

METROPOLITAN AIRPORTS COMMISSION
ANOKA COUNTY-BLAINE AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, 15 April 2009, 4:00pm
Stack Room – Blaine City Hall

Commissioners Present B. Haake, A. Enerson, J. Plasch, K. Swanson, D. Kelso, T. Ryan, C. Arneson

MAC Staff: S. Skramstad, J. Lewis, B. Rief

Others: S. McChesney – Circle Pines; E. Hagen – Anoka County Union; J. Flaherty – Mounds View; M. Lawrence – Key Air; J. Ericson – City of Mounds View; C. Mueller; J. Krack – Anoka County Aviation Association

1. Approval of the 1 December 2008 and the 21 January 2009 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved as written and distributed.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER RYAN AND SECONDED BY MEMBER ARNESON TO APPROVE THE 1 DECEMBER 2008 MEETING MINUTES.

The motion carried by unanimous vote.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER HAAKE AND SECONDED BY MEMBER KELSO TO APPROVE THE 21 JANUARY 2009 MEETING MINUTES.

The motion carried by unanimous vote.

2. Long-term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) Update

Bridget Rief, MAC Airside Development, distributed revised draft forecast numbers related to the Anoka County-Blaine Airport (ANE) Long-term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP). She reminded Commission members that the tower at ANE is not open 24 hours a day and, therefore, the operations count from the tower is not 100% accurate. She noted that radar data from Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport allow the MAC to establish a percentage of ANE operations as having taken place at night. **Rief** said that, in the past, that percentage was then applied as nighttime operations to the noise contour models and the daytime operations number would be the actual number of operations minus the percentage of operations determined to be nighttime operations. She pointed out that this process yields inaccurate data. **Rief** stated that to correct this inaccuracy, the nighttime percentage has been added to the daytime count; the corrected, higher counts are reflected in the handout **Rief** provided at today's meeting. **Rief** stated that the MAC is not expecting to review any alternatives that call for an additional runway at ANE as the revised draft forecast numbers do not indicate a capacity issue, but noted that the revised draft forecast numbers would be used for noise contour modeling. **Jack Plasch, Lexington**, asked if it was possible for aircraft to utilize ANE without being counted as part of the operations numbers. **Rief** stated that the nighttime count is an estimate, but that the daytime counts are accurate.

Rief noted that the LTCP looks out to the year 2025 and that the year 2007 was used as the base case for operational counts. She pointed out that the handout she distributed includes a break out of base case operational counts by aircraft type. **Rief** noted that the revised forecast shows declining general aviation operations at ANE through the year 2025; an increase in the number of jet and microjet operations through the year 2025 is forecasted, but it is not enough to offset the decline in general aviation operations, for an overall decline in operations at ANE. It was noted that economic conditions do have an impact on the number of operations taking place, and that demographic data are factored into the forecasts.

Carol Mueller, Mounds View, asked for an explanation of a touch-and-go operation. **Rief** stated that a touch-and-go operation is when an aircraft approaches an airport, lands and then immediately takes off again. She noted that such an operation is counted as one arrival and one departure. It was noted that such operations are typically training operations and that a decline in training operations contributed greatly to a decrease in overall operations.

Rief informed the Commission that the MAC had received a formal request from Key Air to consider an extension of Runway 9/27 at ANE to 6000 feet as an alternative in the LTCP. **Rief** noted that the MAC Legal Department indicated the request letter is now public information and could be shared with the Commission. **Rief** stated that the MAC is reviewing the information provided in the letter by Key Air but has not taken a position on its request. She pointed out that receipt of the letter does not mean that the request will automatically be considered in the LTCP but that MAC staff is reviewing the information provided to determine, perhaps with the MAC's Board of Commissioners, whether or not the request merits consideration in the LTCP. **Rief** noted that an update on the LTCP will be taken to the MAC's Finance, Development & Environment Committee meeting in early May, and to the MAC's Full Commission meeting in later May. She stated that a decision regarding Key Air's request will not be sought at the May meetings; information will simply be presented to the MAC Commissioners.

Barbara Haake, Mounds View, asked for clarification as to whether the MAC will take any action on Key Air's request unless directed to do so by its Board of Commissioners. **Rief** stated that she expects MAC staff would recommend the MAC Commission make a determination regarding the request. She noted that certain legislative issues mean the MAC Commission may be the appropriate body to make that decision, rather than MAC staff.

Haake asked if there are minutes available from when MAC staff met with ANE tenants regarding the LTCP. **Rief** noted that minutes of such meetings are not kept. She stated that the same information presented to the ANE Commission in December 2008 was presented at the ANE tenants meeting. She noted that tenants were told to submit written requests for consideration of alternatives for the LTCP no later than 15 April 2009, and that the Key Air request was the only one received.

