

# YAMPA VALLEY AIRPORT COMMISSION

February 10, 2023

Meeting MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Yampa Valley Airport Commission (YVAC) was called to order in-person and via Zoom at approximately 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 10, 2023.

## YVAC members present:

Janet Fischer – Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp.  
Tim Redmond – Routt County Commissioner  
Stephen Birch – Resident of Routt County - Aviation Community  
Randy Rudasics – Steamboat Chamber  
Les Liman – Resident of Routt County - Aviation Community  
Chris Nichols – Resident of Moffatt County  
Michael Buccino – Steamboat Springs City Council member  
Trevor Gann - Resident of Town of Hayden

## YVAC members absent:

Robin Crossan – Steamboat Springs City Council member  
Bob Reese – Town of Hayden (Alternate)  
Rob Perlman – Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp.  
Sean Hovorka – Resident of Moffat County (Alternate)  
Larry Mashaw – Resident of Routt County

## Others present:

Kevin Booth – YVRA  
Stacie Fain – KSBS  
Tim Ascher – Atlantic Aviation  
Jake Hoban – Garber  
Lauren Rasmussen – Mead & Hunt  
Jeremy Lee – Mead & Hunt

## **I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**

### **1. Approval of Minutes – December 8, 2022**

#### **MOTION**

Steven Birch moved to approve the December 8, 2022, meeting minutes as presented;  
Janet Fischer seconded.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

## **II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **III. Sunshine Law Resolution**

Tim Redmond moved to approve the Sunshine Law resolution; Randy Rudasics seconded.  
The motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. Comments from Board Members**

Steven Birch:

Kudos to the maintenance crews for keeping the runways and taxiways clear during these huge snow events.

There is a NOTAM that there was a lack of 100 low-lead, so I wanted to ask Tim about that event from January 26-31.

Tim Asher:

We had one of our control boxes that's been there since that fuel farm has been there go out, so we had to get a new control box. Meantime, we were unable to get any low-lead out of the fuel farm.

Birch: Did you know of anybody impacted, or was it pretty quiet that week?

Asher: No, we hardly go through any low-lead.

Birch: The second thing on this NOTAM is that one of the requests that FlexJet's chief pilot had is that from December 24-January 5, we had a NOTAM that you have to call departure via a telephone number. The request was maybe in the future if we can put that on Unicom on the AWOS.

Booth: We can't put it on AWOS. Denver Center publishes that NOTAM. That caused confusion. Folks here are used to calling Denver Center on the radio, and during high peak hours they apparently allocated somebody at a desk with a phone that's doing that instead of having to read the clearance over the radio during busy periods.

Birch: I just wanted to show that it was way down on the list, and a lot of people didn't see it. Then Center gets cranky, and it creates a lot of communication.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **1. SBS Airport & Capital Infrastructure Update**

Stacie Fain:

Our simulator should be online very shortly. We're in the process of signing a contract with Flight Schedule Pro to allow folks to sign up to use the simulator. We worked out all the bugs, and once we get that subscription and get that link out to all the tenants and users we'll be ready for folks to come and use the simulator. It will rent for \$45 an hour. Folks can schedule themselves and just check out at the counter at the FBO, and that way we'll capture all the data we need for the grant on who's using it and why and for how long. We picked up some paint today and paint the base. We will an open house with a demo and put out a press release so that people know it's available and they can come try it out.

I am still trying to get some answers on our instrument approach that we've been trying to get in place and not having any luck getting any answers from the FAA, but I'm going to keep trying.

ADS-B: I gave an update to everybody at the CAO A about the testing and all the new towers that have gone in in the mountain region so that airport managers would know what's going on. Ours is in the testing phase and we have the IT and electronics in. We're waiting for our big generator that's going to back up our lighting system to come in., The site is now it's buried in snow so it will be a few months before it clears. As soon as the snow clears and the generator comes in, we'll put in the propane tank, and we'll have our system complete in the late spring or summer.

