

City of Winsted  
Winsted Airport Commission Meeting  
Winsted City Hall – Council Chambers  
Tuesday, August 9, 2011  
8:30 a.m.

Airport Commission Members Present: Joe Johnson  
Kevin Kubasch  
Russ Paschke  
Dave Mochinski (Council Liaison)

Airport Commission Members Absent: Dave Millerbernd  
Glenn Weibel

Staff Present: Brad Martens, City Administrator  
Dave Meyer, Public Works Lead  
Amanda Zeidler, Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk

**1) Call the Meeting to Order**

Paschke called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**2) Approval of Minutes**

Martens asked to remove Glenn Weibel’s name from the minutes of the July 12, 2011 meeting, as he was not present at the meeting.

**Kubasch made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 24, 2011 and July 12, 2011 Airport Commission Meetings with the adjustment. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.**

**3) Financial Report**

Martens presented the financial report for July, 2011. Kubasch had asked for clarification regarding charges from Bolton and Menk, Incorporated. Martens stated that he would research the charges for Kubasch. Martens also clarified that Bolton and Menk, Incorporated charges a reduced rate for their representatives to attend meetings and other functions. Martens added that Bolton and Menk, Incorporated, does not charge the City of Winsted when their representatives are presenting information regarding future projects.

**4) Maintenance Report**

Dave Meyer, Maintenance Lead, reported on the following:

- New ribbon was installed on gas pump receipt printer
- Ruts that were created when plowing snow by hangar 45 have been fixed
- Paschke repaired a light on the runway
- There are currently 1,200 gallons of aviation fuel, and the tank cannot be filled until there is less fuel in the tank. Public Works is required to order 4,000 gallons of aviation fuel at a time.

Paschke noted that printer paper was low in the printer in the Arrival/Departure (A/D) Building that is used for weather reports. Meyer stated that he would refill the paper in the printer.

**5) Old Business**

**a) 2011 Airport Improvement Projects Update**

Martens gave an update regarding the 2011 Airport Improvement Projects. He stated that the City Council has approved bids for both projects; the bids are approved contingent upon receiving funding from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and other items. Martens noted that the bids for the Arrival/Departure (A/D) building were twenty-eight percent (28%) below the engineer’s estimate. The City Council decided not to go

forward with the cost-reduction measures regarding the roof and brick materials for the building. Martens stated that the slurry seal project only received one (1) bid, which was higher than the engineer's estimate. The City Council made the decision to include all of the taxi-lanes at this time. Martens stated that the City Engineer believes that the City will receive communication regarding funding from the FAA in August, 2011.

Martens stated that construction of the new A/D building is scheduled to begin in mid-October, 2011, and the slurry seal project will be completed prior to the construction of the A/D building. After approval from the FAA, the City will develop a timeline with the City Engineer and contractor to move forward with both projects. Martens noted that the Airport will have to be shut down for a short period of time during the construction period, and the FAA will provide for a portable building and bathroom facility at the airport. The Airport Commission discussed items related to the Airport shut-down and how to proceed. Martens stated that the details will be clarified with the contractor prior to construction. Mochinski recommended that Johnson maintain contact with Martens to make sure access is available for his customers and business. Paschke recommended having the contractor available at the next Airport Commission meeting. Martens noted Paschke's request and stated that he would contact the contractor.

Mochinski inquired about the area that was painted with a compass rose, to see if that area will receive the slurry seal treatment. Kubasch stated that the area will receive the treatment, since the City Council approved all of the taxilanes for the slurry seal project. Johnson stated that the Ninety-Nines, Incorporated, volunteer their time to paint the compass rose, and the City pays for the paint product.

**b) Review of Camping at the Winsted Municipal Airport: July 15, 16, 29, and 30, 2011**

Martens stated that part of the procedure for approving camping for Johnson at the Airport, included a follow-up discussion with the Airport Commission. Martens added that he did not receive any comments, other than a small amount of litter that was picked up right away. Meyer stated that the Public Works Department did not receive any comments regarding camping at the Airport.

**c) Schedule Future Airport Commission Meeting at Airport**

Martens provided options for the Airport Commission to review regarding a date for a future meeting at the Airport. He asked for a motion to change the October, 2011 meeting date. Martens stated that the Airport Commission would like to possibly have evening meetings on a quarterly basis. Paschke stated that in the past, the Airport Commission meetings always took place at the Airport in the evening. Martens asked if anyone would be willing to open up their hangar for the meeting, because the A/D building will be under construction and unavailable.

