

**APPROVED MINUTES
FLYING CLOUD AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION**

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2007

7:00 P.M.

**Minneapolis Community & Technical
College – Aviation Center
10100 Flying Cloud Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55347**

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Rick King, Vice-Chair Jeff Larsen,
Commissioners: Greg McKewan,
Mark Michelson

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Joe Harris, Kurt Schendel, Brad Stratton

VISITORS:

Scott Skramstad, MAC
Warren McVey, FAA Representative
Ron Muntifering, Air Methods, Inc.

STAFF:

Scott Kipp, Senior Planner
Peggy Rasmussen, Recorder

CALL TO ORDER

Chair King called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

King requested that Item IV be moved ahead of Item III.

MOTION: Michelson moved, seconded by Larsen, to move Item IV to Item III. **Motion carried 4-0.**

II. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 11, 2007 MINUTES

Michelson made a correction on page 6, the second sentence in the last paragraph, which should read “Michelson responded that back in the 90’s the newspaper published . . .” King noted a correction on page 5, under item 2., the 6th bullet should be “FBOs/FCM – Based Businesses”, and the 7th bullet should be “Hobbyists.” On page 10, under VII., in the third bullet from the end the word “letter” is missing a “t.”

MOTION: Larsen moved, seconded by Michelson, to approve the minutes of the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission held on January 11, 2007 as corrected. **Motion carried 4-0.**

III. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS

A. TOUR OF LIFE LINK III HELICOPTER

The Commissioners took a tour of the Life Link III helicopter with Air Methods, Inc. manager Ron Muntifering and met one of the Life Link III crews, then returned to the meeting room at 7:30 p.m.

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Muntifering said he works for Air Methods, the vendor for Life Link III, located out of Denver. It started in 1980 with one helicopter. There are now 80 bases, over 200 helicopters and 600 pilots. Life Link III started helicopter service with a base in St. Paul in 1985. In 1999 they added a base in St. Cloud, and a base in Hutchinson in 2005. The base at Eden Prairie's Flying Cloud Airport, which is their newest one, started just one month ago.

Life Link III usually gets calls to pick up patients at small-town hospitals and then transport them to larger hospitals in Minneapolis and St. Paul. However, about 10 percent of runs are to the actual scene of the accident and 30 to 40 percent are trauma patients. Many of the patients are children or babies. In those cases, the helicopter flies from the airport to Children's Hospital in Minneapolis or St. Paul to pick up a neonatal team before flying to the location where the patient is, usually a small hospital. There is always a crew on stand-by at all four bases.

Muntifering said Life Link III is very concerned about the noise caused by helicopters and has worked with the public from the start about the noise problem. He hopes to keep the noise at a minimum as much as possible.

Kipp said the training of the helicopter pilots out of Flying Cloud triggered a lot of the complaint calls recently. Muntifering replied this helicopter, a 222, has been here since early in February. That is why the noise complaints have gone up. McVey pointed out that most of the training takes place at Flying Cloud Airport. McKewan said Council Member Kathy Nelson was sure a helicopter had been hovering over her house at 2 a.m. one morning. Michelson noted the majority of complaints are along the helicopter's flight tracks.

Michelson told Muntifering that Life Link III is providing a great service to the community and it is appreciated. These flights are necessary.

Muntifering said they could do training flights at other airports south of the metro area. If Eden Prairie has some type of community celebration days, his team would be more than happy to land the helicopter at the airport here and show it to the public. Michelson said there are a number of opportunities of this type in Eden Prairie.

King said the local newspaper could be contacted to find out if they would do a feature story about Life Link III, including something about the helicopter operations and flight patterns. That would make a good article. In the summer, a connection could be made with a community event. Kipp could make the arrangements if he gets the name of the contact person at Life Link III. Also, he asked Kipp to take the information back to the City Manager that it might be worth having Muntifering make an appearance before the City Council. He could speak about having the training off-site, etc. Kipp replied it would be worth bringing it to the attention of the City Manager regarding an appearance before the City Council.

King thanked Muntifering for coming and said it was very timely to have this opportunity to see the Life Link III helicopter.