Mueller asked if it is known what the cost would be to extend ANE's Runway 9-27 to 6000 feet, and where the funding for such a project would come from. **Rief** noted that costs would be examined if the extension request were to become an alternative considered in the LTCP, but that funding would not necessarily be identified at that time. She pointed out that the MAC's reliever airport system is fee-based and is set up to be financially self-sustaining and that any portion of a runway extension not covered by federal funding would have to be covered by revenue generated by the Relievers; any shortfall would need to be covered by tenants. **Mueller** asked how many tenants there are at ANE at this time. **Scott Skramstad, MAC**, said there were 437 based aircraft at ANE in 2007.

Dave Kelso, Circle Pines, asked if increasing the weight-bearing capacity of a runway is a significant effort. **Rief** noted that increasing the weight-bearing capacity of a runway is a separate issue from

extending the length of a runway and is not necessarily part of an extension. She noted that Runway 9/27 at ANE is constructed for 30,000 pounds per single wheel (or 60,000 pounds for double wheel), and that increasing its weight-bearing capacity to 95,000 pounds for double wheel would require adding additional pavement to the existing runway, in addition to an extension. **Kelso** asked for clarification that extending Runway 9/27 would not mean tearing up the entire existing runway and re-constructing it. **Rief** said that is correct. She pointed out that the runway is constructed for the design aircraft of the airport and that, for an increase in the weight-bearing capacity to 95,000 pounds to be warranted, a significant increase in the number of operations of larger, heavier aircraft would be called for. **Kelso** asked for clarification that extending the runway and adding to its weight-bearing capacity would be a major undertaking. **Rief** said that is correct.

Haake asked for clarification as to whether ANE tenants would have to contribute toward the cost of a runway extension at ANE, if an extension were done. **Rief** clarified that there is the potential for that to be the case. She stated that the budget for the reliever airport system is set up with income coming in on one side and capital projects going out on the expense side. If there are more expenses than income, the difference is made up by surcharges to tenants throughout the system, i.e., at all six reliever airports. **Rief** pointed out that, for the 2006-07 ANE expansion project, the MAC and Anoka County worked out a development deal in which Anoka County contributed to the project funding. She noted that, if a runway extension at ANE were approved as a preferred alternative in the LTCP, environmental studies would need to be conducted and those studies would have to be funded as well.

Haake asked if adding pavement over the existing runway to increase its weight-bearing capacity would render the runway stable enough to handle heavier weights. She also noted that it seems the burden on reliever tenants to help pay for a runway extension, which would benefit only one tenant, Key Air, is a heavy one. **Rief** stated that the sub-grade material and construction of Runway 9/27 can likely support additional pavement. She added that a runway extension project at ANE would have to meet the Federal Aviation Administration cost-benefit ratio in order to achieve federal funding. **Plasch** stated that a rumor had been circulated that Key Air would pay for a runway extension out of its own pocket. **Rief** stated that she had no information to that effect and noted that Key Air's request letter does not indicate whether it would, or would not, provide funding for such a project.

Joe Flaherty, Mounds View, asked if the MAC has a timeline for responding to Key Air's request. **Rief** said it does not, but that MAC staff is working to develop one to present to the MAC Board of Commissioners at its May meeting. She noted that the MAC is sending a letter to Key Air asking for additional information and clarification on points of its request. **Flaherty** asked what the timeline is for the LTCP. **Rief** said that that will be determined in large part by whether or not alternatives are included for consideration in the LTCP. She noted that a set timeline cannot be established at least until after the May meeting.

Haake asked if the information that will be presented to the MAC Board of Commissioners at its May meeting can be sent to the ANE Commission, or if it will be available on-line. **Rief** noted that the information should be available on the MAC's web site one week prior to each of the May meetings, but that she could send that information to the ANE Commission members one week prior to the meetings if they would like. **Haake** stated, for the record, that she would like to receive those materials.

Skramstad asked anyone wanting to receive the information to provide their current e-mail address.

Haake noted that, at the ANE Commission's 21 January 2009 meeting, "Skramstad stated that he has asked Rief to include the Commission on a distribution list she maintains for disseminating relevant updates on the LTCP process for ANE" and noted that she has not received any information. **Rief** stated that there has been no information to receive until today's meeting. **Haake** pointed out that Key

Air's request letter is dated 19 March 2009. **Rief** stated that the letter was not deemed public information by the MAC Legal Department until yesterday.

