

City of Winsted
Joint Work Session
City Council and Winsted Municipal Airport Commission
Vollmer Room
Monday, March 7, 2011
4:30 p.m.

City Council Members Present: Mayor Steve Stotko
Council Member Dave Mochinski
Council Member Tom Ollig
Council Member Bonnie Quast
Council Member George Schulenberg

Airport Commission Members Present: Joe Johnson
Kevin Kubasch
Dave Millerbernd
Russ Paschke

Staff Present: Deb Boelter, City Clerk-Treasurer
Amanda Zeidler, Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk

I. Call to Order

Mayor Stotko called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

II. Discuss Airport Funding / Background

Marcus Watson, Airport Specialist for Bolton and Menk, Incorporated, was present to provide background information to assist the Winsted City Council and Winsted Airport Commission with discussions about the Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP). Watson stated that there is a need for the City Council and Airport Commission to reformulate the ACIP in order to develop a realistic project direction for Federal Fiscal Year 2011 and beyond.

Watson stated that there is a total Federal Entitlement balance of \$581,484 for the Winsted Municipal Airport, and the City must either spend or loan \$131,484 of non-primary Federal Entitlement airport funds in Federal Fiscal Year 2011 on eligible projects, or else the funds will be lost. The Airport Commission had previously stated that they are committed to utilizing available funds for the Winsted Municipal Airport. Watson added that to date, no specific projects have been recommended for 2011. Watson stated that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had a deadline for paperwork, confirming all desired 2011 projects in February, 2011, but has stated that they are willing to wait until early March, 2011, pending a decision by the City.

Watson stated that the existing ACIP that was submitted in October, 2010 lists possible projects for the Winsted Municipal Airport. All projects must be listed on the ACIP to be eligible for funding. Since October, 2010, possible changes to the CIP have been discussed, including the use of Federal funding for a new commercial hangar building. Discussions with the Airport Commission, FAA and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) Office of Aeronautics have occurred since that time to research possible project options. Watson stated that multiple options have been explored, and through those discussions, it appears that the official ACIP that has been submitted does not accurately reflect the desired prioritization of projects or schedule.

Mochinski asked if a decision had to be made at this meeting. Watson clarified that at a minimum, the 2011 project list must be completed.

III. Discuss Airport Expansion Project Feasibility

Watson stated that members from the City of Winsted, Winsted Airport Commission, Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) Office of Aeronautics, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and Bolton and Menk, Incorporated, discussed the Airport Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and proposed future project concepts. The meeting was called to answer questions and provide guidance on project concepts.

Watson stated that the City and its representatives asked questions of Mn/DOT and the FAA representatives on several different proposals as a part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). One concept was utilizing Mn/DOT and/or FAA funding for the construction of a private-public terminal-hangar building. Watson stated that the concept was ranked a low priority project by the FAA and Mn/DOT because it would be a 'revenue-generating' project. The project would also be subject to eligibility rules that could cause the total project costs to be pro-rated, leading to a higher local share. Other projects such as airfield pavement maintenance, development, and equipment are higher on the funding priority and would be a better use of Federal funding, according to the FAA. Due to the project's low priority and funding challenges, a combined hangar-terminal project is no longer recommended to be funded with public funds.

Watson stated that the FAA and Mn/DOT representatives encouraged the City to continue to take steps toward implementing the Airport Master Plan for a paved runway. Watson stated that the runway needs to be discussed, in order to formulate the ACIP. Watson asked the council and commission members how realistic a paved runway is. He added that the first steps would be to update Airport Zoning to protect airspace and surrounding land uses, and to begin the Environmental Assessment. Both Mn/DOT and the FAA are in full support of the project and indicated that it would rank very highly for ninety-five percent (95%) Federal Discretionary funding. Mn/DOT and the FAA also indicated that the five percent (5%) local share for the overall project could come from other funding sources such as donations, economic development funds, or bonding. If these steps were taken starting in 2011, construction still would not occur for at least five (5) years. Watson added that there can also be key milestones set along this process to continue to evaluate the need and desire for this project.

Paschke recommended that the zoning be done first, in order to protect the land use, and the airspace.

IV. Discuss Short-Term Airport Improvements

Watson stated that three (3) options for the revised Winsted Airport CIP were presented to the Airport Commission on February 8, 2011. Short-term project options for the Capital Improvement Plan that were discussed include the following:

- Airport Zoning Update (City offered funding for July, 2011 by Mn/DOT)
- Crack Seal & Slurry Seal Airport Pavements
- Replace Terminal Building
- Conduct Environmental Assessment for Runway
- Acquire Snow Removal Equipment
- Purchase Snow Removal Equipment Storage Building (existing hangar for sale)
- Rehabilitate Runway 9/27
- Upgrade Airfield Lighting

Watson stated that the Airport Commission provided general input on the options presented. A recommendation for the ACIP was not made. It was recommended that the Airport Commission work with City Council to help adopt an updated project Airport CIP and project direction. Watson stated that the City can also lend the entitlement funding to another airport.

V. Reformulate Five (5) Year Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP)

Watson stated that according to the FAA, the ACIP for the Winsted Airport must be updated and project programming papers submitted for proposed 2011 projects by early March, 2011. Grants based on bids, or agreements would be available through August, 2011, pending Congressional approval of FAA funding. Watson offered a preliminary project schedule for a proposed Federal construction project in 2011.

Ollig gave a synopsis, stating that the crack seal and slurry seal, the design of the terminal building, and construction would be on the project task list for 2011. Ollig stated that a motion will need to be made at the City Council meeting that will follow the joint meeting. The Environmental Assessment and Airport Zoning update will remain on the CIP, in future years. The runway paving will also remain on the CIP, as a long-term project.

Watson stated that the ACIP revision process is typically done in the fall of each year. Stotko asked if there should there be a joint meeting once a year to sit down and look at the CIP. The Council and Commission members agreed to hold a joint meeting in September of each year to update the Airport CIP.

VI. Adjourn

Mochinski motioned to adjourn. Schulenberg seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda J. Zeidler
Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk