

YAMPA VALLEY AIRPORT COMMISSION

August 10, 2023

Meeting MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Yampa Valley Airport Commission (YVAC) was called to order in-person and via Zoom at approximately 6:11 p.m. on Thursday, August 10, 2023.

YVAC members present:

Stephen Birch – Resident of Routt County - Aviation Community
Keith Hensley – Resident of Routt County
Les Liman – Resident of Routt County - Aviation Community
Janet Fischer – Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp
Michael Buccino – Steamboat Springs City Council
Robin Crossan – Steamboat Springs City Council, Alternate
Randy Looper – Resident of Moffat County
Matthew Mendisco – Town of Hayden, second Alternate
Katie Brown – Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp, Alternate

YVAC members absent:

Trevor Gann – Town of Hayden
Bob Reese – Town of Hayden

Others present:

Kevin Booth – YVRA
Stacie Fain – KSBS
Jake Hoban and Justin Cooper - Garver
Jeremy Lee – Mead & Hunt
David Franzel - former YVAC Chair

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

1. Approval of June 8, 2023 Minutes – Motion

Stephen Birch moved to approve the June 8, 2023, meeting minutes as presented; Janet Fischer seconded.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. Commissioner Term Discussion and Update

Booth said the interviews have been delayed a couple times.

Crossan reported that the county commissioners submitted three dates for review and interviews in late August, early September.

Booth noted that Larry Mashaw and Les Liman's seats are up for review.

3. Committee Member Discussion

Booth suggested that the discussion wait until the Commission is fully seated.
Commissioners agreed.

Current Assignments:

Marketing and Outreach: Chris Nichols, Katie Brown, Michael Buccino, Keith Hensley

Finance: Tim Redmond, Les Liman, Stephen Birch

4. Date for Budget Presentation to Finance Committee

Booth: We normally do this in August; we haven't set a date as of yet. I'm available in the month of August.

5. Public Comment

None.

6. Comments from Board Members

Robin Crossan mentioned oversized trailers parking at the airport, which caused trouble for snow plows.

Booth reported that the situation had been addressed.

Booth: Most of those were snowmobile outfitters. There will be signage that says you're going to pay based on the number of spaces you take. We can't just have a human out there screening everybody that comes in. Employees will have their own dedicated parking lot come September. We will inventory the parking lot for oversized vehicles every day. If we see one, we'll adjust their rate. It's not perfect. It was a topic I spoke at length about when we went out to bid for our parking lot system. There was not a good fix from the seven applicants.

Birch asked if the system could count the number of axles; Booth said it couldn't be done accurately and that there could be false positives, which would cause some people to be charged extra. He did not think the headaches that would cause would be worth it. He did not believe it would be difficult to inventory the oversized vehicles that do park there on a daily basis.

Crossan wanted to make sure the airport receives the revenue from oversized vehicles.

Booth: We went with a very high-technology, good system, the same one they use at Ski Corp. It will be installed in October.

Katie Brown introduced herself as Vice President of Brand and Resort Strategy and said she works closely with Janet on the airline program.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Air Service Update

Janet Fischer:

September-November air capacity is back to 100% of what it was for those months in 2019.

Our passenger travel in the month of July was 100% of what it was in 2019 and 112% of what it was a year ago.

Fischer reviewed airline capacity for the spring, summer, fall, which was the same information she gave at the last meeting.

Fischer: For mid-April through mid-August, capacity in available seats is -11% YOY; Passengers are -1% YOY. So, overall, some improvements in load factor at 69%. April and May are definitely the months that bring the load factor down. This year, they were at 55%; last year, they were in the high 40s. June was flat at 70%; July was 73%; it looks like August is going to be about 72% overall, and it was 67 last year.

Booth clarified with Fischer that capacity does not include cancelled flights. He said there were far more cancelled flights this summer than they've ever seen.

