

AIRPORT COMMISSION MEETING
November 30, 2021
5:00 p.m.
Jackson City Hall Council Chambers

A regular meeting of the City of Jackson Airport Commission was held in the Council Chambers of the Jackson City Hall at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 30, 2021 with the following persons present: Airport Commission members, Vice-Chairman Richard Hample, Paul Clymer, Tom Stoner, Kerry Ella, Marcus Polz and FBO Paul Sanders. Also attending was City Administrator Matt Skaret, Engineer Eric Hanson of HDR and Recording Secretary Dave Maschoff. (Airport Commission Chairman Chris Handevitd was absent.) (A quorum of the Airport Commission was present.)

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Richard Hample called the regular monthly meeting of the Airport Commission to order.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2021 AIRPORT COMMISSION MEETING

Hample asked if there were any additions or corrections to the September 28, 2021 Airport Commission meeting. Hearing none, Hample asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

CLYMER/ELLA moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the September 28, 2021 Airport Commission meeting minutes as mailed.

BIDS FOR REMOVAL OF TREES ON MENEELY'S PROPERTY

City Administrator Skaret distributed copies of the bid received to remove trees in the Airport easement area on Knute and Kaye Meneely's property.

Skaret noted only one bid was submitted.

Engineer Eric Hanson explained the cost for the tree removal was under bid thresholds so advertising to seek bids for the project was not required. He said bid proposals were sought from Svoboda Excavating, Carl Edlin, Snyder Tree Service all of Jackson and Rosburg Construction of Welcome, Minnesota. Hanson said Dale Ascheman of rural Jackson was also contacted and was not interested in the project.

Hanson said Svoboda Excavating was the only contractor that submitted a bid which was \$74,350. He said the reason the bid was high is due to the request that the trees and debris be hauled off of Meneely's property. Hanson said usually, the trees are cut down, put in a hole and burned and then covered up. Hanson said he doesn't blame the Meneely's for not wanting a hole dug and a large fire on their property. He said he wouldn't want that next to his home either. Hanson noted MNDOT also probably doesn't want a large fire right next to Highway 71.

Hanson explained the reason the bid is high is because the trees have to be cut into haulable pieces and then trucked to a disposal site.

Stoner noted the trees could be hauled to the City's dump which is only a couple of miles from the Meneely's property.

Hanson said there are over 225 trees that need to be cut down.

Hanson said he talked with the FAA (Federation Aviation Administration) who indicated Svoboda's bid of \$74,350 was not the price they were expecting to see. He said the FAA wants at least two quotes and wants the City to work harder to get another quote.

Hample and Stoner both suggested seeking a quote from Thate's Tree Service of Fairmont, Minnesota.

Hanson said he would contact Thate's Tree Service to see if they would be interested in submitting a quote.

Hample asked what the deadline was for removing the trees from Meneely's property.

Hanson said the trees have to be down by April 30th, 2022 to protect the Northern Long-eared bat. He said the documents for seeking quotes said the tree removal has to be done between January 1st and April 30th, 2022 unless the contractor can reach an agreement with the property owner to remove the trees sooner.

Hample noted the document also states that grading and complete clean-up has to be completed by June 3rd, 2022. He asked if action by the Airport Commission regarding the tree removal had to be tabled until another quote was obtained.

Hanson said the Airport Commission could table action and wait for another quote. He noted there's over 100 trees that are six inches in diameter.

Hample asked if the FAA will cover the cost of the tree removal from Meneely's property.

Hanson said the FAA will pay 100 percent of the cost.

Hample asked the Airport Commission members what they wanted to do.

Skaret suggested the Airport Commission could approve a motion to have Hanson seek another quote and then approve the lowest responsible quote that's submitted.

STONER/ELLA moved and it was unanimously carried to have Engineer Eric Hanson get another quote for the tree removal on Knute and Kaye Meneely's property and approve the lowest responsible quote among the two quotes.

AIRPORT PROJECT UPDATE

Hanson said work has been underway on the plans for the Airport Project. He distributed plans to the Airport Commission members to review.

Hanson noted low spots in the land where the new parallel runway will be constructed. Hanson said about nine feet of fill will be needed. He noted the turf runway is the highest part of the entire airport so it will be cut down a little bit. He said the width of the turf runway will remain the same. Hanson estimated about 400 feet of the turf runway would be graded down. He went on to detail the aspects of the elevations of the new 4,200 parallel runway.

Sanders asked how far will the turf runway have to be carved down.

Hanson said it would be about a foot. Regarding drainage, Hanson said a 42-inch culvert will have to be installed under the new runway similar to the culvert that's under the current runway. He said when the project is complete, the new runway is probably going to maybe be two feet higher than the existing runway. Hanson said he's expecting information from the geo-tech engineers in the next week or two on what may need to be done regarding adding extra fill and grading. He said the geo-tech engineers did work at the Jackson airport on November 23rd.

