

CITY OF PLYMOUTH BOARD OF AVIATION COMMISSIONERS

February 11, 2025

The City of Plymouth Board of Aviation Commissioners met in regular session on February 11, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the City Building, 124 N. Michigan Street, Plymouth, IN.

President Phil Bockman called the meeting to order for Commissioners Glenn Daven, Ken Houin, and Anthony Witt, who were physically present. Commissioner Kevin Morrison was absent. Also present were, Airport Manager Bill Sheley, Mayor Robert Listenberger and City Attorney Jeff Houin. Airport Engineer Curtis Brown was absent. The public could see and hear the meeting through Microsoft Teams.

Commissioners Houin and Daven moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the regular session meeting of January 14, 2025. The motion carried.

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Williams presented the Oath of Office for Anthony Witt.

Airport Engineer's Report

Airport Engineer Brown was absent.

Airport Manager's Report

Subject: February 2025 BOAC Meeting

1. Fuel Farm: Update. Waiting for quote to complete yearly/3-year inspections.
2. 34' Articulated all terrain lift delivered 2/5.
3. New charter customer that will help make up for one that we lost.
4. TBM in hangar earning overnight rent due to new door.
5. Final approval of new user fees.
6. Possible waiver for Buy American so we can get size of equipment we need, not much larger more expensive.
7. Wildlife sightings are way down, hoping management programs are starting to show results.
8. Runway & Grounds Inspection Report: Attached

Regards, Bill Sheley

Sheley informed the board that the Clerk-Treasurer sent him information yesterday stating that she would be transferring \$71,015.58 from the excess funds for Aviation Rotary fuel inventory. He asked what fund that would be sent to.

Williams replied that it would go to the Aviation fund.

Sheley stated these funds would be income that was made last year and part of it would be income from fuel sales in the last year. He believed this was excess over what they had budgeted over the year for purchases but generally believed that it was income.

He stated he had emails with a couple airports today regarding fuel farm maintenance and one was regarding weights and measures. He stated that some counties do not have a weights and measures guy, and those airports are not required to do this but those of us who do are held

accountable. He stated they are still in contact with the current maintenance people who would be doing the weights and measures but are still awaiting quotes.

He stated their lift was delivered that they budgeted for that year. He explained that they budgeted \$35,000 and they spent \$32,600 including a harness. He stated they would be doing training with a construction company in Nappanee with them as well. He stated that Andy Metsker through Gibson would be able to handle their paper training.

He stated that their F450 Plow Truck that they purchased back in 2019 does not work well plowing the runway. He stated he was in the process of getting a quote for a larger truck that may work once he has the numbers to look at budgeting next year. He stated it would work great at plowing parking lots or smaller areas but when they start working on the 750 wide runway with a 2-inch snow moved a few times that it becomes 6-8 inches, and the truck would not be large enough for it. He stated they had times where they spent hours on the runway and by the afternoon, once the Street Department was done, they would use one of their trucks and be done within 20 minutes.

Daven asked what type of truck he was looking for.

Sheley replied that he was looking at a 650 to start with for pricing. He stated he wasn't at the point of sending it out to bid, but he wanted to get some budget numbers to work with. He stated their 2019 only had 2900 miles on it so it should have good value. He added that it had also never seen salt being only on the runway and not on city streets.

He stated a copy of the new user fees had been provided and this would be the first time for them seeing it as a complete form. He stated there was no urgency to approve it if they wanted to take time to review it.

Daven asked if the landing fees were for non-based aircraft.

Sheley replied that it could be added to reference non-based aircraft.

Houin asked why there was a cap of \$850 for Section 1. D.

Sheley replied it was that way as they were looking at a five-year contract. He stated at the end of the five-year contract that they would review it again.

Commissioners Daven and Houin moved and seconded to approve the Plymouth Municipal Airport Fee Schedule with the amendment to add "non-based" to Section 3 for landing fees. The motion carried.

Sheley stated that Mark Shillington of Woolpert called him a week and a half ago as there was a new list that came out from the FAA for waivers on the Buy American rule and he had seen a tractor very similar size to the tractor that we would like to buy instead of what they thought they were being pushed into to fit into the Buy American requirement. He stated Shillington was going to reach out to John Deere because it was a John Deere tractor, and it was a step smaller than what they wanted. He stated they also received a few waivers on some of their front-end loaders as well. He added that it was about a six-page list of waivers.

Bockman asked if this was a new list of waivers.

Sheley replied in agreement and stated that Shillington planned to reach out to see if they could get a waiver on the size of the tractor they would want to buy and if that was the case then that would save them about \$100,000 on what they were intended to have to spend. He stated that \$100,000 would be grant money they would then be able to utilize elsewhere.

Witt asked if that would help with the plow truck.

Sheley replied that this was from the BIL grant funds and a plow truck would not qualify. He stated it would be more for hangar improvements, like the hangar door, or improvements to the ramp.

Other Business

Daven stated there was something he noticed missing from the board since he had joined was the goal of the city and board for the airport. He referenced the five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), but he asked what they wanted to see this airport transition into and become. He stated it would be helpful for him to know what direction to take for achieving goals. He listed options like charter services, maintenance operations, etc. He stated they could build all the hangars they want but if there was not a plan to use them then it was pointless to him. He asked if by bringing those services here that would help expand the airport faster as that would help people who want to develop that or bring money.