Fischer agreed that there have been a lot of delays and cancellations that had nothing to do with the airport. Some were due to weather in Denver, and there were a lot of ground stops due to an air traffic control shortage.

Booth: When we go to a ground stop, and then they come off of it because the thunderstorm passed, we're one of the lowest priorities because it's such a short flight to Denver. We have ground delays often in the morning when there are no thunderstorms in Denver, so we're holding planes out there for flow into Denver. That's unusual. I think there are issues with air traffic control in Denver or with the amount of traffic going into Denver that may be overwhelming their air traffic control capabilities.

Crossan called it a domino effect between the east coast and Denver.

Fischer said she would follow up with Denver.

Fischer: For the coming winter, this is the third winter that we're going to have six airlines, 16 non-stop airports. Everything is in place. Southwest just added March 7-April 8, so that's complete.

Overall, we're looking at a capacity increase in seats of about 15%. It's going to fluctuate up and down with schedule changes that will still happen. So, about 237,000 arriving seats; last winter, we had 205,000.

Jet Blue loaded about a month ago, and it is going to be from Boston and Fort Lauderdale in February and March, but they are going a week longer. For many years, the United Newark flight has been just on Saturdays or Saturdays and Sundays; it is going to be five days a week.

This year, there will be three mainline jets from Denver; last year it was two mainline and one regional. That could change.

Delta Airlines from Atlanta is daily; it's been a 737 for a long time, and it's going to be a 757. That's an increase from 160 to 199. Atlanta is our highest-performing flight.

Booth reported that they're having to repaint the spots to accommodate that, though the airport was originally designed for that airplane; it's the largest that they can accommodate.

Fischer: Southwest is picking up a net of about 3,000 seats. Dallas Love is going to be daily starting on January 8 through the rest of the season, but the three dailies from Denver will go down to two.

American will have more seats from DFW; they have two 737s all season.

The cap for the program for the coming winter is \$3.4 million; last year, it was \$3.0M, and we paid \$1.9M.

The minimum revenue guarantee is not based on seats that are empty; it's based on having to make a certain amount of revenue every time the aircraft makes a round trip; if it doesn't, we pay the shortfall.

Birch confirmed that the revenue guarantee number is set by the airline.

Fischer: It's what they need to move that aircraft into a Hayden route because we are regional. We don't have that business mix. Some routes don't have steady load factors every day. For Hayden, it depends on day of week, in and out, and around holidays, off peak and peak. To not use that airplane to fly from one big city to another where they know they make money, and to put it here, that's what the amount they require is based on.

Liman: So, they just set a number, and we either accept it or we don't.

Fischer: We do what makes sense with the available budget. What works for the demographic of our guests? There are some pretty complex formulas.

2. HDN Airport/Capital/Infrastructure Update

Kevin Booth:

We've updated our independent projection of passengers recently to 214,509 this calendar year. For 2024, based on what we expect, we're almost up to 240,000, and that's conservative.

We received a grant last week from the FAA for almost \$600,000 to do the design this year for our big project in 2024. That's the taxiway rehabilitation, all new lights, moving a connector and adding a blast pad on the east end of the runway. It's a \$10 million project, give or take.

Last Friday we also received a notification from Charge Ahead Colorado. I had submitted a grant application for EV chargers, and it was approved. It's up to \$36,000; every little bit helps. We're putting in the infrastructure right now to get electricity to our employee parking lot, and we're going to install some for paid parkers. I don't know if that will be done before the winter season, but hopefully.

I spent all day on July 18 in Breckenridge. Senators Hickenlooper and Bennett put together an infrastructure summit, and it was a traveling roadshow, so I went to the one that was closest to us. This was all about infrastructure projects and funding. I was the only airport representative at the meeting; everybody else was roads and bridges and other types of infrastructure, but it gave me an opportunity to sit down with the Senators' senior staffers at lunch and talk about our airport. It paid dividends because I received commitments from senior staffers from both

senators that they will sign a joint letter of support for our terminal expansion. So, I'm really excited about that.