Hanson said everything is still on track to get the plans completed and submitted to the FAA for review so bids for the airport project can be sought in the beginning of March.

Ella asked about the zoning for the airport.

Hanson said MNDOT has talked for years about redoing their zoning process and zoning rules. He said apparently MNDOT's new zoning process and rules are going to be completed by the end of the year (2021). Hanson said MNDOT said to wait until early 2022 to tackle the airport zoning issue. He said the zoning process has not been started yet. Hanson said the concentration has been on the airport plans and removal of the trees.

Skaret asked if the extra dirt that will have to be brought in will increase the cost of the project.

Hanson said he didn't think so. He said he thinks there was enough built into the project when the pre-application was sent to the FAA. Hanson said the project cost was estimated at \$4.8 million which was pretty similar to what was estimated the other years. He said he thinks we're still in the ballpark of what the FAA anticipates the project will cost. Hanson noted the Infrastructure Bill was approved in Washington, D.C.

Skaret said everything for 2021 is still 100 percent compensated by the FAA.

Hanson said 2022 is still up in the air on what the compensation will be or whether it will be 95 percent paid for by the FAA and five percent local. He said that's not known yet.

Hample asked if anything was going to change regarding drainage at the airport. He noted the water has always drained to the west.

Hanson said the ground to the east is considerably higher.

Hample asked if the drainage would be good or better than it presently is.

Hanson said the drainage won't be any worse. He said things won't be changed that much from what they are now. Hanson said the drainage will be reviewed and modifications made if necessary.

Hanson said the new runway project will include the installation of new papis (precision approach path indicator) and LED lighting that will be much more energy efficient and don't cost significantly any more nowadays.

Sanders asked if the turf runway would be closed next summer when dirt is brought in for fill.

Hanson said that can be discussed. He noted the big fill will be north of the turf runway.

Sanders pointed out if the grass runway was closed next summer, the City could seek bids from those that may want to hay that land instead of spending money to mow it.

Hanson said the turf runway will be closed whenever construction starts. He said it will then probably be closed for two-and-a-half years. Hanson said the turf runway will be closed while the dirt work is done and will be closed when the new parallel runway is paved. He said the following year it will also be closed when the parallel taxiways are constructed.

Sanders said his recommendation would be for the City to put the turf runway up for bids for haying if it's going to be closed.

AIRPORT FARMLAND LEASE PAYMENTS FOR 2022

Skaret said the farmland leases at the airport are expiring. He said the City has been doing five-year leases with Matt Benson and the Fransens. Skaret distributed information from the University of Minnesota Extension Service regarding farmland lease rates in our area along with information on the current leases with Benson and the Fransens.

Skaret said the Airport Commission needs to discuss renewing of the leases. He said there hasn't been a lot of change in farmland rent rates in Jackson County from 2017 to the most recent data which is for 2021. Skaret noted the rental rates have been around \$195 to \$200 an acre for Jackson County.

Skaret said the last farm lease for Matt Benson set the rate for the first two crop years of 2017 and 2018 at \$185 an acre for the airport and another smaller piece of property of 8.3 acres at \$170 an acre. He said the rental rate was set at those levels for two years with the rent to be negotiated for 2019, 2020 and 2021. Skaret said the rates stayed the same for the final three years of the lease since there really hadn't been much change in rental rates.

Skaret said the renewal of the lease for the next five years could have the same terms with the rate set for the first two years with the rent open to negotiation for the last three years depending on the economy and market conditions for farms.

Hanson noted the new parallel runway will be on top of some of the current farmland that's leased by Benson. However, he also pointed out there will be land on the west side of the runway that would become available for farming if the Airport wanted to do that. Hanson said it wouldn't be as much land but the number of acres could be determined after the new runway project is completed. Hanson also said there wouldn't be any restrictions regarding the height of the crop such as corn.

Sanders said the land west of the hangars and north of the Arrival/Departure building could also be available for farmland since the State decommissioned a communications antenna in that location. He said that land is adjacent to the farmland that Benson is already leasing.

Stoner noted Benson paid \$10 less per acre than the Fransens.

Skaret said Benson's rent has been a little bit less because there are some drainage issues on the land he farms.

Polz asked Skaret if he was looking for a motion to approve the rental rates.

Skaret said he was looking for some direction from the Airport Commission on their preference regarding the lease term and rates.

Hanson said the number of acres Benson farms may have to be amended due to the airport runway project.

Skaret noted the farmland rental rate has been pretty steady. He said he thinks the Airport Commission would have a hard time justifying increasing the rental rate.

STONER/ELLA moved and it was unanimously carried to keep the Airport Farmland Lease payments and terms the same as in the past.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Hample asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

STONER/ELLA moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the Airport Commission meeting at 5:45 p.m.

David A. Maschoff, Recording Secretary