Kubasch suggested a time of 6:30 p.m., so the meeting does not go too late. Paschke suggested 7:00 p.m. so people are able to attend after work. Mochinski suggested having the meeting on Thursday, October 6, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. Kubasch made a suggestion to mail a meeting notice to all of the hangar owners a few weeks ahead of time, since they would not all see a posted notice in the A/D building. Mochinski suggested emailing the notice, as well as postal mail. Kubasch also suggested that the City send a form with the meeting notice to update contact information for each of the hangar owners.

**Johnson made a motion to change the October, 2011 Airport Commission Meeting to Thursday, October 6, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. with the location to be determined. Kubasch seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.**

**6) New Business**

**a) Skydiving Agreement Extension – Joe Johnson**

This item was discussed in conjunction with item b, regarding a request from Joe Johnson for a new hangar.

**b) New Hangar Request – Joe Johnson**

Martens stated that Johnson has requested an extension to the skydiving agreement between Westside Skydivers and the City of Winsted, as well as a request to build a new hangar at the Airport. Martens stated that the current agreement with Westside Skydivers is in place through December 31, 2012; however, Johnson wishes to build a

large hangar at the Airport, which is a long term commitment to the Airport. Martens noted that Johnson has requested to increase the term of the agreement to at least thirty (30) years, and decrease the usage fee for the drop zone to \$1,000 per year. Martens stated that Johnson is currently paying \$4,500 per year for the use of the drop zone, and Johnson has found lower rates for drop zones at other airports; however, City staff has not been able to confirm these rates. Martens stated that he is looking for direction from the Airport Commission to move forward, and offered some options, including the following:

- Recommend moving forward with drafting a contract to meet the language that Johnson has requested or draft a contract with different language
- Deny the request by Johnson to extend his contact
- Table the request and direct City staff to work with Johnson to obtain more specific information

Martens stated that he would like for the Airport Commission to take steps to move forward so Johnson can expand his business at the Winsted Municipal Airport. Johnson stated that it is important for him to know that his business has a long-term home before he makes capital investments in the business. Johnson informed the Airport Commission that in the first year of business, his goal was to have 1,000 tandem jumps, and there were 1,952 tandem jumps, and his goal for 2011 is 4,000 tandem jumps. He added that his business has outgrown the hangar that he is leasing, and he would like to have more room, his own plumbing, and be more self-contained.

Martens stated that Glenn Weibel, Airport Commission member, was not able to attend this meeting, and had some comments on Weibel's behalf. Martens stated that Weibel feels that the placement of the proposed hangar does not match the future layout plan for the airport; however, the City does have the opportunity to change the future layout plan. Weibel was also concerned that a precedent may be set by allowing the use of private water and sewer for Johnson's proposed hangar. Weibel made a suggestion for Johnson to purchase other hangars at the Airport and relocate them to build his own hangar in their place.

Paschke stated that he does not agree with the location Johnson has proposed to build his hangar, and added that he would like to obtain more information and have further discussion. Martens asked what specific information would be helpful to the Airport Commission, in order to make a more informed decision. Paschke stated that he would like to know what is proposed for the land that is currently being used as the drop zone at the Airport.

Paschke made a recommendation for Johnson to build his new hangar on the south side of the existing hangars. Johnson stated that this site has been discussed, and he has concerns about building a hangar near the residential area, or among the other hangars. Mochinski asked if Johnson has considered purchasing the older hangars on the first taxiway, just south of the runway. Johnson stated that he had considered this idea; however, it was his understanding that he would not be able to rebuild in this area, because it is too close to the runway. Mochinski stated that Johnson may want to make sure that he receives a professional opinion regarding the proximity to the runway, and noted his concerns regarding the view of the runway from the new A/D building, and the affects a new hangar might have on the future Airport Layout plan.

Johnson stated that for his business, and the impact on the airport, he feels that it makes the most sense to build his hangar on the west side of the parking lot. Martens made a suggestion to build the hangar on the south end of the existing hangars, and create an entrance and small parking area. Johnson stated that he would like to have permission to use the field on the south end of the Airport as a drop zone, if he would build his hangar there, and use the existing drop zone as an alternate for student landings, etcetera.