I just presented two nights ago to Craig's City Council; they're also going to write a letter of support. I'll talk to Robin and Michael before you leave about a letter of support. Matt has already said yes, and I'm pretty sure I can get one from our County Commissioners.

Senator Hickenlooper is coming to town later this month. He's holding a roundtable in Craig, and they invited me, so I'm going to go. Transportation and tourism are two of the talking points. He's coming to CMC here in town later that night, and they invited me to come to that, too, so I'll be there.

We've been asked and will host the Colorado Space Business Roundtable. They want to come to the airport, and they want me to talk about the airport. Matt and I are going to present at this event on the 23rd to get them excited about potential business opportunities at the business park that Matt is building and in the airport area that we're building.

You've heard me talk about the 37 acres. That has all been granted, and we're building that road. It's going to be done here before we know it. All of that is business opportunities, and Matt is moving ahead on the business park as well. We're partnering on that because it's right there across the street.

We just joined The Good Traveler program, which is a carbon offset opportunity for our passengers. They input where they're flying, and they can offset the carbon they put into the environment. For Atlanta, it's a \$16 offset for the round trip.

The program has added nonprofits. I wanted the money to come to the Yampa Valley, so we've partnered with the Yampa Valley Community Foundation, and they've submitted an application in conjunction with the Climate Action Plan group and the Yampa Valley Sustainability Council. So, the Foundation will be the primary nonprofit. They can funnel any money they get to projects in the Valley. You should be seeing a media release on that within the next week.

Projects:

We've kind of gotten over the final hurdle with the carwash; I'll know that for sure next Tuesday.

Piper Lane is finished.

Runway Pavement Maintenance: This is the sealcoat. We're closing the runway every night at 10 and reopening at about 7. It's going well; I haven't heard of any significant problems. We hope to be done the middle of next week.

The employee parking lot is going well, as is the CR 51B relocation project. \$262,000 is what we're going to spend on our new SKIDATA parking and revenue control system. I think it's going to be a great system and a lot more intuitive than the one we have right now.

We were working on the financials for the Terminal Area Plan with Mead & Hunt today. We're trying to figure out how we're going to pay for a \$140 million project. That's a precursor for us holding our second and final open house, which will be at the airport. We haven't set a date yet.

Our General Aviation Development Plan is done. The final documents haven't been put on our website yet, but the draft ones that are on there haven't changed.

Our Primary Management and Compliance Documents are done. There's no change to the final draft that's posted on our website.

We signed contracts with all three shuttle bus companies, so their contracts are renewed. No changes there.

We put out an RFP to renew the rental car contracts. We currently only have Avis-Budget and Hertz. We were hoping five years ago, the last time we did this, to get a third, and that same one we hoped to get is interested again, but we haven't signed it yet. We abandoned the RFP process and went to a negotiated agreement process at their request, and I'm fine with it. So, they're all at the table; they're all going to get treated exactly the same. Some of the way we divide up how many parking spaces they get is based on their volume, so Avis-Budget gets the majority. If Enterprise comes in, then we'll divide the rest of the spaces between them.

Asked by Birch, Booth said their desk will be next to Hertz.

Booth: It's not optimum. If Enterprise signs, and they prove to me that they can rent more cars than anybody else, we'll adjust. We have that in the contract. They're not upset about that at all.

I think yesterday's mass casualty exercise went really well. It was more in depth than previous exercises. We had more volunteers than we've ever had. We had more agencies respond than we've ever had. We had more involvement from both of our year-round airlines. We had 5-6 people in our command center all day. We had the Red Cross in numbers. Two of their experts came up and gave academics in the afternoon. If what we exercised for yesterday happens, one of our major challenges is how to deal with grieving families. That's what they were concentrating on yesterday. The airlines were really impressed with the Red Cross training and came away saying they were much better prepared. We need to have a place where you can send families, and you need to have a place where you can reunify families. The two have to be separate.