Both Kevin and I attended the CAO A conference this week. It was fantastic to network with all our counterparts and get some questions and answers on things that apply to general aviation airports. I'm sure Kevin had a similar experience for the regional airports. It was very well attended with about 155 people in attendance. Kevin and I both got to talk with Dylan Roberts, our State Senator.

KSBS got approved for \$300,000 in discretionary funds from CDOT. That is the \$200,000 that we're matching with city funds for the installation of our self-serve fuel tanks this summer and \$100,000 that we're matching 90%-10% to move our fuel truck parking canopy.

Prior to that the conference, Jake Hoban (Garver) and I met with FAA and CDOT about the KSBS Terminal Area Improvement project. Garver is 60% complete with the design and on track to submit the plans to the City for comment.

KSBS got the last two items of the runway rehabilitation project under contract, and as soon as weather allows we'll be doing those. We're about one year late for trying to put the pond in for the city to have snow storage at the airport, but it is coming; it will go in this spring or summer. I sure wish we could have had it ready for them this year as the Streets Department really needed it. We also will be putting in the culvert so that the vehicle will be approved by the county to access our haul road for the firefighters this summer.

Garver and I also talked to the FAA and CDOT about our capital improvement plan (CIP). They like to know six years out, which is a tall order because a lot of things can change in six years. They are very pleased with what we've got on the schedule, and we are pretty satisfied with what we've got scheduled out until about 2028. We'll revisit that again when the city starts the budget season this summer.

Jake Hoban, Garver:

If you've been at these meetings for a while, you may have seen several variations of the Terminal Area Improvement project design. There were early variations last year with different layouts, and we've started to refine that as we are making submittals to the city and the FAA as of today. The main goal of this project is to make this area more susceptible to hangar development, so we're continuing to evolve in finding better layouts that will allow more square footage for hangar development. Lately, we have added a relocation of the main access gate from the northern area to between the Honey Stinger Building and the FBO. That will be part of the first package (Phase 1). We'll also have a revised access gate with access to the airfield through a new gate 3 and gate 4. We'll continue to work with the developer on utility relocation and allowing taxiing in this access. A critical Phase I task is moving the fuel canopy relocation. Once the development gets underway, then we'll move into the parking lot and start rehabilitating that, improving the efficiency and providing more parking for the FBO.

Hoban: Hoban showed the location under consideration for self-serve fuel parking.

It is in between the existing hangar and the Honey Stinger Building. We're in the process of laying out two 6,000-gallon tanks with the self-serve access immediately onto the apron. The airport is really excited about that. I think tenants that arrive at the airport after 5 p.m. will like that as well.

Birch: What's the rule on proximity of fuel storage tanks to buildings?

Hoban: It depends on the size of the tank and the material in the tank. The reason this location works is based on the size of the tank; we can actually get within five feet of the building. We won't be within five feet of the building; that's a little tight for our conservative engineer sensibilities, but we'll be pretty close. We won't be any closer than ten feet to a building, but with a small tank, 6,000 gallons or less, you can actually get within five feet of a building.

Birch: Is the pump equipment integrated, or is it going to have to be a separate unit?

Hoban: It's likely to be a separate unit that will be directly accessible from the apron. The way that the specs read, it can be interpreted that the dispenser should be farther away from the tanks than we normally see, so we're working through that with the Fire Marshal to determine which way he's going to allow us to go.

Fain: We dug into these regulations deeply because we have to move our trucks further away. That's some dead space there next to the K-1 hangar where we parked a trailer where we did all our pavement testing last summer. That's when that idea hit me that we could probably fit the self-serve fuel tanks in that space.

Liman: I know the airport has a huge waiting list for hangar space. I don't have a real good understanding of what this project is. I have heard from at least two different groups that have looked at prior hangar development RFP proposals and they said that they can't make the numbers work because there's too many things that the airport is asking them to do in addition to simply building these hangars and getting them out there for use. I know there's interest in converting the old terminal building, which is now an office, back into hangar space and relocating Honey Stinger so that can be used as hangar space.