Sheley replied that he started with an airport that had no business and no activity. He stated the first goal was to bring the interior up to where it could be used, which was done, and to bring the businesses there that they have got. He stated they had reached a point where they are out of room to do much else, short of building a corporate type of hangar for a charter company or maintenance facility. He stated without that they would not be able to expand much more from what they had. He stated the problem was with that type of hangar that it would be around \$2 million to build. He stated the only way to get a charter service was by having a 5,000-foot runway because of the requirement for insurance for some of the aircraft that it would bring in. He stated they were not going to get 5,000 feet without first getting 500+ operations a day and that was the number that the FAA required. He explained that they were at half of that or less. He explained that it was unfortunate that it was not a build it and they would come but rather they had to prove to them that they have it and they could build it. He stated as much as previous boards worked on wanting to get 5,000 feet, that they were so far away from getting it approved by the FAA that it was silly. He stated he sees it being a 10-year minimum before it could be discussed again unless they were able to get a couple jets based there. He stated it would have to start as an investment from the locals before the airport could spend the money as they do not have the money, and he did not see the city providing the money that it would take. He stated they would give them the 2.5-5% needed as an AIP project, but that was where they must look at their projects that they have AIP wise to make the improvements to get there. He stated some of that was what they were doing like building a taxiway. He asked if it sounded reasonable to get a charter company here without a taxiway. He stated he had been working on that taxiway for over five years now, but they got passed over a couple years and screwed on it. He stated that his vision further from where they are at now would be getting more jet traffic from Notre Dame and beyond that he does not see a way to increase his jet traffic.

Daven asked if he had those aircraft based there that would justify expanding the runway. Sheley replied wholeheartedly that he could. Daven asked if they were running into a property issue with the road at the end.

Sheley replied that there was no property issue as they owned the property on the other side. He stated he had meetings with the previous Mayor and County Commissioners to show them what their Airport Layout Plan (ALP) was and the biggest response he could get out of them was that they would not be there when it happened, so they did not care. He stated with the crossing now being closed on US 30 that it alleviated some of the pain of closing Lilac Road. He stated one of the reasons Bockman joined the board was because of the discussions about closing that road as he lived in that community. He stated that especially at that time the airport had no business to close the road. He stated if they had the business that Bockman explained he would have no problem going to his community and explaining that the airport needed it.

Bockman stated that the operations were really clouded at the time and the old board was tunnel visioned on closing the road. He stated the roundabout on Veteran's Parkway and the closing of the US 30 intersection were both helpful. He stated if the operations are there then it becomes a much easier argument but before it was a mistake. He stated there was so much time, energy, and money spent on that. He stated to Sheley's point earlier, the airport needed to take care of landscaping, leaking roofs, etc. He stated for the first ten years they had to take care of what was there as it was an embarrassment. He stated it has improved so much that a goal at this point sounds good, but it would need to stay within the confines of what was practical and what the FAA would allow. He stated they had engineers coming in telling them that we were close to operations but once they dived into it, they found that they were nowhere close. He added it was all in theory.

Daven stated it was helpful to know that they need several jets based here to achieve those numbers. He stated it could be a focal point to get someone here because there needs to be a plan to make this work.

Houin added that it may require another hangar here to base jets.

Witt stated it was good to know what we want 10 years to look like from now because it would help them find what they need to have in place for five years. He stated the Notre Dame traffic would be good even if they get only 2-3 to stop in Plymouth instead of flying all the way to South Bend and waiting in line to depart. He stated he was sure if people knew what they had here that they may be able to get some of those to stop here instead. He mentioned a potential shuttle service in place to run people to Notre Dame.

Sheley brought up the idea to acquire tail numbers to utilize a direct marketing approach.

Witt asked if there was a location to accommodate the jets.

Sheley replied that they could park that many, but it may not be convenient for their tenants at times.

Mayor Listenberger asked if there was a marketing line item in the airport budget.

Sheley replied that he was told by the previous Clerk-Treasurer that there was no such thing as advertising as a city entity for business, although they have a marketing line item with \$200 each year.

City Attorney Houin added that the Mayor had a promotion of the city budget. He stated they could market and promote but they could not advertise.

Witt asked what the difference was.

City Attorney Houin replied that marketing and promoting was allowed for the city, but advertising was not. He stated it worked in the same way that they don't plan on building bump outs downtown, but they may consider curb extensions.

The discussion continued about styles of marketing and types of clients for some time.

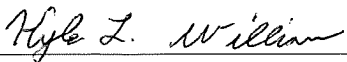
There was a lengthy discussion about whether cash stays in the Aviation Fund or if it moves to the General Fund. Cash made in the aviation fund remains in the Aviation Fund as cash reserves and if it was not appropriated in the following years budget, then it would not be available to spend. It remains as unappropriated cash reserves that could be appropriated in the future.

Acceptance of Correspondence

- Runway and Grounds Inspection Report
- January 2025 Financial Reports
- Plymouth Municipal Airport Fee Schedule

Commissioners Houin and Daven moved and seconded to accept the correspondence as presented. The motion carried.

There being no other business to come before the board, Commissioners Houin and Witt moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried, and the meeting was declared adjourned at 7:27 p.m.



Kyle Williams
Recording Secretary