

**WILLMAR MUNICIPAL AIRPORT COMMISSION  
CITY OF WILLMAR, MN  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2012**

**MINUTES**

1. The Willmar Municipal Airport Commission met on Wednesday, July 18, 2012, at 5:00 p.m. at the Willmar Municipal Airport Conference Room.

**\*\* Members Present:** Pat Curry, Terry Albers, John Lambing, Steve NedreLOW, and Dan Reigstad.

**\*\* Members Absent:** Sandy Gardner, and Don Cole.

**\*\* Others Present:** Charlene Stevens- City Administrator, Megan Sauer- Planner/Airport Manager, Jared Voge- Bolton and Menk, Kevin Carlson- Bolton and Menk, Marcus Watson- Bolton and Menk, Brian Negen- FBO, and Jim Dokken- City Council Liaison.

2. MINUTES: The minutes of the April 18, 2012 meeting were approved as presented.
3. AIRPORT 101 BOLTON AND MENK WORKSHOP PRESENTATION: Kevin Carlson, Jared Voge, and Marcus Watson of Bolton and Menk, the City's Airport Engineering/Planning Consulting firm, presented an Airport 101 Workshop. The Airport Planning and Development overview covered FAA and MNDOT Aeronautics agency contacts, general airport references, airport zoning regulations, AIP (Airport Improvement Program), grant assurances conditioned with funding, ALP (Airport Layout Plan), and the local Willmar Airport project relating to crack sealing and sodding/fertilizing the grass runway.

The presentation included a binder detailing all the processes and requirements from the multijurisdictional agencies.

The Commission thanked them for the presentation making long complex processes understandable and relatable to the Willmar Airport.

4. There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Megan M. Sauer, AICP  
Planner/Airport Manager

Survey Results (43 total sent out to T-Hangar Tenants and Private Hangar Owners)

1. How often do you use the terminal building?  
A. Often (13)    B. Once a month (4)    C. Rarely (4)    D. Never
  
2. Are the runway, lights, and general maintenance on the operation side of the airport adequate for your use and that of other users?  
A. Yes (13)    B. No (8)
  
3. Does the FBO service and fuel system meet your and other users' needs/expectations?  
A. Yes (17)    B. No (4)
  
4. How has losing the courtesy cars affected you or other airport users?  
A. Yes (7)    B. No (13)    C. Both (2)

22 respondents

West Central Roofing, Dr. Nedrelow, Chuck Nefsted, Nelson International, Quam Construction, David Kleine, Dr. Lee Cafferty- Chief Medical Staff, Rice Memorial Hospital, Fagen Inc, Bruce Jaeger, Accupress, Bill Fry, Larry Juhl-Revier Cattle, Jerry Schwitters, Maurie Evans- Duininck Inc., and Wayne Mitchell.

6 anonymous surveys

## Response Narratives

1.

- B. I use the building a couple times per month, mostly for the bathroom facilities.
- As the terminal is a public facility I have taken the liberty of meeting flight training clients from both the local area and beyond. The conference room works well for a ground school session. From recent experience, I would estimate using the building at least twice a month.
- I use the terminal building quite often. It has always been clean and nice to use except: Multi-million dollar facility and the water is un-drinkable and stinks, sewer should have been put in for both the Terminal and Hangars along with water, Pilots lounge is kept locked with a combination lock so no one can use it.
- We use it for the bathrooms and the weather machines. It should be open for early and late hours so my people can use the restrooms. Most airports have access to restrooms 24 hours a day.
- Using restrooms.
- To use the restroom.

2.