Fain: The Airport Office Building (Honey Stinger) was built with FAA grant funding so it has to generate revenue and cannot be converted back into a hangar space. Right now, it generates more than \$325,000 a year on the lease that we have has been approved by the FAA.

Liman: How long is the lease?

Fain: It goes for another eight or nine years. That lease has been approved by the FAA and is going to stay that way for the foreseeable future.

Liman: Who was that money paid to?

Fain: The city. That's how our airport is self-sustaining. It's been renovated to office spaces, so to turn it back into a hangar space doesn't really make much sense. It's generating a lot of money, and that's going to remain that way for a while. To answer the first part of your question, we released the third version of the RFP and it closed in January with no bids I talked to Steve and other folks that were considering it. I had a very long list of probably 60-some folks that looked at it, and nobody bid on it. I think there's multiple reasons. Steve can share some of

his thoughts. This new design that Jake just showed you today has utility lines that don't have to be moved as much as the previous design, which will take a lot of the expense out of the equation. It also gives 5,000 more square feet of hangar development space. We're going to continue massaging that through the spring and summer, and I will try to release an RFP again this summer. I'm continually trying to find ways, and now that we're making the taxiway go out to the north instead of to the west where there was a slope, there will be less fill required. As we get more survey data and get more refined on the design, the RFP should pencil better and better. We also feel like a lot of developers have supply and labor problems, and the fact that many projects are behind, haven't had time to look at it. As things get a little bit better and development gets caught up, I think we'll get to a solution.

Liman: Steve, do you agree that this latest plan is more viable for a developer and might actually happen?

Birch: I haven't seen all of it yet. Moving the utilities alone was penciling in at almost \$200,000 because there were major term clients that come in that were along the street that we're now taking. So, they weren't an issue before, and now they are. That was the shape of the hangar that created some dead space, trying to figure out how that works. Then, the city's desire to have one of those hangars be dedicated to them; we lost revenue on that. A lot of different things.

Fain: Jake and I talked to the FAA and asked them if they would look into issuing a categorical exclusion for Area 2 for hangar development at the south end of the ramp. We're waiting to hear back from them.

Fain clarified that that's the environmental requirements needed to develop to the south.

Fain: We're trying to get the FAA to get that done for us instead of putting the onus on the developer for the environment clearance in area because KSBS doesn't have the budget for it.

Area 2 is to the south of the ramp. The developers could on Area 1, Area 2 or both.

The Airport Terminal Area Improvement project is being done with Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) grant money. Maybe once in a lifetime at a general aviation airport do you see this kind of money. It's about \$1 million over five years, and each phase has to bid out each year. We have to be very careful how we're going to execute it, but we're going to make the most of this \$1 million that this airport will likely never see again.

Birch: If I had been able to make one of those work financially, I would have eaten it on the other end, but I couldn't make either work.

Fain: I feel like it's two steps forward, one back, but we're getting there. I currently have 58 people on the hangar wait list that want to be based at the airport. I was able to meet with a lot of folks down in Denver about our hangar ground leases and collected a lot of data from other airports. So, I'll be making some recommendations to my supervisor based on that, and we'll keep moving forward.

Liman: How many hangars are you talking about if this project gets built?

Fain: In Area 1, I think we could probably pull 12-15 small airplanes off the list. Area 2, I would say about 4.

Birch: The largest one was going to be 80x80.

Fain: I was thinking 60x60, so 5-9 of those sized hangars. We would probably cut the list in about half with this development. Every other general aviation airport in the Front Range or mountains has a list like this. The demand is unbelievably high.

Limán: Any prospects for getting the west side down and using that?

Fain: That land is not owned by the airport. He's trying to sell. I get calls probably once a month from somebody saying they're buying it, but they haven't bought it. So, nothing in the foreseeable future.

