

**THE WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES OF THE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILLCOX, COCHISE COUNTY, AZ  
HELD ON THIS 1<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY 2010**

**CALL TO ORDER**-Mayor Gerald W. Lindsey called the work session meeting to order on Monday, February 1, 2010 at 5:03 p.m. and from the audience Ms. Delcie Schultz shouted "speak up!" (Staff adjusted microphones) The Council appreciates everyone being here tonight and those that served on the Airport Ad Hoc Committee for their hard work that went with that venture as they met as Committee and their recommendation to the Mayor and Council.

**ROLL CALL**-City Clerk Cristina G. Whelan, CMC called the roll.

**PRESENT**

Mayor Gerald W. Lindsey  
Vice Mayor Larry Schultz  
Councilman Elwood A. Johnson  
Councilman Jimmy L. Norris-5:14 p.m. arrived  
Councilwoman Monika Cronberg  
Councilman Stephen Klump  
Councilman Christopher Donahue-5:12 p.m. arrived

**STAFF**

City Manager Pat McCourt  
City Attorney Hector Figueroa  
City Clerk Cristina G. Whelan, CMC  
Library Director Tom Miner  
Public Services & Works Director Dave Bonner  
Code Enforcement Jeff Stoddard

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**-Mayor Lindsey.

**DECLARATION ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST**-There was no response from the Mayor and Council members or staff.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Councilman Johnson moved to adopt the agenda as presented.

**SECONDED:** Councilwoman Cronberg seconded the motion. **CARRIED.**

**DISCUSSION REGARDING THE AIRPORT AD HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL.**

Mayor Lindsey asked the Chairman of the Airport Ad Hoc Committee to address the Mayor and Council. Mr. Rod Keeling served as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee and prepared the recommendation. An overview was presented by Mr. Keeling and he along with some members are here to answer any questions.

Information presented and /or discussed were:

- There were 14-15 full-time people on the Committee which is very good participation. Meetings were held about once a month; public hearing meeting was held at the Elks in July and about 40 people were in attendance.
- Committee tasked circumstances the City might or might not acquire the Airport which is owned by the County since the early 1940's. It was used during WWII and a lot of training for military pilots and Airports in many Arizona locations. It is small rural Airport P33 is its identification for National and International Airports and it is part of the National Transportation System.
- The Airport consists of approximately 960 acres and has taxiway and drainage. Concern that it is in a Flood Plan and that is a myth although there are portions that are in the 1' Flood Zone. There are 270 acres for future development.
- FAA has money willing to invest on periodic basis and County has used this over the past 12 years with Airport Master Plan as joint venture with the City and Chaired by Eddie Browning. Completed nine (9) major projects or \$9.8M and \$180,000 all from County. Master Plan is 12 years old, needs to be redone or updated, and need to apply for Federal Funds which are available and therefore Airport is really owned by Federal Government. The county owns the property and control and 95% of improvements are with Federal Monies.
- Airport has one (1) runway and could land pretty good size airplanes and it is only 600' long. It is designed like other cities of this size. Daily there are 25 airplanes and 1-helicopter and 25 operations which is landing and taking offs. This does not include the aircrafts based there.
- Basic financial income and expenses from the County shows running about \$8,000 cash deficit. A big concern how much infrastructure and capacities various department have to add if City owns it. County does not have full time or part time employee, no specialized equipment or fire services for the Airport. Most day-to-day management done by local private operator. Current fire protection is provided by Rural Fire District through subscription. There have been few improvements over the past 10 years and "pretty good" not everything is perfect and tremendous amount of ramp space (pavement)

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runways and taxi ways to maintain and that takes a good chunk of money. Since the County has not had specialized employees or work force the City could run it at the same level as County.

- Does Airport need to be annex? State Law allows City to own property and manage it and only City Tax Ordinance is not allowed. People living out there do not have to be annexed.
- Could City enter into joint agreement with County? Thinks County already has another Airport to take care of. City able to control and develop in the future.
- Biggest responsibility in his view is the obligations to the Federal Government because you can't get rid of it unless have someone else to take over. Other benefits: (1) is the 270 acres separate from aviation related activities open for development. City could plan development within 4-5 years or 20-30-40 years with good taxi access. Not included in the report is about 70 acres that could be set aside strictly for aviation. Storage aircraft or other activities related to aviation. (2) Employment will be higher level, higher income than average for the region. Attract businesses that will have higher compensated employees.
- Issue Economic Development. Short term believes Mayor and Council and City will benefit from decision based on how they send message to business community. Acquiring this Airport sending message to businesses that we also have train, freeway, golf course and Airport. Willcox is serious place to think about. Before streets and other items are done we need to send this message.
- The committee voted unanimously on the recommendation to the Mayor and Council to acquire the Airport.
- Negotiations are needed with County with Deal Points, transition period, and need to have all issues laid out and what clearly the County is giving, operations, standards income, expenses and capital costs for the next 5-years. Good place to start is transition of updating Master Plan and have questions asked. Informally County interested in participating in update and at the end makes decision. Have a phased decision process i.e., decide tonight move forward, then phase out with benchmarks and once all meet and sign. He thanked all on Committee who worked very hard and very interested in this project. A lot of the Committee members own places at the Airport and others did not. He doesn't own an airplane and stated it was a pleasure to work with them.

Discussions were held with Cochise County Board of Supervisor Richard Searle, Louise Walden contractor at Airport, on maintenance, cross wind runway, the need to acquire part of Airport Road off of North Vista to keep people from building there, Bob Coder's research on Flood Plain Maps and maps from FEMA, Don Uises concern on taxiways, Pete Erickson, Paul Sheats, Bill Holloway, and the Mayor and Council all voiced their concerns. Several council members concern is the revenues which are basically all grant funds and their availability. Concern is if there is a back up plan if funding is gone. Federal Funds are Trust Funds and for that exclusive use and Congress can not swept them. Biggest percentage of income is from the Fuel Sales. County question that is not being asked is why the County wants to get rid of the Airport. It has been and continues to be a low priority for the County.

Vice Mayor Schultz recommended that at the next meeting agenda include an item to consider proceeding with the process. Mayor Lindsey suggested that staff place on the City's web site for any citizen to comment for or against the City taking over the Airport within the next couple of weeks and get that input from citizens of Willcox. Also include the Airport Ad Hoc Committees recommendation. Transition period is about 18 months to get approval from the FAA. It is going to be transition and City's view could change in 18 months and what that could do is delay when to start.

Mayor Lindsey presented Certificates of Appreciation to the Committee members present. **APPLAUSE.**

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business before the Mayor and Council, Mayor Lindsey adjourned the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

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**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the work session meeting of the City Council of the City of Willcox held on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of February 2010. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

**Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of February 2010**

/s/ Cristina G. Whelan, CMC  
City Clerk Cristina G. Whelan, CMC

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this 15<sup>th</sup> day of FEBRUARY 2010.

/S/ GERALD W. LINDSEY  
MAYOR GERALD W. LINDSEY  
Signed: February 16, 2010

ATTEST:

/s/ Cristina G. Whelan, CMC  
City Clerk Cristina G. Whelan, CMC