departing flights, the door can be opened to provide more passenger seating. Additionally, the TSA screening checkpoint and private screening area were expanded/relocated, and new space was added for a GSE garage, airline offices, future ticket counters, and baggage handling.

Construction will soon start on two new, 11-unit t-hangars. The two buildings will generate an estimated \$100,000 of revenue annually for the airport. The project will cost an estimated \$4 million, and \$3.4 million of the remaining CARES Act funds will be used on the project.

Following a question from Mr. Olsen, Mr. Buck shared that he has nine individuals on a waiting list for t-hangar spaces. He plans to wait until construction is underway and a completion date has been determined before advertising the additional spaces. Following a question from Commissioner DeVore, Mr. Buck shared that the bid for the t-hangar buildings will be open any type of pre-fabricated structure. He clarified that the t-hangars will be constructed and owned by the airport, but the box hangars are constructed by individual owners on ground owned and leased out by the airport.

Cheyenne Regional Airport

Tim Bradshaw, airport director at Cheyenne Regional Airport, provided a general overview of the airport's operations and recent projects. The airport offers twice-daily service to Denver International Airport (DIA). Air service in Cheyenne is supported through an MRG with SkyWest Airlines that is funded by a sixth penny tax, Laramie County, WYDOT, and Visit Cheyenne.

Last spring, the airport completed a passenger demand analysis (leakage study). Data indicates that the airport loses 97 percent of its potential passengers to other airports, primarily DIA. The airport's top origination locations and destinations include Phoenix, Los Angeles, Dallas, Las Vegas, and Houston. The average

number of passengers per-day each way for the top locations demonstrate that Cheyenne has a healthy volume of traffic, but the airport lacks airlines and flights to fulfill the need.

In addition to passenger air service, airport operations include the Legend Aero-operated FBO, which services corporate and private aircraft; cargo shipment; military operations; medical airlift services; and flight training.

Mr. Bradshaw reported on future and upcoming projects. The airport will soon request bids for a passenger boarding bridge to the terminal. A boarding bridge protects passengers from the elements during boarding and deplaning and will improve passenger comfort and satisfaction. IJA funds will cover the cost of the project.

Phase III of the runway reconstruction project will begin this spring. Following the concrete failures during Phase II, the team anticipated the need for an additional phase in 2024. Mr. Bradshaw reported that the airport has engaged a new contractor with runway construction experience, and the contractor may have a solution to the prior issues that would ensure this is the final phase of the project. The runway will be closed April 5th through September 10th and there will be no commercial air service during this period.

Other future projects include rehabilitation of the air traffic control tower, the conversion of the old passenger terminal into a multi-use GA facility, and an expansion of the terminal's long-term parking lot. The airport has applied for a \$1 million grant through the ATP to address structural issues in the 20-year-old tower. While the runway is closed this summer, the terminal parking lot will be expanded and a connector road between the lots and Airport Parkway will be constructed. The parking lot around the historic passenger terminal (where the Aeronautics Division offices are located) will be replaced this summer as well.

Following a question from Commissioner DeVore, Mr. Bradshaw stated that there are currently 14 individuals on a waiting list for hangar space. There is space for additional hangars, and the airport plans to start with the construction of a box hangar.

Air Service Update

Ms. Johnson provided a 2022 Year-End Air Service Update. She began the presentation by sharing a four-year comparison of total annual passenger enplanements for the nine commercial service airports in Wyoming. Jackson's total enplanements decreased last year because of the runway closure for the reconstruction project. Both Cody and Casper's numbers were nearly identical to 2021 totals. Cheyenne saw vast improvements from 2021, but 2021 numbers were down because of a runway reconstruction project. Gillette, Laramie, and Sheridan all saw modest improvements in 2022 total enplanements, and Rock Springs and Riverton were down a small amount from 2021 totals.

Ms. Johnson shared a chart that detailed spending for the Air Service Enhancement Program at the Cheyenne, Cody, Casper, and Jackson airports. A second chart detailed program spending for 2022 for each of the Capacity Purchase Agreement communities: Gillette, Riverton, Rock Springs, and Sheridan. Ms. Johnson shared that the state cost per passenger at all four airports was reasonable and met expectations.

Ms. Johnson reported on CPA program spending for the first six months of the new agreement. Costs per passenger have increased along with the block-hour rate, but overall costs have not increased significantly. High load factors and higher fares are offsetting increasing costs.

Ms. Johnson also reported on her major projects. She is currently working to upload data into the BlackCat Aviation Data Management System air service module. Once the data is uploaded and internal and external testing is complete, airports will be able to submit ASEP applications through the system. Users will be able to record and track delays, independent of information provided by the airlines. The standard reports provided monthly to the commission will also be generated in BlackCat.

Ms. Johnson is working with the commercial service airports to develop a statewide marketing grant that meets airport needs and compliments local marketing efforts. The next steps are to draft a scope of work to formalize project requirements and timelines, and to hire a consultant to complete the project.

Following a question from Commissioner DeVore, Ms. Johnson shared that program details have not been fully developed for the marketing grant. It is estimated that it will end up looking similar to the Fly Wyoming program. Following a question from Commissioner Harrop, Ms. Johnson shared that the grant program will focus on encouraging Wyoming citizens to use local airports. Mr. Olsen assured Commissioner Blann that the division will work with the Wyoming Department of Tourism as this program is developed.

Ms. Johnson shared a few major issues that could impact air service in 2023. SkyWest Airlines is still working to get approval from the U.S. Department of Transportation for a Part 135 certificate for air service in Wyoming. This would allow SkyWest to operate smaller commercial service aircraft in some Wyoming markets. There is no firm timeline on approval, and the division is in regular communication with SkyWest on this issue.

The pilot shortage is easing slightly, but Wyoming will continue to experience the effects of it in 2023. Ms. Johnson will also be closely monitoring the runway project in Cheyenne and how it will impact air service in the area. Following a question from Commissioner Blann, Mr. Olsen shared that this is the final phase of the runway reconstruction and will replace any sections of the runway not previously replaced in the previous two phases.

Commissioner Blann requested a copy of the most recent master plans from each of the nine commercial service airports. Staff will work with Commissioner Blann to provide the necessary information.

TMC Tour

Commissioners DeVore, Richmond, and Harrop toured the Transportation Management Center and Wyoming Highway Patrol Dispatch Center located at 6101 Yellowstone Road in Cheyenne. Vince Garcia, WYDOT ITS/GIS Program Manager, gave a presentation detailing the history and operations of the TMC and conducted a tour of the site.

The session concluded at 4:50 p.m.