## 2. HDN Airport/Capital/Infrastructure Update

Kevin Booth:

Lauren and I put together some storyboards for the Airline Summit seminar a couple weeks ago. It was kind of a tickler that we set up for breakfast. I've combined this with some slides from Lauren, our lead planner with Mead & Hunt for the Terminal Area Plan and GA development. Barry Sherman is one of the leads on Phase I of our GA development plan. It's a total of nine hangars. We actually met earlier today on the lease agreement, and we're working out the details on that. We're going to bid some of the infrastructure work that needs to be done for Phase II, so this summer, while the BA Group is starting to work on the hangars, we're going to build the county road. We're going to reroute CR 51B. It's through Legal and Road & Bridge review, and we should be ready to bid that in a couple months. We're going to do that in conjunction with another project, so hopefully we'll get the same contractor to do both. They will build that road, put in the appropriate drainage, and they will do a lot of grading because it's not flat enough to run airplanes around.

We're working with Yampa Valley Electric Association to reroute the power lines, and we'll be hiring a fencing contractor because we have to move our wildlife fence. The land is owned by the County, so right-of-ways and easements and things are all ours. That made it much simpler.

We don't think a developer is going to come in and build it all at once, so we phased it. Phase II could be 2A, 2B, 2C, that sort of thing. That might not be built out in ten years, but we'll see what the demand is. We do have demand. Barry and his team are counting on that and are aware of that demand. It is larger hangars; I think two are 120x120, then there's three 80x80 and four 60x60. There's even larger ones in here, and that's by design. That's our concept suggestion, but we're not the developers, so it's not our choice. But that's what we're going to be looking for. We want some for business purpose, and we really want those to have access so that you don't have to come through a security fence. Your customers can drive up to the back of those hangars, and you can let them into main hangar, an A&P shop, an avionics shop or whatever it is.

We expect to upgrade Taxiway Bravo to an ADG III capability, and this cross taxi lane will be an ADG III. With the current design, nobody gets trapped; you can still get to the active taxiway. It also doesn't lock us out of FAA funding. If you do a dead-end taxiway, that's a nonstarter for the FAA. This is still not going to rank high in priority with the FAA, so I'm not counting on FAA funding, but I also spent some time at the CAO meeting last week talking to CDOT because they're giving funding to airports like us or even bigger than us – they just granted \$8 million to Grand Junction Airport, which is a little out of the norm for CDOT because they tend

to gravitate to airports that don't get the funding that regional commercial service airports do. So, I was kind of startled to see how much money was going toward Grand Junction. This preferred design, which was one of three options, is the one that gives us the best chance of getting either CDOT or FAA funding or both. We also had to do a Categorical Exclusion, and that is mandated by the FAA.

#### Terminal Area Plan:

Our study group is going to meet here in March, and that's going to be the last study group meeting. Then, we'll do public comment and have the public meeting in April, probably in the County's hearing room. By then, we'll have some alternatives. There are a number of different projections that represent someone else's opinion on enplanement growth at this airport. We've had a big spike in the last two years. My opinion on enplanement growth is pretty aggressive, and I have a lot of reasons for that, some of which have to do with what Janet's group is doing up on the mountain, what's happening in Steamboat writ large. I think developments like Barry's are going to make this a better place to come and a better airport that can serve those folks that come. We got the FAA to buy off on that projection, so that's what guides everything from how many square feet we need to add to this terminal to the facilities we need that we don't have today.

Both showed how future development will necessitate removing existing hangars. He showed why the terminal needs to be expanded.

Booth: There was a leakage study published just before I got here, and it tells you all the air travel business you're losing. Back in the 2014-2015 timeframe, Sixel did this study, and they said two thirds of your people are driving to Denver to fly where they want to go. Today, it's almost 180 degrees out from that with two thirds of locals flying to and from our airport.

Lauren has a subcontractor who took a look at where we fly, and what service we have today. This was very interesting to Janet, and Lauren's consultants briefed Janet and her team on their findings. The Ski Corp does this on their own, but this is interesting to compare. What they told me was: You pretty much have everything you need and want in winter. We don't really see you needing to find another city to fly to.