Tom Ryan, City of Blaine, asked if the determination on whether or not a runway extension is needed is done solely by the MAC or if outside engineers are consulted. **Rief** said the MAC would review it internally and that an independent review might be completed by an external consultant. **Haake** asked if that would be Mr. Wilbur Smith. **Rief** clarified that Mr. Smith consults for the Metropolitan Council, and that the MAC consults with HNTB Corporation. **Haake** asked if the MAC is also looking into, as the Metropolitan Council is, creating Minor I and Minor II classifications for airports, with Minor I airports having runways up to 4000 feet in length and Minor II airports having runways up to 6000 feet in length. **Rief** said it is her understanding that the workshop where Mr. Smith presented the proposed classifications was the first time Metropolitan Council personnel, as well as the MAC representative to the workshop board, had seen the proposed classifications. She noted that the MAC is reviewing the information provided by Mr. Smith and is planning to respond to the Metropolitan Council, although a final response has not been formulated at this time. **Haake** asked how she could find out what that response will be. **Rief** said that she would have to check on that, and stated that she did not know if the response would be considered public information and, therefore, available for dissemination.

Haake asked if the MAC has had meetings with cities regarding the ANE LTCP and asked when the MAC would be meeting with citizens about the LTCP. **Rief** stated that the MAC would be meeting with the cities at 1:30pm on 30 April 2009, at Blaine City Hall, to discuss the same information shared with the ANE Commission at today's meeting, but that there are no public meetings scheduled at this time. **Haake** asked if the cities had received notice of the 30 April meeting. **Ryan** and **Jim Ericson, City of Mounds View**, said they had. **Haake** asked which cities had been invited to the meeting. **Rief** said that notice of the meeting had been sent to the mayors and city administrators of Blaine, Mounds View, Shoreview, Spring Lake Park, Lino Lake, Circle Pines and Lexington, and that it was up to the mayors and city administrators to invite other city staff as they saw fit. **Mueller** asked if the 30 April meeting is open to the public. **Rief** stated that, because the meeting is set up by the MAC, she believes that does it make it open to the public. She added that the meeting will be an informal meeting intended to give people other than those on the ANE Commission a chance to hear from the MAC that it has no position on the runway extension request and to provide information regarding where the MAC is in the LTCP process for ANE. She noted that the meeting is not part of an official workshop for the Metropolitan Council. **Rief** stated that whether or not public hearings or public information meetings are held will depend on what is actually included in the LTCP.

Kent Swanson, Lexington, asked if it is possible to find out how many Anoka tax dollars were spent on the 2006-07 ANE expansion project. **Rief** stated that the MAC would only have information on the construction costs and engineering fees for the project. **Mueller** noted that the Anoka funding information is a matter of public record and should be available through Anoka County.

3. ANE Noise Complaints for January, February and March

Scott Skramstad, MAC, reminded the Commission that noise complaints were discussed at its 21 January 2009 meeting. Specifically, the types of aircraft causing complaints, the origins of the operations causing noise complaints and possible reasons for an increase in noise complaints in recent months were discussed. **Skramstad** noted that, for the three-month period of January – March 2009, a report run on 1 April 2009 shows a total of 350 complaints; however, that number has increased to 383 total complaints because complaints can be filed until the fifth of each month for the previous month. He stated that 34 complainants registered the 350 complaints. He noted that complaints began spiking

in November 2008, coinciding with the first comments being made proposing a possible runway extension at ANE, and noted that 28 of the 34 complainants had never filed a complaint prior to November 2008.

In January there were a total of 53 complaints, 164 complaints in February and 133 complaints in March. Of the 350 total complaints, 5 complainants left 217 (62%) of the complaints.

Skramstad stated that he reviewed 150 complaints left by 23 complainants that took place between 10:00pm and 7:00am. He determined that twin-engine prop aircraft operations generated the bulk of the 150 complaints, with Cessna twin aircraft operated by two operators at ANE making up approximately 43% of those operations. **Skramstad** noted that flight track data were not available, due to low altitude or distance from radar, for approximately 23% of the operations making up the 150 complaints. He noted that complainants may not log exact or correct times for operations when registering complaints on line. **Skramstad** noted that approximately 14% of the 150 complaints were correlated to unknown aircraft, meaning an operation was taking place under visual flight rules and a flight plan was not specified for that operation. **Skramstad** stated that approximately 9% of the 150 complaints were for operations at Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport and not at ANE. Single-engine prop aircraft operations accounted for 8% of the complaints and jet aircraft operations made up 5% of the complaints. **Skramstad** reminded Commission members that several complaints were received in fall 2008 for operations taking place around 3:00am. He noted that a letter was sent to the operator in October 2008 requesting it follow applicable noise abatement procedures. He noted that he was able to track data for that operator's operations during the January-March timeframe and that it appears the operator has shifted operations to occur between 6:30-7:00am. **Skramstad** stated there appears to be a second operator consistently operating between the hours of 3:00-4:00am and noted that a letter could be sent to that operator if the Commission so desired.

