

TOWN OF SILVER CREEK
SPECIAL MEETING
AUGUST 27, 2019

A special meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Silver Creek was held at the Silver Bay Airport on Tuesday, August 27, 2019 and convened in the Arrival and Departure building. Present were Supervisors: Greg Hull, Denny Moen, and Chuck Voss; Clerk Alison Oftedahl, Town Operations Assistant Paul Thompson, and Equipment Operator Allen Anderson.

Visitors Present: Kathy Vesely, Praveena Pidoparthi, and Ryan Gaug from MNDOT Aeronautics; Mike Beard from Bollig, INC; and eight regional pilots.

Chairman Hull called the special meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to tour the airport and look over the facilities in consideration of the possibility of becoming the sponsoring entity. Kathy Vesely of MNDOT Aeronautics then provided an Airport Layout Plan showing current infrastructure and identifying future needs. The airport is currently closed due to safety issues. She said that in order to re-open the airport, a sponsor must be established; the runway must be repaired or replaced; the approaches must be cleared; and a new license application must be completed. She stated that the current runway is 3200 by 75 feet and suitable for light "utility" class aircraft. The next larger size aircraft such as King Air could land at this airport if the runway were expanded to 3900 by 75 feet. Such an expansion would require land acquisition. Runway repaving would require an environmental study. If the runway were extended in addition to repaving, the required environmental assessment with outreach to other agencies could add a year to the project. Cleaning the approach will require obtaining permissions to cut some trees off the property of neighboring landowners.

The group then walked around the grounds, inspecting the airplane fuel system, the old Arrival and Departure building, the eleven hangars, navigation lights, weather system, and the runway. The fuel system is not currently usable, and its tanks have been pulled out. The old Arrival and Departure building was never removed when the new one was built. It must be torn out because it is too close to the runway according to FAA regulation. Supervisors went into a couple of the hangars. Hangar rental is currently at a rate of \$85 a month and is not restricted to airplane storage. That is low for the state according to Vesely. Grand Marais Airport rents its hangars rent for \$150 per month according to one of the pilots. Both hangar rental and fuel sales are a source of revenue to assist with ongoing maintenance costs. The hangars are usable but suffering from water leaks. Some of the equipment inspected such as the navigation and weather systems are owned by MNDOT. When walking the runway, the group discussed types of material that could be used and whether concrete would hold up better than asphalt. It appeared that the runway would need full replacement.

After the tour, the group again held discussion in the Arrival and Departure building with Hull asking Vesely to identify the next step. She suggested contacting Silver Bay to discuss an agreement. Moen asked about Silver Bay's current status. Vesely explained that right now Silver Bay is liable to the FAA for the grant assurances and would owe repayment of some grant money because they have not kept the airport maintained and open. Hull stated that according to Andy Peek from the FAA, Silver Bay is obligated to repay approximately \$280,000. If Silver Creek were to take over the Airport, they would take over the grant assurance, thereby relieving Silver Bay of the need to repay the FAA. It was discussed that Silver Bay might be willing to provide some initial funding to Silver Creek in exchange for Silver Creek assuming these grant assurances.

Vesely then stated that the second step would likely be selecting the most qualified aviation consultant for assistance with developing a business plan and identifying funding.

Motion by Voss, second Moen to empower Chairman Hull to contact the City of Silver Bay for purpose of discussing the potential transfer of airport sponsorship over to the Town of Silver Creek. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Hull, second Moen to empower Chairman Hull to meet with Airport Consultant Mike Beard for the purpose of developing a potential business plan and budget. Carried unanimously.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Moen, second Voss to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Oftedahl, Deputy Clerk