With 15 cities and 6 airlines, we're doing better than almost everybody – certainly all our peer competitors, and I don't count Bozeman as a peer competitor.

For the summer, they said we ought to be looking at Austin, Chicago, Dallas, Houston and Phoenix. Janet and her team are talking to airlines about summer service, and they have some funding that the city approved for summer air service. St. Louis was one that keeps popping up that has never been on my radar before. Both Janet's and Lauren's teams identified St. Louis as a good feeder airport.

Going all the way out to 2041, they think we ought to have 2.5x the size terminal that we have today. That's what the experts say we should have; we have to pare that down to what we can afford and build what we can with the funding we have with the idea that if when we get to 2027 or 2030, and we need more, we can take down the temporary wall to the east and continue expanding that way.

This is just one of about seven overlays that I saw last Wednesday, and I'm calling this the east wing. We're shaped the way we are because of aircraft parking. That's why this overlay goes this direction; it's land that's available to us, and it allows us to park mainline aircraft near the terminal. Right now, we have six mainline parking spots, and we have a lot of mainline service – way more than we used to. We still have airlines that fly regional jets. What I told the planners

when we met earlier today was I want nine or ten universal parking spots; I don't want any RJ only spots. I can park a little airplane on a big spot; I want them to all be the same, and I want them to be sized for mainline aircraft.

Booth recapped the progress made last summer.

Booth: Deice Pad 1 is used almost as much as Deice Pad 3. Last year, all we had was 3 and 2, and 2 was almost nonfunctional because it caused planes to block access to parking spots. So, 1 has really helped us, and it will be a perfect spot when we have more mainline aircraft parking.

Booth showed the progress made on the paid parking lots with 200 more spaces since they paved the employee lot 1.5 years ago. He noted that the lot is kind of a mess right now with all the snow, but that it remains full and now stays full in the spring and summer.

Booth: We have our employees parking in here, but pretty soon we're not going to have room for employees; we will need room for paid parkers to park there. So, we're going to build a new employee parking lot this summer. It includes a sidewalk with a protected crosswalk with lights. That's 150 parking spaces for our employees. We're going to pave the entrance to it. We'll still have half of the rental car overflow lot there, which is not paved but has millings on it. Rental cars are going to end up with almost as much parking as they have today. This last summer, we built them two additional lots, so at the end of the day, they have significantly more storage space for cars than they did before. They're a little further from the terminal than they were. Employees will actually be a little closer to the terminal, which will make them happy. This will be a secure entrance, so you'll have to badge in and out. We've had some security issues in there with people messing with cars. So, we'll put that in and make that part of our parking control system.

This summer, we're going to seal-coat the runway. Our runway was rehabbed in 2015; it's really overdue for a seal coat, but it's in good shape. So, we got a good product back in 2015, but we're going to seal it in August. It will be about a 2-week project that will be mostly done at night. So, the runway will be closed through the night while they do the seal-coat and paint.

Next summer, we'll be doing a complete rehab of our parallel taxiway. We're designing it now. It's about two of Stacie's runways in width and length. The A4 connector has to be removed because the FAA no longer allows you to come off a commercial apron on a taxiway connector that leads directly onto the runway. It's a safety issue, and it's why we have that green island painted out there right now. So, we're going to remove the A4 connector and build a new A2 connector, which gives you a roundabout at each end of the runway. That really helps. So, that's a big project in 2024. We're also going to build a blast pad on the approach end of RWY 28 because right now, the end of the runway is where the dirt starts. It would make me nervous to land knowing that if I land short, I'm in the dirt. Currently not having a blast pad causes pilots to land long. On RWY 28 there isn't a precision approach, so they tend to be high, anyway. Thankfully, we have a 10,000-foot runway, so they just get off at the end of the runway. This blast pad will reduce the frequency of landing short, and allows you to aim shorter than they're aiming today.

Birch asked how long it would be; Jeremy Lee said it would be 200x200, which is the same as what is on the west end of the runway now.