Barbara Haake, Mounds View, noted there is a construction gate off of Radisson Road and asked why it was there. **Tom Ryan, City of Blaine**, said it was the main entrance for Key Air. **Bridget Rief, MAC Airport Development**, noted that the entrance was originally used as a construction entrance but that it now has the monumentation denoting it as the official entrance to Key Air. She noted there are secured gates off the end of Runway 27, near Radisson road, for MAC employees to access the runway light system. **Haake** said she would determine the exact location of the gate in question and follow up with Joe Harris.

Ryan wondered if it would be possible to show addresses on the noise complaint map. He said that a small number of households generating the majority of complaints is doing a disservice. **Skramstad** noted that addresses used to be reported, but that the MAC Legal Department determined that addresses of complaining households cannot be made public. He pointed out that, at the same time, the MAC cannot give out tail numbers for aircraft if residents request them when registering aircraft noise complaints. **Dave Kelso, Circle Pines**, agreed with Ryan that the large number of complaints made by just a few households can present a skewed picture of noise issues at ANE and noted that some residents object to the presence of the airport. **Skramstad** stated that 23 complaints were received for Flying Cloud Airport in 2003, but that after a runway extension project began there 2800 complaints were received in 2008. **Carol Mueller, Mounds View**, noted the MAC's Noise Complaint Line number was posted on the Mounds View web site and that information regarding upcoming construction projects in Mounds View was posted as well. It may be that Mounds View residents used the Noise Complaint Line to complain about noise related to construction projects. She stated that skewing the noise complaint issue was not the intention of posting the phone number. **Skramstad** stated that receiving noise complaints allows the MAC to analyze data and identify operational trends, but that the complaints will not change the way the airport is operated.

Haake stated that, in the past, noise contours around airports were identified by zones and that the outer zone was removed at some point. She asked what is being done with noise contours at this time. **Rief** stated that the Metropolitan Council made changes so that only the 70, 65, and 60 DNL contours need to be shown on contour maps. She said that the A, B, C and D noise zones are Metropolitan Council designated zones. **Haake** asked if the MAC's noise contours align with the Metropolitan Council's zones. She also asked if the noise contours are being evaluated regularly in order to minimize the amount of mitigation the MAC would have to do in certain contours. **Rief** said that, to her knowledge, now and in the past the Metropolitan Council uses noise contours generated by the MAC – they do not generate their own contours. **Skramstad** said that that is true. **Haake** asked if the contours will shrink or expand. **Skramstad** said that factors that will determine the size of the contours are the number of operations and the fleet mix operating at an airport. He pointed out that the base forecast out to the year 2025 is for 79,560 operations, and that the forecast in the EIS that was done for the Runway 9/27 extension to 5000 feet was for approximately 180,000 operations. The difference in the number of operations will change the size of the noise contour. **Skramstad** said that older, noisier aircraft are less efficient to operate and are being phased out of fleet mixes and that newer, quieter aircraft are being phased in, which will have the effect of reducing the size of a noise contour. He added that the Integrated Noise Model is being updated, allowing for more accurate noise contour modeling – which can increase or reduce the size of a noise contour.

Kent Swanson, Lexington, stated that people in his neighborhood question what is considered “low” for a low aircraft. **Skramstad** noted that Swanson's area is affected by arrival operations on to Runway 27 and reminded the Commission that such aircraft will be on a 3° glide slope as they approach the airport – i.e., they will be at 300 feet altitude for every mile from the airport. He said that anything lower than that would be considered low. He reminded Swanson that during the day such aircraft are under the positive guidance of the air traffic control tower and are doing what they are told to do by the controllers, consistent with federal regulations. **Swanson** pointed out that “low” is often identified as the reason for a complaint being registered. **Skramstad** noted that the perception of altitude of an aircraft is highly subjective and is affected by the size of an aircraft. He offered to meet with Swanson to determine altitudes of aircraft overflying specific locations in his neighborhood. **Jennifer Lewis, MAC**, noted that when she speaks with residents complaining about low aircraft it often turns out to be the case that the resident did not see an aircraft but is registering a complaint of “low” based on what the resident heard. **Swanson** asked if the air traffic control tower can tell how low an aircraft is. **Skramstad** said that it can and that a controller will advise an aircraft if it is too low given its place in an operation. **Arlo Enerson, Anoka Airport**, stated that aircraft in the landing pattern at ANE are at a minimum of 1000 feet altitude at one to one and one-half miles from the airport. He noted that departing aircraft will gain as much altitude as it can, quickly, and will be at least 1000 feet in the air or more by the time they are one mile from the airport.

