

**Aviation Advisory Board Teleconference Meeting Minutes
November 26, 2018**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Lee Ryan at 1:40 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS:

Board Members: Jim Dodson, Tom George, Lee Ryan, Mike Stedman, Gideon Garcia, Dennis Parrish, Earl Samuelson, Marilyn Romano, Frank Neitz, Bob Hajdukovich

Excused Absence: Bob Kaufman

DOT&PF: John Binder, Troy LaRue, Linda Bustamante, Meadow Bailey

OTHERS: John Harris, Jane Dale, Merle Akers, John Parrott.

AGENDA and MINUTES – Gideon moved to accept agenda, Marilyn seconded. Marilyn moved to adopt minutes. Gideon seconded. Motions passed unanimously.

DC Binder Update

Expressed funding concerns for the Alaska Aviation System Plan. FAA is scrutinizing the tasks eligible under Airport Improvement Program funding for system planning. This combined with reductions in leasing revenue, limits funding available for planning activities statewide.

Sand Point Airport is now a Part 139 Certificated Airport allowing PenAir to begin service to the airport in the Saab 2000. Landing fee regulations are still under review pending approval by the new administration.

Aircraft Registration fees are on hold pending review by new administration.

PFAS (Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) is commonly used in products for fire suppression and is used during firefighting equipment testing at airports. PFAS is now considered an emerging contaminant and has been found in groundwater next to the Fairbanks and Gustavus Airports. The Department of Environmental Conservation is testing groundwater next to other airports across the state that provide firefighting service. The board has requested a list of airports where further testing will occur.

EAS (Essential Air Service) Joel Szabat, Deputy Assistant Secretary of US DOT visited Alaska in October. He is in charge of the EAS program and traveled to Dutch Harbor and Akutan to see how the state uses EAS and also to meet with air carriers to discuss any issues. This was a beneficial trip to help him understand how EAS is used in Alaska.

FAA Reauthorization Bill – some significant provisions in this bill for Alaska include preserving EAS funding and adding Little Diomed Heliport as a EAS qualified airport; providing Airport Improvement Program entitlement funding of \$600,000 for airports with enplanements between

8,000 and 10,000 and \$1M in funding for primary airports; airport access roads can now be used for incidental purposes; AWOS systems – the FAA has been directed to take over the maintenance & operation of AWOS from airport sponsors that meet FAA technical specifications, if requested. The board has requested a list of AWOS locations submitted by DOT&PF.

Bypass Mail Program – no funding changes have been proposed. The Alaska congressional delegation is keeping a close eye on the program.

Economic Impact Study – should have a final report before next legislative session begins.

UAS – the Department is utilizing drones for purposes such as surveying, avalanche control and 3D imaging. The board is interested in knowing about efficiencies the department is realizing by using drones. And asked that a cost/benefit analysis be performed to evaluate opportunities for private contractors. A UAS coordinator position will be hired by Statewide Aviation in January.

Board Discussion

The board would like to know more about the Aviation Project Evaluation Board (APEB) process and have requested a briefing at their next meeting. Include information on scoring and how criteria has changed.

It was discussed that a letter of support to retain the current Airport Managers of both Fairbanks and Anchorage Airport be sent to the new administration.

AAB revenue committee plans to meet before next meeting in January.

The board would like to hold their annual face-to-face meeting in Juneau on January 23-24 or 30-31. This meeting provides board members an opportunity to meet with legislators and explain the importance of the rural aviation system from an air carrier/pilot/stakeholder view. The possibility of holding a “lunch and learn” session for legislators was discussed.

Public Discussion

Merle Akers addressed the group and expressed concern over lack of maintenance at Lake Hood. He also reminded the board of the loss of slips to a commercial operator and how the public notice process wasn't sufficient especially for pilots on the Lake Hood waiting list for slips. He wants the tenants/operators at Lake Hood to have better representation on the Aviation Advisory Board. Chairman Ryan expressed that this issue had been reviewed and addressed by the board and airport leadership previously but that he understood Mr. Akers' frustration at how the initial public communication had been conducted on the proposal.

Meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