Booth: We try to do a seal-coat every three years on all our asphalt surfaces; the typical rotation of seal-coating asphalt is 3-5 years. It's challenging in our paid parking lot because the lot is never empty now. That's why we're buying a seal-coat machine. We'll seal-coat one empty stall at a time. The maintenance guys aren't real happy about becoming seal-coaters, but that's what we've got to do.

They started putting our carwash up yesterday; they're going to put the actual skin on it tomorrow. Shortly thereafter, they unbolt it from the slab, and then they stretch it. It will be up in 2-3 weeks. This is a miniature of what they put at the top of the new gondola; same manufacturer. They have a 30-year lifespan.

Birch: If we diversify winter to summer, do you really feel like that increase is going to happen? The only way you can do that is add more mainlines in the winter because I don't see any more frequency in flights. Maybe a few, but... Are you going to have 30% growth in the next five years? 30% more seats?

Janet Fischer:

I probably wouldn't see winter growth as aggressive as it's being projected, but I would see some growth. I want to be able to add a seventh airline and maybe eight. So, I do see some growth potential in winter. I feel like there's also the opportunity for a little bit more where we came from in capacity. I think Southwest is so important to us and our future. What do they do? Their presence is really what created that spike we saw. It's also coming out of COVID. Southwest comes in big, and their presence created so much competitive responses from other airlines. Lucky for us, our locals and our guests ate that up and responded to it instead of driving to Denver. If they made a change, that would create a lot more challenges for us to maintain those numbers of seats and flights in the winter. It would become more expensive to contract for them. But the need is there. I think Lauren and her team did an awesome job on this whole presentation.

Booth: Southwest didn't create the problem at the terminal. Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays we were undersized before Southwest ever showed up. Southwest came in big. They didn't all come in at the same time; they're one plane at a time. So, it's one mainline, and they space it out so they're not on top of each other. I almost never see a Southwest airplane sitting waiting for their gate to open up. So, we needed a bigger terminal before Southwest ever got here, and we would need it if they left.

Birch: From a space perspective on planning, is that peak representative of what's going to happen? We're talking about a 20% increase by the end of 2026.

Lauren Rasmussen:

The FAA guidance says that we're supposed to look at the average day of the peak month for planning purposes. So, that 418 that you see is an average Thursday in March at the peak hour. What the projection shows is adding about three mainline flights to that peak hour over time. Whether or not that happens we'll all have to wait and see. We understand that this might be a little bit aggressive, so in our alternatives we're developing three initial concepts. We'll have one that's the minimum possible buildout that the airport could get by with at an acceptable level of service; then we'll have a medium buildout and a long-term buildout. From those, we'll get to a preferred concept, which will likely be a combination of a couple of them. That would be phased over 20 years.

Booth: What can we afford to build? Let's use that money to address the biggest problems – not the nice-to-haves but the must-haves. They've got all that; that's being pulled into these alternatives that they're coming up with now. The problem is it's hard to say what the priority is over the other: Ticketing is too small; TSA checkpoint is too small; the secure area is way too small. As I prioritized yesterday with them, it was TSA checkpoint; got to have a four lanes where now we have three; that's a must-have. The secure area, we have to have room for whatever mainline and regional jets we think we'll have on the ground so that I'm not holding passengers back from processing through the TSA checkpoint because I'm exceeding fire codes. So, we have to expand that. I don't want any gates that aren't mainline capable. Alaska was all regional jets, but they've already told me they're considering going to some mainline flights next season. Alaska's gate right now won't work for anybody but Alaska, and I don't need that; I want the gates to be able to work for everybody so that even if they just brought in a mainline on Saturday, which is step 1 of what they're planning, I've got someplace to put them.

I think as a minimum we'll get two large baggage claim belts, maybe three. I think we'll optimize baggage scanning, how we get those out on the line and how we get the ground handlers access to those. I think you'll see additional gates in the secure area, and the gates we have will be realigned or reconfigured so that everything can handle a mainline. If we plan for a 150-seat airplane, we're in good shape. Those are the must-haves; we're just working through which of those we can afford.