B. TOUR OF MINNEAPOLIS TECHNICAL COLLEGE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TRAINING CENTER

Later in the evening Rick Breslin, an information technical specialist and instructor with the Air Traffic Control Training Center, led a tour of the training center.

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. FEBRUARY 20, 2007 CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP

King noted that the feedback on the workshop and the publicity the Commission received were good. Scott Neal and Mayor Young told him they were very pleased with the workshop presentation. Kipp replied he believed the Council was very impressed with the organizational structure of the presentation. It set the tone for other commissions to follow.

Michelson said he got reaction from residents about the idea of “marketing” the airport after the newspaper articles came out. It is unfortunate the newspapers picked up on that word because a lot of people reacted negatively. They wanted to know how the City could do that. Michelson told them the idea is to have additional information about the airport going out from the City to businesses, so the firestorm was quickly put out. Kipp said Scott Neal ordinarily forwards any letters he receives from the public on to him.

McKewan said people saw his name in the paper and was told he should not be marketing the airport; he should be trying to shut it down.

Kipp said people might be reacting to the city’s offer to get sewer and water to the airport. The City is offering to finance this for the airport over a period of time because MAC is not generating the funds to accomplish it, and the City wants that to go ahead because of concerns about water quality, fire protection, and for economic reasons.

McKewan noted that Council Member Sherry Butcher said something about improving the appearance of the hangars, and people told him they like that idea.

Larsen reported that he attended a meeting of the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce Government Committee, representing the Commission. The chair of the Committee, Dick Ward, was extremely happy that there seems to be such a positive new attitude on the part of the City Council and new Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission with regard to talking about Flying Cloud Airport.

Kipp distributed some additional information that has been gathered since the Commissioners’ packets went out. One was a letter to Jeff Hamiel, executive

director of MAC, from Scott Neal, stressing the importance of extending City water and sewer services into Flying Cloud and asking for his support.

There was also a letter from Scott Neal to the City's federal legislators, asking for support in the EIS process and for the expansion, showing that the City is expressing support for the airport.

King said one result of the publicity was to let people know the Commission exists and now is more active, which then percolates feedback from the public, and that means the Commission is doing a good job. He has heard from Karla Wennerstrom of the *Eden Prairie News* about doing more articles on the Commission. If the Commission has more information, she would be happy to publicize it.

B. COMMISSION "TOP 5 LIST" OF ISSUES (CONTINUED DISCUSSION)

King said the Commission's 2007 Work Plan is basically formed by the City Council's approval of the two slides shown by the Commission at the workshop. He asked if any of the Commissioners had thought any further about the Top 5 List and what was covered on those slides. He asked if there is anything to add to the list. If not, that list, which was approved at the last Commission meeting, will be the goals for 2007.

Larsen suggested adding the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce under "Develop Key Relationships", because the Chamber is going to have a major impact on developments. He would like Scott Kipp to memorialize the final copy.

Larsen noted that there were actually two presentations at the meeting with the Council; the unedited version of all commissioners' Top 5 Lists collected by Kipp; and a two page synopsis of those lists prepared by he and Michelson. Larsen asked Kipp if there were any copies of the Top 5 Lists, as it was presented, for everyone to have. Kipp offered to e-mail them to everybody.

King recommended that the Commissioners agree to make the amendments of the wording Kipp already made, add Chamber of Commerce to the list, and they would then have their 2007 Work Plan.

Larsen said he took the names off the summary of the detail; letters were arbitrarily assigned. Kipp asked if they wanted the e-mail to include people's comments without the names added. Larsen replied they want the list of comments without the names.

MOTION: Michelson moved, seconded by Larsen, to take the slides from the meeting held recently and memorialize them, with the changes discussed tonight. Add Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce to the top slide under "Develop Key Relationships", and redo the bottom slide under "Business Development" to read "FCM presented as a competitive advantage for the City", and remove "If so, should the marketing take more visible role?" **Motion carried 4-0.**

C. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEETING ON MARCH 6, 2007

King had been invited to attend the Chamber of Commerce Government Committee meeting on March 6 but was unable to go, so he asked Larsen to take his place. Dick Ward is the Chair of that Committee. Larsen said the committee discussed the future of Flying Cloud Airport with MAC Chairman Lanners and other development personnel from MAC, as well as Joe Smith from Elliott Aviation. Mayor Phil Young was also present. The Chamber of Commerce needed input from MAC regarding the status of expansion at Flying Cloud.

