

**CITY OF WICHITA**  
**WICHITA AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD**

**MINUTES**

**Monday, November 5, 2001 - 2:00 p.m.**

Present: Tim Austin, Dion Avello, Charles Bouilly, Bill Calloway, Beth Garrison, Carl Harris, Dave Murfin, Don Slawson, Jay Swanson, Carrie Williams

Absent: Dorothy McKay

City Staff: Ernie Garcia, Doug Moshier

Airport Staff: Bailis Bell, Steve Flesher, Jean Zoglman, Valerie Wise

Chairman Avello called the meeting to order.

**Approval of Minutes**

*Slawson moved to approve the minutes of the October 1, 2001 Wichita Airport Advisory Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.*

**Report on Terminal Building Improvements**

At the previous meeting the Airport Advisory Board voted to replace the concourse carpeting and paint the walls. The City Manager's office has approved new carpet, but the painting was not approved. However, the walls will be cleaned and the ceiling will have new paint. The estimated cost for these improvements is \$175,000 and is expected to be complete by February 1, 2002. Funds to pay for these improvements are budgeted in the Capital Improvements Program and will come out of the airport's unencumbered cash balance.

The terminal remodel and master plan project was discussed. It was suggested that a member of the Airport Advisory Board be involved in the interviewing process.

**Rental Car Fees and Taxes**

At the City Council meeting of October 23, 2001, there was discussion of a proposal to increase taxes on rental automobiles in Wichita. Avello was present at that meeting and inquired why this proposal was not presented to the Airport Advisory Board prior to the City Council meeting. Avello stated the WAAB was given an apology. It was recommended that if there are further questions or comments, members should contact their Council member.

Bouilly made the observation that the Airport Advisory Board is to be responsible for the airport, and if this tax is approved, it will lower the franchise fee of the airport by 2%, thereby decreasing airport revenue by about \$300,000. Swanson suggested the franchise fee should remain the same and the \$1 should be added to the rental car fee. It was his feeling that the airport should not be penalized. Avello was assured that whatever funds are taken away from the airport will be returned to the airport.

Bell stated that the proposed use of the money is to promote tourism and assist in attracting a low fare carrier to Wichita. From that standpoint, Bell supports the proposal. There is some flexibility with using the funds developed through a direct tax on rental cars that is not afforded to the airport for its use of monies that it collects from rental cars.

It is not known at this time how the money would be spent to lower airfares; however, Bell feels it is in the best interest of the community for this proposal to move forward.

It was Austin's opinion that the Airport Advisory Board should not recommend the proposal, and that there needs to be a better understanding of the impact on airport revenue. It was his suggestion that the Board neither supports nor denies the proposal until there is an assurance that it is revenue neutral to the airport. There was also concern that no one from the City Finance Department was available to address questions at this meeting. Due to the increased costs associated with heightened security, Austin felt it was a poor time to be taking money out of the airport budget.

Avello stated he would be present at the November 6 City Council meeting. The Board would be supportive of the proposal if this were an overall plan to attract a low fare carrier and if it was revenue neutral to the airport's budget.

### **Report on Low Air Fare Strategy**

Steve Flesher, Air Service Development Director, presented a brief outline of the strategy to attract a low fare carrier to Wichita Mid-Continent Airport. The strategy includes a region-wide campaign to recruit a combination of three low fare carriers: AirTran Airways, Frontier Airlines, and American Trans Air (ATA). Currently, presentations are being conducted to many communities and organizations. Within the next couple of weeks, businesses and organizations will be looking at their existing travel needs and will determine what amount of that travel can be committed to one or more of the targeted low fare carriers. It is hoped that the pledge campaign can be concluded within the next 60 days. The support that has been raised for these airlines will then be used to accelerate negotiations with each of the targeted carriers. As these carriers enter our market, this community will assist in promoting and launching the new service.

A number of businesses have been approached in and around Wichita. The Regional Economic Area Partnership, the leadership of the Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Business Investment Group have endorsed the strategy. These organizations are helping the City of Wichita and Mid-Continent Airport expand this campaign to hundreds

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of businesses across South Central Kansas. The response has been overwhelmingly positive.

As Airport Advisory Board Members, endorsement of this strategy would lend credibility to the campaign. Flesher asked the members, as individual business people, to review their corporate travel needs and commit a portion of that travel to one or more of these targeted carriers.

Harris stated that affordable air service and availability has been the top priority of REAP since its inception. People not flying out of Mid-Continent Airport commercially are not flying out of the State, and this hampers everyone in the region. It hurts in commercial recruitment and retention, as well as employee recruitment and retention. The REAP organization has challenged all government entities in this region to dedicate the entire travel portions of their budget to destinations in which these carriers travel.

*Motion made by Murfin that the Wichita Airport Advisory Board wholeheartedly supports the low fare strategy. Motion was approved unanimously.*

### **September 2001 Statistical/Project Reports**

Bell stated that after the September 11, 2001 tragedy, Mid-Continent Airport lost only four out of 44 scheduled flights per month. Total passengers for September 2001 were down 37% from a year ago.

### **Other Business**

Swanson stated that the Wichita Opera has requested free advertisement in the terminal building. Bell stated that non-profit organizations are allowed free advertisement in the terminal building if there is available space. It is the airport policy to charge \$250 to \$275 for advertisements in the display cases in the terminal.

SkyWest Airlines will begin service from Wichita on December 1, 2001 with three flights to Dallas/Ft. Worth. SkyWest is a Delta connection carrier and will replace two of the Atlantic Southeast Airlines' 30-passenger Brasilia turboprops with three, 50-passenger Canadair regional jets.

Comair Airlines, a Delta connection, will add a second departure to Cincinnati on January 3, 2002.

On December 2, 2001, TWA will no longer exist. American Airlines has replaced TWA logos on aircraft and gates.

It was requested that leasing policies be discussed at the WAAB meeting in December.

**Executive Session**

Swanson moved to recess the regular meeting and reconvene in executive session for 15 minutes to discuss matters related to the security of a public body, public building or facility or information system.

3:45 p.m. Regular meeting recessed; executive session

4:05 p.m. Executive session adjourned. No action was required as a result of the executive session.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

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Valerie Wise, Clerk