- Grass runway-poor condition. Grass needs to be cut more often around hangers.
- We would agree that runway, lights and general maintenance are adequate. Is adequate good enough for the Willmar airport, we are not sure. Lighting is not at 100% but with minimal budgets of maintenance staff their hands are tied having to make small, thoughtful parts orders and making used parts work. The other issue that is seen on the airport is the forced closure of the grass crosswind runway. Without this runway there are days when decisions have to be made whether Willmar is the correct choice for landing. Without this runway as an option for the smaller aircraft the Willmar airport may be giving up some traffic.
- We always have NOTAMS about something wrong as the Airport.
- Yes, good service.
- No, cross runway (grass strip) not in service.
- No, the PAPI lights hardly ever work. The grass runway needs to be operational.
- No, they need to spray for weeds several times per year. They will destroy the runway and taxiways.
- No. The paved runway, the lights, and the general maintenance are fine. You are also addressing the grass runway issues, I understand. The City owned and leased hangars on the west side of the airport still have problems, however. I appreciate the City's work on mitigating the flooding issues so far. However, the hangars still 'flood' to a depth of ½ to 2 inches or so. This is the biggest problem in the winter. Water will come in during any kind of thaw, then refreeze into a very slick sheet of ice. Last year, my wife fell head first on the ice, prompting an ER visit and \$1500 bill. Fortunately she didn't suffer any long term consequences. The ice also makes it nearly impossible to pull our airplane out for up to months at a time.

- No, taxiway and runway lights out, VASI out all the time. Gates have been inoperable for years. Cross wind runway out all year. I would even be willing to change bulbs for the taxi ways and Runway. My understanding is they are just not furnished. The driveway leading into the Airport had been burnt out for over a year at one time, I do not know what the status is on these lights but right now I think only one is burned out. A. Gates have been out of service for years. These are needed to protect all of our investments. Should be repaired and left open during business hours and closed at nights if nothing else. B. Crosswind runway should have been repaired and put back in service. Money was spent to put this in this is just maintenance. C. Taxiways through the hangars need center lines to assist at night when trying to taxi. Unable to see where to be. D. Some hangars do not have a complete concrete apron. This is ridiculous. People are picking up these small rocks and destroying their prop(s) because we have a couple of people that don't care about anyone but themselves. They need to pour concrete completely in front of their hangars so that we have concrete all the way. This is a safety issue. This should never have been allowed. E. Also, there is still grass in places between some of the hangars. This also needs to be concrete. F. There should be outside lights on all the hangars and kept on from dusk to dawn. Another safety issue.
- Security gate has been inoperative/broken for a long time. Why don't you fix it or replace it. Other Airports that I use frequently (KRRC) don't have this problem. Also I still have drainage issues around my hanger. Water comes in with any significant rainfall.
- We are the biggest users of the airport and rely heavily on the maintenance people. They do a very good job.
- The FBO is doing the best they can with the funds available.

3.

- The FBO services provided are far above services provided at similar size airports around the country. With on-site staffing that extend from before 6 am to 5 pm and an on call 24 hr. 7 day a week person this not common to see. The on call person is available for fueling, courtesy car, or any other needs of pilots or passengers at the Willmar airport. Fueling is made as easy as possible with discounts available to large volume customers, on site aircraft owners and serf service customers. Fueling systems are inspected on a daily basis and fuel quality is never an issue.
- No, I have to go to other airports for all of our service needs.
- Very responsive (I noticed this summer special repairs done within 5 minutes on Congressman Colin Peterson's plane).
- The FBO should provide water, ice, coffee, etc. for visiting aircraft and Charter Flights.
- No, the FBO is a huge disappointment. They are very unfriendly except to their biggest customers. They are not interested in helping aviation on the field at all unless it makes them money, and even then sometimes they are not interested. One weekend, I couldn't even get compressed air or a hand air pump from them so I could add air to a low tire. The Flight Instruction is acceptable and a nice guy, but is exceedingly difficult to actually arrange

lessons with. I know of at least five individuals who have tried to use Mr. Rudningen and have been unable to obtain acceptable service. Also, I don't believe Mr. Rudningen maintains a website to allow new customers to find him. I don't blame Mr. Rudningen, who has other priorities. However, flight instruction is the heart of aviation. Without flight instruction, you can't learn to fly, you can't get checked out in new aircraft, you can't do a biennial flight review, and so on. Also, flying is a hobby for most of us. We need evening and weekend availability in order to get flight instruction done. This would not be difficult to arrange. We could recruit and train a local pilot as a flight instructor or recruit someone from St. Cloud or elsewhere to come down for these hours. By way of contrast, Alexandria, for example, has one full time and three part time instructors.