Larsen said the Chamber is pleased with MAC's approach to the expansion at Flying Cloud, and also that the City Council seems to be in support of the work. MAC and businesses in the city are interested in going ahead with the expansion of the airport and new hangars as soon as possible. There is interest in participation by the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission in some form. There might be an opportunity to participate in some of the discussions that will take place in the future.

Regarding expansion at Flying Cloud, Larsen reported that MAC said there had been several programs at Anoka and Blaine that were higher in priority. A number of those have been completed, and MAC is interested in putting Flying Cloud at the top of the list of work that has to be done.

At this point MAC does not have the \$22 million needed for expansion and new hangars. MAC expressed interest in public partnerships, talking to and getting input from major users of the airport, and trying to develop revenue streams to support the work. They also expressed interest in getting together with the Chamber of Commerce to find out who might be interested in partnering with them in the expansion project. In addition, they are looking into getting non-aeronautical revenue streams from parcels near the airport. It is very difficult to obtain money from Washington for the expansion, so it would be best to find financial resources within this group.

Larsen said, in terms of a timeline, obviously that depends on the money. It appears the first runway is budgeted at \$900,000. MAC either has that money now or it would be available, but it is trying to find money for the other runway. The Anoka airport work will probably be done next spring, subject to changes, reviews and funding.

Larsen reported that Lanners is planning to get people together in order to find businesses interested in the financial components. He would like the business group to work together. There has been talk about trying the same method used in finding the various financial components for building the third ice rink at the Community Center. These people have not come forward yet, but it is believed that when the financial components are pulled together, they will come forward. MAC was assured the Chamber is interested. They believe there will be people behind the scenes working on this to keep it going.

Larsen sent a letter to Dick Ward to thank him for the opportunity to attend the meeting. If the City Council is interested in having the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission involved, Larsen offered to help. Kipp said he and Dave Lindahl would probably be participants from the City. Gene Dietz was also mentioned.

King inquired if the question of the soccer field came up. Larsen answered that it did not. King said the City will have a very strong position on the soccer field and would want that to remain in the current configuration. Kipp agreed that if MAC starts to look at the ball fields as optional, they would get quite a bit of feedback from the public. McKewan added there would be a large protest.

King thanked Larsen for going to the meeting in his place. Shortly after the workshop with the Council, the Mayor sent him a note saying that he should go to the meeting. King said he believes the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission should be represented and involved. Larsen said he was surprised how quickly this meeting with the Council happened and he is happy with the way the Commission approached the Council.

D. FLYING CLOUD AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION WEB SITE

King distributed a handout about the City's Web site as it relates to the Commission. He said the Commissioners had talked about the need for communication and working on the Web site. He met with the City's technical staff. They talked about ways to clean up the Web site so it would be ready to put up information that is helpful to the public. It might include maps, a noise complaint form, power points, etc. It has been changed now so when people log on they are directed to the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission, and that branches into the agenda and minutes for the past year and the current year.

King recommended reviewing and revising the paragraphs titled "About the Commission", "Airport History" and "MAC Expansion Plans." King said McKewan has consented to do that work and he could contact Stratton to work with him. McKewan could e-mail the other Commissioners and ask for feedback before the next meeting so the changes might be approved at that meeting.

Michelson said people have asked him how to get in touch with the Commissioners by looking at the Web site, and he could not figure it out. He believes that information should be up front. King said the information the Commissioners provided when they signed up is available if people call and ask.

Michelson noted that the Council has one e-mail address for all Council Members. He asked if the Commission could have a site that states "All Commission Members", and messages could go to Kipp to forward to the appropriate Commissioner. Kipp responded that the City Council is elected, and City staff is paid to speak on behalf of the City, so that could be an issue because the Commission is only advisory to the City Council. The staff person for the

Web site takes questions that come in through e-mail and sends them to the appropriate staff person. Kipp offered to forward questions on to the Commission. King said Kipp's e-mail address should be put on the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission site as the Commission's representative.

