

Moses Lake Municipal Airport Commission

A regular meeting of the Moses Lake Municipal Airport Commission was held on Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Rod Richeson.

P = Present E = Excused A = Absent C = Canceled

Name	Jan 5 26	Feb 9 23	Mar 9	Apr 6 27	May 4	Jun 8	Jul 6	Aug 3	Sept 21	Oct 5	Nov 2	Dec 7
Rod Richeson	P P	P P	P	P P	P	P	P	E	P			
Richard Pearce	P P	P P	P	P P	P	P	P	P	P			
Finley Grant	E P	E P	P	P P	P	P	P	E	P			
Darrin Jackson	P P	P P	P	P P	P	P	P	P	P			
Richard Waltman	P P	P P	P	P P	E	P	P	P	P			

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT/ABSENT/EXCUSED: Present: Rod Richeson, Finley Grant, Darrin Jackson, Richard Pearce, and Richard Waltman.

OTHERS PRESENT: Trisha Kehret, Engineering Administrative Technician, Rich Huebner, Assistant City Manager, Kevin Fuhr, Interim City Manager, and Katherine Kenison, City Attorney.

VISITORS: Council Member David Eck, Council Member David Skaug, Greg Hutchison, Jay Williams, Seth Trautman, Darrel Jackson, Lana Jackson, Charles Featherstone, Eric Aronsohn, Angela Richeson, Karen Liebrecht, Phil Stout, Ron Piercy, Dayna Dent, Tom Dent, Kelly Dagarret, and JJ Dagarret.

MINUTES OF AUGUST 3RD MEETING: A motion was made by Mr. Grant to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2023, meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jackson and passed unanimously.

SEPTEMBER INSPECTION REPORT: Mr. Waltman reported that repairs were made to the windsock at the wind "T", the tie down area could use another mowing, and the approach lights on the runway need to be replaced.

CHANGE TO AGENDA:

Mr. Jackson made a motion to add an item, airport closure, to the top of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Waltman and passed unanimously.

1. **AIRPORT CLOSURE:** Mr. Richeson announced that City staff put obstructions on the runway to close the airport on Saturday, September 16, 2023. Mr. Richeson addressed Mr. Fuhr asking how this decision came to pass. Mr. Fuhr replied that the City received notice earlier in the week that the EAA club was going to be hosting a fly in event. The EAA event coordinator and president, Ron Piercy, was contacted and was requested to provide an event application and additional insurance. At the September 19th Council Meeting it was discussed with the Council the possibility of closing the airport should the information not be provided. Mr. Huebner and Mr. Piercy were in contact back and forth regarding the application and insurance up until Thursday, September 14th. Communication stopped at that point, and nothing was received. Mr. Huebner reached out to Mr. Piercy Friday and got no response back. By Friday afternoon Mr. Fuhr made the decision with City Council's notice to send out a NOTAM and close the airport. Saturday morning, Mr. Fuhr received notice that the event had been moved. At that point the airport was reopened after being closed for about two hours. Mr. Fuhr was contacted by Brad Schuster, from AOPA, and Mr. Schuster did research on behalf of the situation, commenting that the closure was in conflict with the state rules for shutting down an airport. Mr. Piercy stated the fees for the event application were too excessive and acknowledged that he made the decision to move the event and not inform the City because he was threatened with airport closure if the application and insurance was not received. It was stated that Grant County Airport was closed at the same time and safety concerns for pilots were discussed with both airports being closed at the same time. Kelly Dagorett spoke of her concerns of the airport closure because she flew out of the Municipal Airport just prior to the closure and she was concerned that if she would have had an in-flight emergency where would she go with both airports closed. Mrs. Dagorett demanded the City be held liable for the safety concerns that came about from the airport closure. Mr. Jackson stated that the City was in legal right with filing the NOTAM and technically it is the pilot's responsibility to check the NOTAM before flying. A citizen attending the meeting stated that he was in contact with the tower at Grant County International Airport during the two hours that Moses Lake Municipal Airport was shut down and the Grant County airport was open.

NOTE: While absent for the meeting, Interim Public Works Superintendent Brian Baltzell provided the following information: A NOTAM was called in by Mr. Baltzell on Friday, September 15th at 2:44pm, along with calls to Spokane FSDO and the Grant County International Airport Tower notifying that the Moses Lake Municipal Airport would be closed from 8am to 7pm on the 16th.

MISCELLANEOUS:

1. **AIRPORT INSURANCE:** Seth Trautman from Basin Pacific Insurance attended the meeting and was asked by the Commission to speak on behalf of airport insurance. Mr. Trautman was contacted by Debbie Burke, City Clerk, requesting an insurance quote. Mr. Trautman stated that he asked for better direction on what kind of quote the City was requesting. Mr. Trautman reached out to Mr. Fuhr asking for additional information. Mr. Fuhr replied with, a quote similar to the current policy and also a quote with Mr. Trautman's recommendations would be appreciated. Mr. Jackson made a motion to direct staff to get insurance quotes from Basin Pacific along with two other agencies that covers liability along with event coverage. The motion was seconded by Mr. Grant and passed unanimously. Mr. Richeson will contact Debbie Burke to discuss insurance.
2. **AIRPORT TRANSFER:** Mr. Jackson asked if the Airport Commission would like him to enter an agreement as a Port Commissioner for the Port of Moses Lake for the purchase of the Moses Lake Airport. Mr. Richeson made a motion to recommend to the Interim City Manager and City staff to enter into negotiations for the hopeful transfer of the Moses Lake Municipal Airport to the Port of Moses Lake. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pearce and passed unanimously by four voting commissioners. Mr. Jackson abstained.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **OPS BUILDING USE:** Use fees for the Operations Building need to be developed and brought back to the next meeting.
2. **UPDATE ON VARMINT CONTROL:** Mr. Jackson announced he has removed a couple varmints from airport property.
3. **UPDATE ON COMMISSION MEMBER OBTAINING A SPRAYING LICENSE:** Brian Baltzell, Interim Public Works Superintendent, reached out to Carl Henrickson at WSDA to see what Mr. Jackson would need as far as a spray license. This information was presented to the Commission. Mr. Jackson stated that he is no longer interested in doing the spraying at the airport due to the denial of Mr. Grant's L&I claim.


NEW BUSINESS:

1. **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Commission did a brief review of the financial report.

2. TIE-DOWN INSPECTION REPORT/COLLECTING FEES: An inspection report was presented, that the Commission should fill out once a month and turn in to the City. At the bottom of the report is space to fill in "N" numbers for planes using the tie downs. Some people pay through a drop box at the airport and others should be being invoiced. To make the process easier and ensure the airport is receiving tie down fees, a policy for tie down payments/invoicing and tie down information sheet was presented. Mr. Jackson made a motion to accept the tie down report form as part of the airport policy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pearce and passed unanimously.

3. RCW51.12.035; VOLUNTEERS: Mr. Richeson stated on the record according to the Airport Commission Policy that was provided by previous City Manager, Allison Williams, airport maintenance on page 4, the snow removal, sweeping, weed spraying, lawns, grounds, and volunteers are all assigned to the Commission to the jobs or to delegate the jobs to other volunteers. To the Commission understanding they were tasked with these things and now there is confusion on how they need to be done. Mr. Jackson stated that Mr. Grant had gone to the emergency room due to heat stroke after pulling weeds for a long period of time in 100+ degree weather and that Mr. Grant's L&I was denied by the City because Mr. Grant was not directed by City staff to do this work.

Mr. Jackson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Grant and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.



Trisha Kehret, Engineering Administrative Technician