Booth showed possible new configurations of the terminal, including a larger snack bar to allow sit-down service and preclude the need for a bigger restaurant outside the secure area. He showed how two new gates would be closer to aircraft parking spots.

Booth: If you read the letter to the editor today, please take it with a grain of salt. What I did want this group to know is that we have revamped our irregular ops plan. We revamped it last summer. We brought in all the ground handlers when we developed the new plan, and we've exercised it a lot this season. We've had a lot of irregular ops – everything from weather to Southwest meltdowns to system meltdowns. All of those things have a negative effect on operations. We also have a contingency plan for people sleeping in the terminal. We're not going to keep the terminal open 24/7 because somebody doesn't want to pay for a hotel, but we'll do it if we have to. If we cannot transport you; if we cannot find you lodging. Nobody has ever been put out in the snow; nobody has ever been threatened with being put out in the snow. There were people that, for the right reasons, were threatened with trespass if they refused to leave the terminal; we booked them an AirBnB and found them transport. I'm pretty proud of the way we handle irregular ops; that's why letters like this get under my skin a little bit. I think we go above and beyond to take care of our customers, and 99.9% of them really appreciate it. Not one of them has had to sleep in the terminal this year, and not one of them has been put out in the snow. We had 100 people sleep in the terminal last July. It had nothing to do with weather; it had to do with mechanical. We have 200 blankets and 200 pillows; we have foodstuffs; we have diapers; we have formula. So, we're doing a lot to take care of these people because we care about them and we want to do the right thing.

We reach out to all the hotels in Craig. We've worked out a distressed passenger rate so they don't pay full price; they're already paying one-third what they would pay in Steamboat. We're working with our shuttle bus companies now to see if they can provide a similar distressed passenger rate because people are paying the same thing to go 24 miles to Steamboat as they would pay to go round-trip to Craig, which is only 16 miles away.

Birch asked who was leading that evening; Booth said Tinneal was on that Saturday with Booth on text messages.

Booth: It was Friday-Sunday. Sunday, we had 564 people not get on the airplane as planned and had to find rooms and transportation, and we provided both to them all. They had a ride back the next morning. That's either me or Tinneal leading that with the ground handler's station manager or their supervisors, our passenger services calling hotels, and the ground transportation companies.

### 3. Air Service Update

Janet Fischer:

We had our 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Airline Summit, and we had 100 airline people who were connected to our program in some way. The department that we contract with for service was called Network Planning, so we had a lot of those people. We had some from ops, some from marketing, revenue management and pricing people from all those different airlines, also. We did other events for them: an airline trivia night, a western barbeque with Buffalo Commons (local band.) I think it went really well.

The whole reason for doing it is because we are just this dot to a major airline, so we want to get them to come here and see this airport, experience something of Steamboat, see what it's like here. That's why we do it, and it works.

For air service, not a lot of updates right now. The capacity and available seats have definitely changed like a hundred times, but right now we're thinking that we'll be a little bit more than last year; maybe +2% in available seats. We thought it was going to be much higher, but that whole session with Southwest for about 8 or 9 days when they cancelled all flights, was brutal. We lost 3,200 inbound and 3,200 outbound seats in capacity. For passengers, we're forecasting that this season is going to be really similar to last year, and last year we had 145,000 arriving passengers and about the same departing.

Booth: Even with the Southwest issues and JetBlue choosing not to fly in December and January, we still had the same number of passengers as last year in that the month of December.

Fischer: We're seeing the same thing where our number of passengers traveled is really flat, but our load factors are up. It's because we lost a lot of capacity. It appears that a certain amount of people who were displaced on all those cancelled Southwest flights did get on other carriers and boosted the load factors on those flights.