We also got a C-130 to fly out from the Air Force reserve unit at Colorado Springs, and they brought up a 7-member medical team. We brought them in to transport burn and head trauma victims out because our hospitals can't handle those, which we knew. This has always been a challenge when we do this exercise, so this was a way to meet that challenge. It was unrealistic to have a federally-funded airplane show up an hour and ten minutes after a crash, and I had to tell the exercise director that we need to get these people up here, understand how they work, how many people they can transport. An Air National Guard airplane from Cheyenne might be able to get activated quicker. But they rolled into the hangar, and they were doing triage within 15 minutes of landing. The colonel that was leading the team wrote me this morning asking when can we come back?

We did this way different than we've ever done it before, and I look forward to the after-action report and the meetings that will go into that to help us decide how we want to do that in the future. The exercise director and I are of different minds on that, so it'll be an interesting discussion.

Fain clarified that this triannual exercise is required by the FAA.

Booth reported that they ended the exercise with a mock press conference with local media, which went much better than it did the last time.

Booth: My two newest firefighters are enrolled in CMC in EMT training, which starts next month. We got a grant for that, so it's not costing us a cent.

Buccino asked how often the PMCDs and General Aviation Development docs need to be done.

Booth: I don't know that we've ever done a GA Development. They look at it when we do the master plan, and that will be our next big project. It's in our CIP in the next year or two. For the Terminal Area Plan and the GA Development Plan, the FAA gave us \$750,000 to do the study. It's just a concept; developers don't have to follow our blueprint. It makes you think about what you need. It made us think about the taxi lanes through the area. If we did cul-de-sacs, the FAA would not fund any of it. We did through for the public, and if you do that, the FAA might fund it. Plus, if somebody has an issue, they pull their plane back and they've got the taxi lane blocked, it would be nice to have an alternate route. That's one of the benefits of what we did.

3. Bob Adams Airport Update

Stacie Fain:

You'll notice a large increase in operations over the last couple of months.

Fain reported that they have been selling a lot of fuel. They are getting ready to put out a bid for a new fuel vendor.

Projects:

Fain:

We completed our runway rehabilitation project this year. Part of that was turning the staging area into helicopter parking area for EMS and firefighting helicopters.

This week, we put in a retaining pond, which will allow the Streets Department to store snow.

We're working out the final contract that the FAA requires stating what the Streets Department is going to do for the airport in exchange for us allowing them to store snow.

The snow will be coming to the airport when it is removed from Lincoln Avenue this winter.

The County required that we put a culvert in at Gate 12 so vehicles can come across that gate.

We'll be budgeting next year a more functional gate. Right now, it's a swing gate with a lock on it; we need to have a lift gate so trucks can access the area easier.

The helicopter parking area is now available to firefighting and EMS helicopters. The USFS kept them away this year so we could finish the project. We did get a lot of transient helicopters coming through to get fuel on their way to fires, but we didn't have any based here this year for any length of time.

We're still trying to schedule the repainting of the runway that is under warranty. We're running out of time, so we're hoping to get it done in the next month, but it may get pushed to next spring. We are going to get it repainted because they didn't prepare it properly and the paint is discolored and not holding up well. We are in the final stages of the Terminal Area Improvement project design project and putting out the project for bid for construction in 2024. We're working on trying to get the matching funds through the City CIP process, for which it's not ranking very well. It's a little problematic because we have to match some areas that are not eligible that will hold up the project or cause the project to have some problems. The main issue is the \$250,000 to move utilities. We will either have to work around that, or we will have to put

that back into RFP for hangar development. That is the reason that Garver and I haven't finished working on the RFP for hangar development is that we don't have the budget answers yet. We definitely need to match the \$53,000 for us to do the construction next year, or we will be leaving \$900,000 in BIL grant funding on the on the table. Once I finish the staff report on the hangar ground lease situation for City Council, we'll try to put the RFP back out. But we need to figure out the ground lease situation and the \$250,000 for utilities first. A lot of this information is available on our website under the Terminal Area Project.