McKewan said the Web site will involve more than fixing some language. For example, the "Airport" link should show other links. All options should be there. Kipp said some links work better than others; staff is trying to make it better.

McKewan asked Kipp if it would violate the open-meeting law if he e-mailed everyone on the Commission to ask what they want to see on the first page. Kipp replied he believed it could be a problem if McKewan asked people to respond to his e-mail, because that might be considered an on-line meeting. Kipp promised to check with City staff to see if there is an e-mail policy and whether or not that would be permissible. They may have a process to do this. King said if Kipp advises that we should not do it, then we will have to change our style of communicating.

King told McKewan that City staff has their website template set up a certain way and he will have to work with it. King asked Kipp to talk to Pat Brink before McKewan meets with him, to brief him about what McKewan wants to do on the Web site.

V. FINAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN CITY AND MAC

A. NOISE COMPLAINTS/STAGE 2 OPERATIONS REPORT (JAN-FEB)

Skramstad handed out copies of the noise complaint summary for January and February and a map showing the locations of the complaints. He said 90 total complaints were received from 16 complainants, 67 of them filed through e-mail. Eighty of the complaints came in February. Thirty-nine complaints were for excessive helicopter noise, most of which were in February. Forty-eight complaints were filed for operations conducted between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. and they were investigated. Nineteen letters were sent to owners/operators. Skramstad said he had not contacted helicopter pilots yet; he will see what can be worked out with them in the future.

Maps of helicopter noise complaints and flight tracks for January-February were reviewed. King said this was exactly what the Commission asked for, and he asked if helicopter tracks could be made a part of the packet in the future. The maps show the path of flights that go to hospitals to pick up teams.

Skramstad said Muntiferung indicated he is quite willing to work with MAC. Life Link III could be asked to take a different track, perhaps over the river, if there is an opportunity in a non-critical flight. King said the Commissioners are in support of their work. Kipp said Life Link III could be asked to have their training elsewhere. The Commission would want to encourage that.

Kipp asked what is the next step regarding the helicopters. Skramstad replied he suggested to Harris and Muntifering that MAC staff should put ideas on the table and bring them back to the Commission. King said that would be appropriate. The Commission would also want to send a letter about this to Life Link III and thank them for coming and bringing the aircraft. It should also state that the Commission would like to work with them on the training location and ask them about their making an appearance before the City Council.

Larsen asked Skramstad if he knows in a given period how many different people make complaints. Skramstad replied usually there is a core of the same people. What was unique this time is a large increase in the number of people who complain about helicopter noise. There were about 40 complaints.

McKewan asked if the people near Grace Church are in a noise abatement zone. Skramstad said no. Kipp said noise attenuation is being done on all new housing construction in Hennepin Village. Most houses being constructed today will likely meet the new construction standards for noise attenuation based on current building energy codes.

McKewan said it seems noise lasts a lot longer for helicopters than for other aircraft. Kipp explained that the sound of a helicopter spreads out much farther because of the lower decibel levels. However, he believes the helicopter issue will be resolved. King said the training of helicopter pilots goes in six-month cycles, so the Commission would want to monitor the noise complaints through a whole cycle. The last training was in February.

McKewan said having Muntifering go before the City Council is an excellent idea. That will start the relationship off on the right foot. King said the Commission might want to do a follow-up letter to the Council and tell them what the Commissioners have been discussing, and let them know February was a training month. McKewan added that an article in the *Eden Prairie News* would also be a good idea.

