MINUTES OF MEETING
JOPLIN AIRPORT BOARD MEETING
December 10, 2020

The Airport Board met via teleconference and in the board room at the at the Joplin Regional Airport Commercial Terminal Building. The meeting was brought to order at 7:00 A.M.

Item 1: Roll Call and Approval of Minutes from the last meeting.

Board members attending either in person or via teleconference included Richard Russell, Mike Bentley, Fred Osborn, Bob Loudermilk, Rob O'Brian, Randy Moore and Kelli Starkweather. Staff present included Steve Stockam, Melissa Hunter and Brent Williams.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. O'Brian voted to approve the November meeting minutes. Mr. Russell seconded. All were in favor.

Item 2: Old Business

Mr. Stockam updated the board regarding the **Essential Air Service** (EAS) bids. He stated that SkyWest submitted a recommendation to the Department of Transportation (DOT) which typically takes about two weeks for a response. However, we could hear back as early as tomorrow. Representatives from SkyWest have reached out to the airport requesting paperwork so they could be prepared if a change occurs. Mr. Stockam reminded the board that if the bid is awarded to SkyWest, American Airlines will still have the option to stay at JLN and fly without subsidy. American Airlines did discuss the fact that the Joplin hub is one of their better performing hubs and we have seen very strong numbers with boarding over 4000 passengers last month according to Mr. Stockam. No matter the decision that comes from the DOT, we will be in good shape according to Mr. Stockam. Mr. O'Brian asked if we have had feedback from American Airlines on why we recommended SkyWest. Mr. Stockam replied addressing an e-mail communication with American Airlines where it was stated they are disappointed with how the bids came out, but they understand what our goal is for the airport. Mr. Loudermilk asked what aircraft was in the SkyWest bid. Mr. Stockam replied that it would be a 50 passenger Canada Air. Mr. Russell asked if we had any indication from American Airlines of the action they may choose. Mr. Stockam stated that he would hate to speculate. He added that they are financially struggling since COVID nationwide. In the past, they have not had an active bidder other than smaller carriers. Ms. Starkweather asked if American Airlines chooses to stay and only flies to Dallas, can another carrier come in and fly to Chicago or elsewhere. Mr. Stockam answered, if American is awarded the EAS contract, then we can only have one carrier for the duration of the EAS contract. However, if American chooses to fly without the EAS contract, then another carrier would have the option of providing additional

services to our airport in the future. Mr. Stockam added that if American Airlines choses to provide us with an additional service, it would most likely be Charlette, NC. Many years ago, an EAS bid was being evaluated for the Joplin Regional Airport between Trans States Airline and North West. The EAS contract was tossed out at the last minute according to Mr. Stockam. The DOT will have a decision to us by the end of the year according to Mr. Stockam. A transition date would be up to the airline. He added that American Airlines would be required to stay in Joplin until new service is in place if SkyWest is chosen.

Next Mr. Stockam addressed the board regarding the next scheduled board meeting. We were originally intending on having a joint meeting with the Freedom of Flight Museum this month but given the COVID issue we decided to postpone that to a future meeting. Mr. Stockam had a meeting with the new Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Commander. He is going to be a positive influence according to Mr. Stockam. He is trying to get a CAP aircraft stationed in Joplin. We are excited to have him aboard and invited him to the next meeting. Mr. Stockam will share his contact with the board via e-mail.

Item 3: New Business

Mr. Stockam informed the board about the **Runway 18/36 Construction** schedule. We have the contract for Emery Sapp Construction, but the funding will come from the FAA in two phases. There is a trigger clause in the contract for when the second round of funding becomes available. We plan on taking that contract before the City Council on January 4th so the submittals and materials can be ordered as well as some concrete and design work can begin. We will also begin planning the phasing and closure and vetting through scenarios as it will be complicated. Those decisions need to be made so we can disseminate the information to airport users. Mr. Stockam stated that we have a side agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for Navigational Aids which can take up to six months. However, the FAA determined based on the runway plating, that the runway will not need to be flight checked before re-opening which is a huge hurdle according to Mr. Stockam. Hats off to Crawford, Murphy and Tilly for working hard to get the plates passed. We plan on beginning construction on April 1st and watching for the second release of funding where we hope to have no local match share.

Next Mr. Stockam spoke about the Air Service Grants. Our current Air Service Grant is set to expire on December 31, 2020 but MoDot has offered an extension. We would like to hold off on further advertising until after the EAS bid award so we know what carrier we will be advertising. Additionally, we have received our Air Service Grant offer for 2021 in the amount of $60,000. We plan on presenting those to the City Council on the January 4th meeting as well.

Mr. Bentley asked what the plan is for the Alpha Air Center closure. Mr. Stockam responded that we received notification from Jake Asbell that they plan on closing Alpha Air Center as of January 1. They have notified employees and we are unsure if they are still open to the public at this time, but they are still serving tenants. Mr. Stockam has a meeting scheduled for Monday with Jake Asbell to discuss closure aspects. Both hangar buildings are owned as well as the fuel farm, so we are unsure of their intended use at this point according to

Mr. Stockam. Alpha has a land lease agreement with the airport, but they own the facilities. The General Aviation terminal will revert to the City and we will need to re-bid the space. The airport board will need to discuss the direction for the space. Mr. Bentley stated that he assumes Alpha will sell the hangars. Mr. Moore stated that having two FBO's on the airport was good and only having one will impact fuel costs. He added that many municipalities operate their own fuel farm. He would like to consider the option of a private party fuel farm or one that is operated by the City. Mr. Stockam said that would be a good discussion, but first we must get the closure plan from Alpha. Ms. Starkweather spoke about Mizzou Aviation and asked if they have expressed interest in the space. Mr. Stockam stated that there will be a number of options. An organization called Twisted Wrench has been looking to build a hangar as well. Mr. Russell asked if the Alpha lease isn't set to expire yet, can we hold them to paying per the signed lease agreement. Mr. Stockam stated that they need only supply a 30-day notice, which they have done. Mr. Bentley requested that information be sent to the board as soon as we have it regarding Alpha's plans. Mr. Stockam replied that he would, and we may need to call a special meeting to discuss it as well. Mr. Moore asked the closure dates from the 18/36 Runway project. Mrs. Hunter responded with the closure dates of July 23rd – August 1st. Mr. Moore stated that we should try to make arrangements with neighboring airports during our closure for displaced planes.

Mr. O'Brian voted to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Loudermilk.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 am.

Approved,

Melissa Hunter, Airport Clerk

Kelli Starkweather, Chairman of the Board