4. Other Items Not on the Agenda

Scott Skramstad, MAC, noted that the question was raised at the Commission's previous meeting as to whether or not the air traffic control tower at ANE keeps daily counts broken down by runway. **Skramstad** checked and they do not. He pointed out, however, that the MAC does have a runway use count for 2007, although it is not complete and is a representative sample only. He noted that, for arrival operations, Runway 27 was used 31.5% of the time and Runway 18 was used 29.5% of the time. For departure operations, Runway 36 was used 34% of the time and Runway 27 was used 22.8% of the time. For touch-and-go operations, Runway 18 was used 31.4% of the time and Runway 27 was used 27.9% of the time. **Skramstad** reiterated that this data is draft information only.

Skramstad reminded Commission members that the Commission's meetings have become less formal over the past several years, and that city representatives were asked to find out from their respective cities whether or not the cities felt the Commission was a valuable body to continue. The response was affirmative, and it was decided to continue with the meetings on an informal basis with Skramstad serving as meeting facilitator. He reminded Commission members that the group agreed that membership and the use of co-chairs would be revisited if topics addressed by the Commission loaned themselves to a more formal meeting structure. **Skramstad** noted that attendance at the Commission's last three meetings has increased and that the topic of the ANE Long-term Comprehensive Plan and the proposed runway extension has generated increased interest in the group. He suggested that the election of co-chairs, one from the community representatives and one from the airport-user representatives per the group's bylaws, and bringing in other interested airport users to achieve a balanced perspective be placed on a future Commission meeting agenda.

Skramstad said he would contact Joe Harris, ANE Manager, to fill the open airport user representative positions on the Commission, and would place on the next meeting agenda the election of co-chairs. Commission members present supported these efforts.

John Krack, Anoka County Aviation Association, suggested having representatives from Anoka County participate on the Commission. Commission members present supported this idea. **Haake** suggested representatives from Ramsey County also be included, as well as representatives from Lino Lakes, Spring Lake Park, etc. **Skramstad** pointed out that changing membership will require amending the Commission's bylaws. He also pointed out that representation on the Commission must be balanced, per the bylaws, and that creating a larger group of community representatives will mean creating a larger group of airport user representatives. He noted that, historically, it has been a challenge to have enough airport user representatives. **Skramstad** said he would take the matter back to the MAC to discuss internally and would report back at the Commission's next meeting.

Tom Ryan, City of Blaine, asked how often the Long-term Comprehensive Plans are updated. **Bridget Rief, MAC Airport Development**, said the Metropolitan Council recommends it be done every five years.

Carol Mueller, Mounds View, asked how the safety record at ANE compares to the safety records of other MAC reliever airports. **Skramstad** said, generally speaking, all of the reliever airports have good safety records but that he did not have specific data available. He pointed out that such data would be available as part of the safety zoning process. **Rief** noted that the safety zoning process will be conducted after the Long-term Comprehensive Plan process is completed. **Barbara Haake, Mounds View**, asked what the Runway Protection Zone would have to be on a 6000 foot runway. **Rief** stated that the RPZ is not dictated by runway length, but is dictated by the type of runway approach and that the ILS RPZ would remain the same regardless of runway length.

Haake reminded the group that discussion was held at the previous meeting regarding a citizens' meeting on 29 January 2009 to discuss the proposed runway extension to 6000 feet at ANE. She noted that a flyer had been distributed about the meeting, and that it was stated the flyer contained misinformation and would exacerbate concerns about the airport. **Haake** stated, for the record, that the citizens group she is part of did not create and distribute the flyer in question and she provided a copy of the flyer her group distributed. She noted that, per comments she made at the Commission's 21 January 2009 meeting, she stated at the 29 January 2009 citizens meeting that the MAC was surprised by the resolution regarding the runway extension as it had no information regarding the resolution.

Haake noted that safety concerns were the reason given for extending the runway at ANE to 5000 feet and that she is concerned that the same argument will be used to justify an extension to 6000 feet.

5. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting was set for 4:00pm on Wednesday, 17 June 2009. The meeting will be held at Blaine City Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 5:42pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christene Sirois Kron, Recording Secretary
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