I would add that Jaeger Aviation is a jewel to have in the area, but Mr. Jaeger instructs virtually exclusively in Mooney aircraft.

We also don't really have any rental aircraft available for other than minimal rentals.

Finally, gas prices are the highest in the area. As of 10/28, retail prices for 100 LL self-serve are:

Willmar- \$6.60 per gallon

Litchfield- \$5.31

Paynesville- \$5.23

Olivia- \$5.75

Benson- \$5.22

Montevideo- \$5.50

Glenwood- \$4.90

Redwood- \$6.42

If you look at prices within 50 miles of Willmar, our prices are almost always the highest, often by far. It's hard to justify paying more than \$1.00 per gallon extra on a 30-50 gallon fill up in order to be loyal to the home field.

- The self-service equipment appears to be working well. The only issue I have seen is an occasional after hour's aircraft that would like help. Typical to other similar size airports, after hours service is available by posted number.
- No issues with fuel or equipment. Cost at Willmar is the highest around mostly by at least \$1.00 a gallon. I do like to buy locally but because of the cost I will gas at other places quite frequently. If gas was more reasonable I would purchase a lot more here.
- Maximum Cruise has been great to deal with- Brian, Eric and the rest of the staff have been very helpful.
- 24 hr. key card self-service is very good.
- They are always willing to assist in any way they can and are 24/7 fueling I have seen them out multiple times fueling jets and medical after hours.

4.

- Important to have, most small airports we travel to have courtesy cars.
- The airport has no lost its courtesy vehicles. The FBO, still, as always, provides two courtesy/rental vehicles depending on the need/end goal of its user. If the car is staying

local or a minimal amount of fuel is purchased the vehicles are still provided free of charge. For users of the airport that are not purchasing any fuel or there is a need to travel a distance the vehicles are available free of charge to users of the airport that were staying local. This has only become an issue when there has been a large amount of airport traffic and the 2 FBO owned cars are being used. The decision to remove the city owned vehicles from the airport just puts more direct overhead on the FBO.

- “All” of the airports I visit have courtesy cars available so other airport users that stop here are “stuck” at the Airport all day.
- No. City car not there, but FBO provides a courtesy car.
- Yes, other airport users need an easy way to get into town. Most airports smaller than Willmar offer a courtesy car.
- No, has not mattered.
- Yes, need courtesy car several times a year. Did not know it was no longer available. That will be a problem for us. I hope one is obtained soon.
- No, the loss of the courtesy car won’t affect me or any other local users. I can tell you that I strongly favor flying to airports with courtesy cars. It makes it far easier to go to town for anything at all. Willmar does not have many other good options for transportation from the airport. Also, I think our high gas prices are even more difficult to justify if we don’t have a courtesy car for customers to use.
- A courtesy car of some type is expected and typically available at airports the size of Willmar. As there is really no other way to utilize local restaurants and stores, lack of courtesy car is a problem. Not many would return to Willmar for other than required for business knowing there is no transportation to a local restaurant. This would be the case for a pleasure flight or more typically flight instruction. I wonder if the Brainerd Airport would be the same without a restaurant.
- No, didn’t use them.
- We should have a courtesy car available for out of town people. This brings a lot of revenue to our community. I do know of people that just don’t come here anymore. I frequently fly to airports with courtesy cars and avoid others without them. Most of these items are just maintenance. I don’t expect the City to furnish courtesy cars. But a plan needs to be made to have one or two available.
- I haven’t used the courtesy car here at Willmar. When flying to other airports I look to use airports which have courtesy cars.
- But it will only hurt the Airport/Willmar for out of town guests.
- The FBO still has three courtesy cars available for use.
- Don’t need transportation, but if needed Willmar Air Service has cars available for any use 24/7.
- I am a local so I have my own transportation but for others that are out of town I’m sure it’s an inconvenience if Maximum Cruise’s vehicles are all being used. Most people want food and only three places in town deliver and the taxi service is not very reliable.