

Baxter County Airport Commission

September 7, 2023

Attendance:

Airport Commission: Stephen Vester, John Bolding, Paul Fagras, Sally Hall, Terry Small, and Kyle McAlister
Baxter County Judge: absent
Airport Manager: Taylor Carmichael
Airport Tenants: none
Guests: Gerald Gaige, AOPA Rep; Brett Vaughn, Ken Gipson, Peter Smolka, Dani Pugsley of MH Chamber of Commerce and Jay Carter

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6 pm by Stephen Vester with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Minutes of the previous meeting were read into record. John Bolding made and Kyle McAlister seconded a motion to accept as read. Motion passed.

Chairman's Report:

Stephen Vester is to meet with Keith Bayird of Bayird Air to present his lease.

The previous attempt to solve the Freeman hangar land lease issue has been brought to a conclusion; however, it was discovered that some asphalt was poured on airport ground not in his lease. The cost of this was calculated and it is determined, based on the amount that is due for land lease since he built the hangar less the value of the asphalt, that the balance is approximately \$16,000.00. This would cover the rent through 2029. The FAA has suggested that if Mr. Freeman refuses to pay this, the county should because they were the one that entered into the original lease agreement which has caused the violation of grant assurances. So, it is now between Freeman Holdings, the County and the FAA to be resolved. The FAA has said that the Commission has done its due diligence in attempting to reconcile the lease issue and they are satisfied with the Commissions actions.

The Fire Department has gone to pick up the fire truck, which purchase was approved at last meeting. Stephen drafted a letter of understanding for the fire department to sign. This is simply a statement of the agreement that was made at the last commission meeting, and assures that all parties understand in the event of changes in leadership/staff.

Manager's Report:

Gate Openers will be installed Sept 12, 13 and 14.

Hangar B & C has new lighting installed and motion detector switches will be installed when the plates arrive.

Hangar B Door on #31 was damaged because the safety latch was not unlatched prior to opening. Parts have been ordered and will be repaired at the expense of the tenant, less \$1,000 for the upgrade to straps on the winch.

Seal coating that was done last year is thinning and looking faded already. This was in areas where the snow/ice was NOT scraped. Paull will call Horton Paving to inquire about our warranty of work.

Old Business:

Committee Reports:

Hangar Committee – not met

Rules and Regulation – Kyle reports they are about half way through the document

Event Committee – not met, but have made a few calls to verify reservation of services.

Jim Brown presented a letter of resignation due to not residing in Baxter County any longer. A motion was made by Kyle and seconded by Terry to accept his resignation. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Grant Applications: The FAA is unwilling to close out pre-engineering study at this time. We have a new program manager. Hopefully since the Freeman lease has been partially dealt with, this will be resolved soon.

Peter Smolka spoke about his application to obtain a land lease to build a private hangar. He is planning on building a 60x100 hangar. He discussed his time here in Baxter County and that his plane is too large to fit into our t-hangars, and Bayird will not give him a lease for his current site. He understands that his plans must be brought before the commission and approved. The commission had no opposition to leasing him a site. Stephen will visit with him after the meeting to get his lease ready.

Terry has visited with Mel Coleman at North Arkansas Electric Cooperative about possible solar farm on the airport property and this is no longer a feasible project for either party. All of the tax benefits for solar farms have expired and without them, it is cost prohibitive.

Terry also discussed with the commission that we have 12 electric meters on BPK. It was discussed that it might be cost effective to move, consolidate or disconnect some of these that are not necessary. Terry is looking into this.

AOPA Report:

Gerald Gaige reports that the EAA Event on National Aviation Day was a success with over 300 people in attendance. Aviation STEM courses at Mountain Home High School has 48 students enrolled for next year. There is a need for donations for simulators

Public Comment:

Dani Pugsley reports that next Friday is leadership day, and Tuesday 26th at 6 pm the CAP will be having an awards ceremony and encourages attendance to support the cadets.

7:05 pm. Motion was made by John and seconded by Paul to adjourn. Meeting adjourned.