

HOUGHTON COUNTY MEMORIAL AIRPORT MEETING MINUTES

DATE: JULY 27, 2023 TIME: 1:00 PM

LOCATION: HOUGHTON COUNTY MEMORIAL AIRPORT CONFERENCE ROOM

ROLL CALL: Tom Tikkanen – Present, Roy Britz – Present, Glenn Anderson - Present

ATTENDEES: Dennis Hext – Airport Manager, Jillian Spagnotti, Phil Anderson

AGENDA: A motion was made by Roy Britz to approve the agenda, seconded by Glenn Anderson.

Motion Carried Unanimously

MINUTES: A motion was made by Roy Britz to approve the June 2024 Airport Meeting Minutes, seconded by Glenn Anderson.

Motion Carried Unanimously

BILLS: A motion made by Roy Britz to approve and pay the bills as presented, seconded by Glenn Anderson.

Roll call: Tom Tikkanen – YES; Roy Britz – YES; Glenn Anderson – YES

Motion Carried Unanimously

FINANCIAL REPORT: Dennis Hext, Airport Manager, presented the airport, water and sewer financials for June 2024.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

New Business, Agenda Item 1, “SkyWest EAS Bid and Letter of Support”. The DOT sent out a request for proposals (RFP) on June 13, 2024 to air carriers interested in providing Essential Air Service to Houghton for a new term beginning February 1, 2025. In response to the RFP, SkyWest Airlines Inc., the incumbent carrier, was the only carrier to submit a proposal. The submitted proposal provides for roundtrip service to Chicago’s O’hare Airport under the United Airlines brand using 50 seat CRJ-200 Aircraft 7 days a week for the next 3 years. The DOT requested formal comments and letters of support from the Airport Committee no later than August 20, 2024. A draft letter of support from the Committee was presented for review and approval.

A motion was made by Glenn Anderson to approve the Letter of Support for SkyWest Airlines, seconded by Roy Britz.

Motion Carried Unanimously

New Business, Agenda Item 2, “Airport Screening - Correspondence”. The committee received correspondence highlighting concerns about the inadequacy of the current holding area, which has become increasingly congested due to the expanding size of TSA equipment. Although, remodeling the holding area could resolve the issue, it would involve substantial costs. The Committee’s primary focus is on developing a new terminal. Should the new terminal project not be approved the Committee has the option to seek assistance from the FAA to support the necessary remodeling of the existing holding area.

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New Business, Agenda Item 3 “Airport FAA Annual Inspection” – The results of the annual FAA airport safety inspection was presented. The Airport received no deficiencies or “letter of corrections”.

The Committee congratulated the Airport Manager and Airport Staff for this stellar report and review from the FAA.

A motion was made by Glenn Anderson to support the congratulations, seconded by Roy Britz.

Motion Carried Unanimously

New Business, Agenda Item 4, “Conservation Easement” – At the January 2023 Committee meeting MTU/KRC approached the Committee to request permission (permission was granted) to restore Gooseneck creek to its original condition specifically, Outlot C of the Industrial park. The reason for the request was due to an alleged violation notice from EGLE regarding alleged dredge and fill of regulated wetlands on land leased from the County. Restoration of the creek would benefit the County by:

1. Removal of the damn which is a liability to the County
2. Removal of a wildlife attractant on and in the vicinity of the airport
3. Removal of water pressure from the sewer line possibly reducing I&I

MTU/KRC/EGLE requested to start lowering the pond by the 15th of August if this is possible. EGLE has drafted an administrative consent agreement with MTU/KRC to resolve the alleged violations and restore the creek. The agreement requires approval of a “Conservation Easement” by the County. The county attorney is reviewing the conservation easement for legality and to provide any additions, deletions or comments. Traverse Engineering is reviewing the boundaries of the easement to ensure it does not infringe on the sewer line. The Airport Manager requested approval of the Conservation Easement pending review by the county attorney, Traverse Engineering, and County Board approval.

A motion was made by Glen Anderson to approve the request, seconded by Roy Britz pending final review by the county attorney, Traverse Engineering, and County Board approval.

Motion Carried Unanimously

New Business, Agenda Item 5, “Mead & Hunt Monthly Progress Report”. – The Mead & Hunt progress report summarizing activities for the period from June 1, 2024, through June 30, 2024 was discussed.

New Business Agenda Item 6, “Water/Sewage Report.” – For the period from June 14, 2024, to July 15, 2024 (31 days) daily I&I was 4,965 gallons. For the same time period in 2023, I&I was 2,287 gallons. For the period from June 14, 2024, to July 15, 2024 (31 days) water loss was (124,327) gallons. For the same time period in 2023 water loss was (44,237) gallons.

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New Business Agenda Item 7, "Airline Monthly Statistics." – For the month of June 2024, SkyWest enplaned 2,286 passengers and deplaned 2,569. Last year in June SkyWest enplanements were 1,704 compared to this year's enplanements of 2,286 an increase of 582 passengers or 34%. SkyWest experienced 1 cancellation during the month compared to 7 in June of 2023. It is important to note that in 2023 the runway was closed for 15 days. A better comparison would be to look at the last 3 years (minus covid years of 2020 and 2021) which show an average of 1,900 for June. Our completed flights load factor was 77% which is also higher than the normal of 69%. I have been keeping records since 2007 and this is the highest load factor since 2007.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None


NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be Thursday, August 29, 2024 at 1:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Glenn Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 PM, seconded by Roy Britz.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Minutes approved by:

Recorded by:



Tom Tikkanen
Airport Committee Chairman



Dennis M. Hext
Airport Manager