

MISSOULA COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY
Facility and Operations Committee
June 24, 2025
2:30 pm, Johnson Bell Conference Room

THOSE PRESENT

BOARD: Chair Deb Poteet
Commissioner Winton Kemmis
Commissioner Matt Doucette
Commissioner Andrew Hagemeyer
Alternate Commissioner Shane Stack
Alternate Jack Meyer (via Teams)

STAFF: Director Brian Ellestad
Deputy Director Tim Damrow (via Teams)
Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell
Legal Counsel Juniper Davis
Business Development Manager Dan Neuman
Public Safety Chief Justin Shaffer
IT Manager Dylan O'Leary

OTHERS: Gary Matson, Runway 25 Hangars
Shaun Shea, Morrison-Maierle
Mike Mamuzich – Minuteman Aviation
Forest Gue – Minuteman Aviation

Commissioner Winton Kemmis called the committee meeting to order.

AGENDA

- Minuteman Update

Commissioner Winton Kemmis informed the group that this is a discussion agenda item and Director Brian Ellestad provided background information. Brian explained that Minuteman Aviation has a ground lease on the east side of the Airport and the lease is set to end in the fall of 2027. Last year the Board asked Minuteman Aviation to provide the Board with quarterly updates on its evolving plans to relocate and/or remove the structures in the lease area as the 2027 lease termination deadline approaches. Minuteman Aviation recently provided Airport staff with a letter (Board members were given a paper copy of the letter at the beginning of the meeting) with requests for assistance for the upcoming lease termination.

Mike Mamuzich of Minuteman Aviation provided an update to the Board. He explained that they are working with an engineering firm to come up with plans and costs for hangar relocation and/or removal as well as plans for constructing new facilities on the separately leased area to the west of the Airport. Bids are not finalized on the new facility so construction costs are not yet known. They received appraisals on the existing hangars that need to be relocated and/or removed and the appraisal for the main maintenance hangar came in at \$2.2 million. Mike confirmed that the appraisal was for the building, not the land, and that the appraisal did not take into account that the lease was expiring and would not be renewed. Mike said he can make the appraisal available.

Mike informed the Board that the purpose of the letter is to request cost sharing with the Airport on the expenses Minuteman Aviation will incur as a result of the lease termination. Mike said that they have been in that location since 1978 and were not looking to build a new facility considering the condition of the current facility. Mike believes the Airport's Primary Guiding documents provide the opportunity for the Airport to assist in covering costs when the Airport is requiring the lessee to move. Mike explained that the costs of the new infrastructure for new construction will be a large expense as well as the loss of the value of the building they are leaving behind and bearing the costs to remove it. Mike explained that interest rates are currently high for loans and cost of building is also expensive.

Alternate Commissioner Shane Stack asked whether the Airport has the resources to help with cost sharing as requested by Minuteman Aviation. Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell explained that the Airport does not have the reserves and the Airport is not in a position with cash to finance these requests. Debt financing might be available, however, the Airport is approximately \$50 million in debt on the new terminal. Brian added that the Airport's federal grant assurances also place significant hurdles in the way of the Airport being able to help Minuteman Aviation with cost sharing of these types of activities. Brian reminded the Board that there have been other instances where the Airport had lessees remove and relocate existing structures, including the McCue hangars. Mike asked about potential grants or other assistance. Brian and Will expressed uncertainty that anything would be available but indicated they would look into opportunities. Deputy Director Tim Damrow provided background on the State Aeronautics Grant/Loan and indicated that most of the grant dollars are going to smaller airports. Mike indicated the financing options they are looking at are through their bank, and Will added that there are some Montana Board of Investment opportunities that might be available and that the information is available on their website. Business Development Manager Dan Neuman suggested they talk to Neptune/Northstar as they have found financing for these types of projects in the past.

Mike thanked the Board for their consideration. Brian said a new meeting in approximately one month would be worthwhile. Commissioner Winton Kemmis thanked Minuteman Aviation for taking the time to talk and encouraged their representatives to keep the Board regularly updated.

Meeting Adjourned.