The Airport Commission discussed Johnson's proposed hangar layout, and how it would affect the layout of the airport. Johnson stated that the existing septic system would have to be relocated, at his expense, and one tie down area would be lost.

Kubasch stated that he is not opposed to Joe Johnson or Westside Skydiving; however, he does not believe that the Airport Commission is at a point of approving a hangar site or an extended lease. He added that he is aware that Johnson is concerned about crowd control, and added that this is one issue that the Airport Commission should take into account for safety issues. Kubasch stated that he understands Johnson's desire to build a hangar on the west side of the parking lot; however, a future apron expansion would allow Johnson to consider building in the area south of apron expansion area, and then use the area south of the existing hangars for a drop zone. Kubasch stated that looking at the current state of the economy and general aviation, he does not see a huge need

or request for new hangars and stated that the Airport Commission should probably research to see if the area south of the existing hangars could be reconsidered for a drop zone.

Kubasch offered another idea, stating that the City may want to consider the apron expansion for the next improvement project to provide a location for Johnson to build a hangar, and also taking care of any crowd control issues. He added that he is concerned about changing or updating the Airport Layout Plan because it will generate more engineering fees. He stated that he would like to find a solution that will accommodate Johnson, and be beneficial for the Airport.

Johnson stated that he has heard unofficial comments stating that the City will not be moving forward with paving the runway. Mochinski stated that the City is not at that point yet, to say that the runway will definitely not be paved. Kubasch stated that the City would get the engineering firm involved, and revise the Airport Layout Plan in order to continue receiving funding from the FAA.

Kubasch made a suggestion to allow Johnson to build a hangar in the future Fixed-Based-Operator (FBO) area on the west side of the existing parking lot. He added that a small taxiway would have to be built to gain access to the existing ramp. Johnson stated that the Airport Commission would probably not want to move the drop zone to the south side of the Airport property because of the comments that were made by the FAA regarding the hazards in this area, even though it did meet the size requirements. Paschke asked Johnson if he would be willing to consider adding on to the hangar that he is currently leasing. Johnson stated that he has considered this option; however, there would be an unknown cost involved, and he also has flooding problems on the north side of the existing hangar. The Airport Commission discussed the drainage issues and layout at the Airport.

Kubasch asked for clarification regarding the location of the septic system, and the A/D building. Johnson proposed to enlarge the existing septic system to accommodate the commercial use, relocate it, maintain the connection to the A/D building, and connect his new hangar to the system. Kubasch advised the Airport Commission that it might be best to complete the construction of the A/D building, and then re-evaluate Johnson's proposed hangar location. Kubasch asked Johnson for a proposed schedule to build a new hangar. Johnson stated that he would like to start building this in the fall of 2011, or spring of 2012. Johnson stated that he wants Winsted to be his home, and he wants to come to an agreement so he knows that he can have a long-term, viable business. Kubasch asked Johnson if he would be willing to address the FAA regarding a drop zone in the area south of the existing hangars. Johnson stated that he would be willing to contact the FAA, and find any other information at the request of the Airport Commission. Johnson stated that if the drop zone is moved, he would like to have his hangar by the drop zone. Kubasch stated that if Johnson is open to building a hangar on the south side of the Airport property, the City would probably be willing to place the drop zone on the south side of the airport. Kubasch stated that he would vote to approve a dedicated drop zone area on the south side if Johnson is willing to commit to the Winsted Airport. Martens stated that moving the drop zone to the south side of the Airport property would eliminate any future camping at the Airport and future use by Winstock, which results in a loss of revenue.

Kubasch stated that the issue of crowd control is not being addressed with Johnson's proposed hangar location. Kubasch added that building the hangar in the proposed FBO location, or on the south side of the existing hangars, it would address crowd control at the Airport. Johnson described the general flow of traffic through the Airport for his customers, and offered for the Airport Commission members to see the operation on a Saturday and see how his business works.

Mochinski recommended adding a covered patio or pavilion area, so Johnson's customers can be by the loading zone, but keep the hangar itself on the south end of the Airport property. Johnson stated that Mochinski's recommendation does not address his need for a larger hangar, and there would still be an issue with shuttling students and customers from his hangar to the loading zone. Johnson stated that it is a big event for most people to skydive, so they are usually accompanied by several other people. Meyer stated that there is a lot of traffic, and there are several people that come to the Airport to observe the skydivers.