When we look at spring-summer-fall, Southwest has been loaded with one of their Denver 737s per day for all the way through August. Just today, they loaded the rest of August all the way to October 4. Other airlines will load flights multiple months at a time; Southwest staggers these six weeks at a time or something like that. So, that's good to see. United is similar to last year, but they're doing just two per day for April and May, then they go to three per day from June-November.

Through the Local Marketing District, we do have a budget to seek a third airline and/or a nonstop from elsewhere to add to that. We're working on that; it's actually very challenging. I'm not sure if that will happen this year; perhaps not until 2024.

Asked where that nonstop might originate; Fischer suggested Dallas, Atlanta or Houston.

Fischer: The thing that's really challenging is that the regional pilots is where the severe pilot shortage is, and that's what we would be looking for. We'd be looking to add something on an E175 or something like that – a 76-passenger regional like what Alaska flies. I guess a lot of those pilots have been able to move into mainline, which is what they want to do. That's what we're running into trying to chase after this.

We actually do approach our carriers every year to try to get service from their hubs. Phoenix is an American Airlines hub, and we've definitely inquired about that for winter and summer.

Booth wondered whether a twice-a-week mainline had been considered; Fischer said she thought that might be what they end up with, preferably a Wednesday and Saturday, since Thursday and Sunday would be very directional with light passenger counts going the other direction.

Birch asked about load factors for Nashville; Fischer said it's doing well in its first year and she expects it to continue. She reported that with some flights such as the Houston daily, they adjusted it to a smaller plane for about five weeks in order to have the budget to keep it; the same thing happened with L.A.

#### **4. Atlantic Aviation Update**

Tim Ascher

Year over year, we had a pretty successful 2022. We ended up pumping 362,000 more gallons on commercial than we did in 2021. We did pump 73,000 less on GA, so overall we increased our gallons by nearly 289,000.

Recently, we did need to request the airlines tanker fuel. That only lasted about a day. I80 shut down due to weather, and I had a hard time getting fuel from Denver, also due to weather. We did end up finding a few truckers, so we were able to get through.

I have been having conversations with American Environmental about storage options. Since our plan of adding a tank last year fell through, the plan as of right now is to take two of the 10,000-gallon tanks out and replace them with two 30,000 gallon tanks at the fuel farm. This would almost double the capacity at the fuel farm. We would also put in 4-inch piping and pumps to replace the 3-inch that we currently have, which would increase the flow rate. That would allow us to offload and top off trucks a lot faster. I don't currently have a timeline on this, but everyone understands the urgency so hopefully it will get done fairly soon. I will keep everyone updated.

Staffing has still been a little tough. I've got a lot of new guys and girls that kind of got thrown into the busy season, but they've been great so far. I still am shorthanded two line service technicians at the moment, so I'm still trying to increase my headcount for the upcoming summer and winter season.

Booth confirmed that the 30,000-gallon tanks will fit in the same spaces as the 10,000-gallon tanks; Ascher added that they will be double walled, so they can be closer to the hangar. He noted that they will be longer, so they will need to redo the containment.

Liman said he's still getting people in private planes and jets that are complaining about pricing.

V. REPORTS FROM YVAC COMMITTEES

1. **Community Outreach and Marketing**

Fain reported that Robin Crossan is no longer on the committee; she switched with Michael Buccino.

Members of this committee include: Michael, Rob, Janet, Randy, Chris, Kevin, and Stacie.

2. **Infrastructure and Finance**

None.

Members of this committee include: Tim, Larry, Les, Steve, Stacie, and Kevin.

VI. MANAGERS' REPORTS – provided via email

1. **Yampa Valley Regional Airport**

No questions.

2. **Steamboat Springs Airport**

No questions.

VII. SET DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be April 13 at Bob Adams Field.

VIII. PRELIMINARY AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE APRIL YVAC MEETING

IX. ADJOURN MEETING

The YVAC meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:36 p.m.

Minutes Approved: April 13th, 2023

By: Tim Redmond  
Tim Redmond, Chairman  
Yampa Valley Airport Commission