VI. NOISE ABATEMENT/AIRCRAFT INCIDENTS

A. FLIGHT TRACK DATA MAPS (NOV, DEC)

Skramstad presented flight track data to the Commission for the November-December period

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Various FYI Items

- MAC Long Term Comprehensive Plan Update
- Sewer and Water at FCM
- Letter to Elliott Aviation on New Aircraft, dated February 9, 2007

- Approved Minutes for November 9, 2006 Commission Meeting
- Next Meeting is Scheduled for May 10, 2007
- Letter to Jeff Hamiel on Sewer and Water at FCM, dated March 8, 2007
- Letter to Federal Legislators that City Supports Expansion of Airport
- Larson E-Mail to thank D. Ward for Meeting with Government Committee
- Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce Position Paper on Airport Expansion
- Kipp's Presentation to the Planning Commission on 2008 Guide Plan Update
- Community Development Department 2006 Annual Report
- Scott Neal's Blog of March 7, titled "Communication is the Key"
- Article on Seeking Better Communications Between Commissions and the Council
- Memo from FAA on Updated Hiring Plan to Hire Air Traffic Controllers

B. SUBMITTING 2006 FINAL REPORT AND 2007 WORK PLAN

Kipp offered to submit the 2006 Final Report and the 2007 Work Plan, with a cover memo asking that the Council accept it and also endorse what was set forth in the February 20th meeting.

King wondered if the Commission's year-end reports should have more structure and detail in the future. The Commissioners didn't have time for the 2006 report, but there will be an increase in the frequency of meetings this year. They could decide next time if they want to add more detail. King said he thought the Commission should ask for formal approval by the Council.

MOTION: King moved, seconded by Larsen, to ask Kipp to submit to the Council the Commission's 2006 report and 2007 goals that were presented at the workshop, with an attached memo seeking the Council's Resolution and Endorsement. **Motion carried 4-0.**

C. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

King inquired if there was any interest in having a Commission dinner once a year, perhaps before a meeting. Or, if he were having dinner somewhere, would other Commissioners like to join him to visit outside of a meeting. Kipp cautioned the Commission about violating the open-meeting law.

McKewan wondered if the Commission is meeting often enough, or should it be meeting every month. People who miss a meeting have to wait another two months for the next meeting. MAC representatives would not always have to be present. Michelson replied it depends on how much the Commissioners want to accomplish.

Kipp said they have to consider where the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission started. When it was first recruited, the meetings were quarterly. Staff handles a lot of what is discussed at meetings as part of their job. It isn't necessary for the Commission to be involved in the day to day details. Kipp said

he believed the Council would want the Commission to continue to meet bi-monthly.

King said if the Commissioners divide up the work as much as they can and have people report at the meetings, then they will be very productive. Michelson said he believed the way they meet is working out well.

King reported he extended an invitation to Jeff Hamiel, Executive Director of MAC, to come and visit him at his workplace. Hamiel has talked about meeting with the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission in May. King said he would also talk to him about meeting with the MAC Commission. This Commission can thank him for the support Skramstad has provided and also Harris. The Commission has had strong support from MAC and Hamiel needs to hear that.

Larsen asked, with regard to getting people's input, if the Commission has any plans to deal with members of the public at a meeting. Obviously, the Commissioners are very restricted in what they can do or say because they don't have any authority, but they could act as a liaison and pass along information.

King responded that what they would try to do if people visited the Commission is set aside an amount of time at the beginning of the meeting for people to tell them what they came to say, and the Commission would take it under advisement, or refer the matter to someone, etc. King said, if five or ten people show up and want to speak for five minutes, it would be part of his duty to conduct this with a more rigorous approach to the rules so they address him when asking questions, and the Commission retains control of the meeting. However, the Commissioners do want to hear them, and he believes the Commission should encourage people if they want to speak at a meeting. If they know of anyone, King said to tell him ahead of time. Those people will be given time to be heard and it will be recorded in the minutes.

Larsen said with more publicity and noise complaints, the Commission is going to attract much more interest and should decide how it wants to approach that situation. King said the Commission would be meeting in the City Center in a fairly small room, so if visitors come they may have to move to a bigger room. The first time that happens they will have to consider how to handle it. The Commissioners will give great respect to people who show up and talk. Their time would be limited and Commissioners will expect them to be as respectful as the Commissioners will be to them.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Michelson moved, seconded by Larsen, to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried 4-0.** Chair King adjourned the meeting at 10:18 p.m.