Kubasch stated that the biggest concern will be keeping people safe and out of the general airport area. Johnson stated that the A/D building is busy now because it is the only facility with a restroom and added that with his own building, the A/D building would not be used as much.

Kubasch asked Johnson if he has considered building his hangar on the north side of the residential area near the Airport, since Johnson has purchased property there, and it would be located outside of the drop zone. Johnson mentioned a hardship that may come about with "Through the Fence" access. Kubasch stated that he would like to suggest relocating the airport beacon and building a taxi-way for Johnson, and at that point, Johnson could build his hangar just north of the residential area, and west of the airport entrance road, while remaining on Airport property.

Martens summarized by stating that the Airport Commission does not seem to be entirely satisfied with Johnson's current proposal; however, they seem to be open for other options. He offered options for the Airport Commission to move forward with his request. Martens made a suggestion to make a motion to table the request from Johnson in order to obtain the following information: for staff to investigate the first row of hangars on the south side of the runway; research "Through the Fence" issues; investigate any funding available for people creating jobs; have Johnson generate some options for the Airport Commission to review that would not reduce parking, not block the view from the A/D building, plans for crowd control, and also meet any future Airport needs; then bring all of the information back to the September, 2011 Airport Commission meeting. Kubasch also requested that Johnson provide a sketch of his proposed building, or site plan. Martens agreed that a plan would be very helpful, and suggested that Johnson provide a sketch and criteria for crowd control, as well.

Kubasch asked for clarification regarding Johnson's request for the creation of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. Martens stated that there is a cost involved with forming a TIF district; however, City staff can research the possibility of a TIF district, tax abatement, low-interest loans, and other possible forms of funding.

Mochinski stated that he is wondering how Johnson's long-term plan will benefit the airport as a whole. Johnson stated that he would like to include a maintenance facility, since he has mechanic on his payroll and he would possibly do other maintenance work, as well. Mochinski requested that Johnson provide a business plan to explain his future plans for the Airport Commission to review.

**Kubasch made a motion to table the request by Johnson to extend his contract in order to investigate the following information: have City staff investigate "Through the fence" issues; any funding that may be available to help create jobs; have Johnson come back with a full business plan, showing flow of traffic and crowd control, a plan that does not reduce parking, a plan that does not block the views from the A/D building, and that meets future needs of the Airport. Paschke seconded the motion. Johnson abstained. Motion carried 2-0.**

**Kubasch made a motion to revisit the lease extension for Westside Skydivers, at which time Johnson's hangar request will be negotiated or resolved. Paschke seconded the motion. Johnson abstained from voting. Motion carried 2-0.**

## 7) Other Business

### a) Airport Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Martens stated that the City of Winsted needs to update the Airport Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) by October, 2011. He added that Marcus Watson, Airport Specialist for Bolton and Menk, Incorporated, will be present at the September, 2011 Airport Commission meeting. Mochinski asked that the minutes of this meeting be forwarded to Watson, so he has an overview of what was discussed at this meeting.

### b) Airport Event Committee

Mochinski stated that he would like to investigate and possibly form a committee to create an event at the Winsted Municipal Airport that would create an atmosphere similar to that of the 1960's. Johnson stated that his staff at Westside Skydivers recently discussed having a fly-in event at the airport. Kubasch and Johnson stated that they would be willing to assist Mochinski. Mochinski stated that he is looking for promotion ideas, for a summertime event that would begin in 2012 and become an annual event. Kubasch suggested that the event coincide with the Winsted Summer Festival in August of each year. Kubasch added that he has a list of events that occur at Minnesota Airports and will research possible dates for the event. Mochinski stated that the committee can formulate a plan and present it to the Airport Commission and City Council. Kubasch stated that Weibel and Millerbernd would most likely get involved with the committee, as well.

**c) Mason Air**

Johnson stated that he has been passing a fair number of customers over to Darrin Mason for flight training. Paschke stated that he has been approached by Mason Air regarding the placement of a sign at the Winsted Airport. Johnson stated that he is working with Mason Air to design similar signs to be placed at the entrance to the Winsted Airport.

**8) Adjournment**

**Kubasch motioned to adjourn the meeting. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.**

*Brad Martens*

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Brad Martens,  
City Administrator  
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

*Amanda J. Zeidler*

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Amanda J. Zeidler,  
Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk  
City of Winsted