Joplin Regional Airport
602 S Main Street
Joplin, Missouri 64801
417-623-0262

JOPLIN AIRPORT COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE

Thursday, November 7th, 2024, 7:30 A.M.
General Aviation Community Room

ROLL CALL

A. Attendees included:
   a. Airport Staff
   b. Airport Board Members
   c. Community Stakeholders
   d. Local Business Representatives
   e. University Representatives

MEETING OVERVIEW

The roundtable meeting focused on open discussion and feedback about the Joplin Regional Airport, its current operations, future needs, and the community's involvement. Several key areas were identified for improvement, growth, and collaboration, as well as strategies to enhance services and communication.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Strategic Planning and Development Needs
   a. The airport strategic plan should address:
      i. Community usability objectives
      ii. Economic and business development goals
      iii. Communication and marketing strategies
      iv. Technology and equipment upgrades
      v. Annual maintenance planning
      vi. Partnership opportunities
      vii. Synergy and collaborative strategies
2. Education and Partnerships
   a. Explore internship opportunities in the airport and maintenance facilities.

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   b. Explore partnerships for regional emergency training and certifications.
   c. Develop educational partnerships for drone certificates, battery charging technologies, and energy/fuel research.
   d. Investigate Foreign Trade Zone status and industries.
3. Flight and Air Service Needs
   a. Flight Scheduling and Frequency:
      i. The need for more frequent flights and better scheduling was emphasized, particularly avoiding late-night arrivals.
      ii. Moving the Chicago flight to earlier in the evening was suggested, with attendees agreeing that convenience beats cost.
      iii. In the event of delays or cancellations, the single daily flight option leaves passengers with no alternative flights, highlighting the need for more options.
      iv. Look at comparable airports for better service options and explore fixed charters or private commuter services as alternatives.
      v. Focus on the utilization of existing flight services, including gathering data on passengers' origins and destinations.
4. Marketing and Communication
   a. The airport needs to enhance its marketing efforts through consistent and strategic outreach. Suggestions include:
      i. Utilizing radio, print, TV, YouTube, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), social media, and partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce and city marketing team.
      ii. Engaging local university student marketing teams for cost-effective promotion.
      iii. Host more community events to increase visibility and involvement.
      iv. Develop an ongoing airport communications plan, including an email list for stakeholders and annual in-person roundtable meetings.
   b. Consistent and proactive messaging is needed to keep the community informed about airport developments and services.

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5. Concessions and Amenities
    a. Discussion around adding food/coffee service. The free coffee service currently offered was noted, but there is desire for a more professional option.
    b. Additional car rental options are needed.
    c. Suggestions to improve the airport's appearance as a community gateway were discussed.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Develop a strategic plan.
2. Flight service optimization.
    a. Research and pursue options to adjust flight schedules for better convenience (especially for business and recruitment purposes).
    b. Gather data on flight utilization and identify underserved destinations.
3. Enhance marketing and communication.
    a. Create a comprehensive, consistent marketing plan with support from local universities and the city's marketing team.
    b. Improve communication with the community and stakeholders via email updates and regular meetings or roundtable discussions.
    c. Send out an RFI or survey to local businesses and the community to assess flight schedule and destination needs
4. Explore additional funding and grant opportunities.
5. Assess the feasibility of offering concessions and amenities.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded with agreement on the need for continued collaboration between the airport, local universities, businesses, and community members. The group emphasized the importance of convenience in flight schedules, improved marketing efforts, and exploring regional partnerships for airport growth and service expansion. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Rob O'Brian, Chairman

Allison Zahner, Interim Manager