We have 59 people on the waitlist, so we're trying to get hangars developed. That's revenue that the airport is leaving on the table with not having hangars that we charge ground leases for.

The self-service station is under design. We're working on getting that out for bid and having a construction contract in place by the end of the year. We won't be breaking ground this year. A lot of the requirements for Self-serve fuel stations have changed over the years and it has caused the price tag to go up and require more creativity in the design. That's the reason the project has slowed down a little bit. We also have had some challenges in getting the survey done.. We plan to begin construction in the spring about the same time we do the construction on the Terminal Area Improvement project.

ADS-B Tower: We made that project a little more complicated because we requested a larger generator and connection to a gas tank so we can back up our lighting system. The generator took forever to get ordered and here, but it came, and it has been installed. We got the propane into the tank, and we're hoping next week to do a little trial and figure out how we want it to operate. This was a neat arrangement where we negotiated a contract with L3/Harris who is a subcontractor to the FAA for them to put in a bigger generator. We will maintain the generator and the gas tank in return for that, and we will waive some of their ground rent to pay off the generator cost.

Asked how long the generator would last, Fain said it would be several hours depending on the amount of gas in the tank. She said testing will yield a more exact answer as well as answers to other operational questions.

Fain: We always like to do a tabletop exercise each year and will hold it on August 30th this year. The potential for something to go south is a little higher with a fly-in so it is a good time of year to host the exercise. SSFD, Classic Air Medical, the Civil Air Patrol, Classic Air Medical, and Routt County Emergency Director will all attend. The Police Department was invited but had a conflict and will participate next year.

It is important for the PD to participate because they would be the first to respond if there's an emergency at night with the FBO closed and none of us are here. They aren't familiar with airplanes, so they need to gain awareness of the airport environment.

We'll do that on the 30th.

We'll have our fly-in and Airport Appreciation Day and Family Fun Run on September 17 from 7 till 3. It's one of the few family events in town that is completely free.

Crossan confirmed that planes are able to land whenever they need to. The airport is public use and open 24 hours a day/365 days a year unless it is unsafe and closed by the Airport Manager.

Birch asked if the ground lease topic has been scheduled for Council; Buccino said it is not on the calendar yet.

Booth highlighted the fact that YVRA puts out notices for runway closures in addition to the FAA shutting down all the lights and navigational aids except the beacon and AWOS when the runway is closed. They also put lighted X's on each end of the runway every night during closures.

In addition, the contractor doing the night work can contact the pilot on the radio.

Fain and Booth reported that a few pilots do still try to land despite all the warnings.

4. Atlantic Aviation Update

Booth: They've been really busy. Tim's struggling to get and keep help. It didn't help that we're now paying more for every starting salary than he does, but he did hire one of our former janitors. Slow spring and early summer, but it has really picked up.

Buccino: A lot of big planes out there.

Birch: I noticed that in your landing revenue. There's fewer operations but higher revenue, so obviously the size of the aircraft has changed.

V. REPORTS FROM YVAC COMMITTEES

1. Community Outreach and Marketing

None.

Members of this committee include: Michael, Janet, Keith, Chris, Kevin, and Stacie.

2. Infrastructure and Finance

None.

Members of this committee include: Tim, Les, Steve, Stacie, and Kevin.

VI. MANAGERS' REPORTS – provided via email

1. Yampa Valley Regional Airport

No questions.

2. Steamboat Springs Airport

No questions.

VII. SET DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be October 12 at Yampa Valley Regional Airport.

VIII. PRELIMINARY AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE OCTOBER YVAC MEETING

Rework committees and assignments; review and advise on budgets.

IX. ADJOURN MEETING

The YVAC meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Minutes Approved: October 12th, 2023

By: Tim Redmond
Tim Redmond, Chairman
Yampa Valley Airport Commission