

**Michigan Aeronautics Commission
General Aviation Committee**

To promote long-term, sustainable growth of general aviation throughout Michigan.

Commissioner Pete Kamarainen, Chairman

*Office of Aeronautics
Commission Room
2700 Port Lansing Rd
Lansing MI 48906*

August 19, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Dick Acker, Dennis Bowdoin, Bryan Budds, Paul Flinsky, Eric Jaroch, Mark Johnson, Pete Kamarainen, John Strehl

Members Absent: Sean Brosnan, James Canders, Bill Cattley, Brad Frederick, Karl Klimek, Mark Perry, David Powell,

Aero Staff Present: Rick Hammond, Hilary Vanderstow

Other Present: Rick Fiddler, Steve Zelle

Introductions & Welcome

Pete Kamarainen opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m. New commissioner, Rick Fiddler, was welcomed into the General Aviation Committee Meeting.

Minutes Approval

Meeting minutes from June 19, 2012 were approved.

September Aviation Month

Rick Hammond shared with the committee that we are anticipating September to be Aviation Month.

Private Airstrip Owners / Recreational Use Statutes

Pete Kamarainen introduces Steve Zelle, representing private airstrip owners in Michigan. Pete brings up the topic of recreational use statutes and what other states have accomplished for private airstrip owners.

Steve Zelle is from the Michigan Private Airstrip Owners Association (MPAOA). He explains that he is involved with the smaller, private strips on private property. Right now, there are one hundred and nine (109) people in the MPAOA organization. Currently they are working on legislation in Lansing (House Bill 5341) to get the privately owned airstrips included in the states recreational activities statutes. This bill is sponsored by Representative Dave Agema, and is currently in the Judiciary committee. There have

been sixteen (16) other states that have passed bills similar to this. House Bill 5341 is different from other states' because it is more "wordy" to eliminate loop – holes. Many groups like the RAF are not happy with the wording of the bill. The MPAOA is hoping that under the protection of this bill, private airstrip owners will allow people to land on their airstrip.

The organization has also been working with Avemco Insurance Company to create a brand new insurance policy for privately owned strips to insure their runway, taxiway and tie – down area for a reasonable rate. This type of policy has never been created before. It covers non – commercial aviation. If this policy is successful in testing, the MPAOA will receive the credit.

The next concern for the MPAOA is getting private airstrips included in the Tall Structure Act. Right now owners have no protection.

Dick Acker asks Steve Zelle what the General Aviation committee can do for him.

Steve Zelle tells the committee that the MPAOA needs support for this Bill.

In response to Pete Kamarainen's question, Steve Zelle tells the committee that there is no aviation caucus.

Pete Kamarainen asks why the RAF would not be supportive of this bill in Michigan. Steve Zelle explains that this bill is more in depth compared to the bills that other states have passed. Two attorneys have looked over the bill and gave feedback. The bill has been changed multiple times over its three (3) year course. Bryan Budds states that the RAF is supportive of the bill; however, the bill is very specific and is causing problems with attorneys and groups.

Steve Zelle reminds the committee that under this bill, flying into a private airstrip would still be at your own risk. Rick Hammond brings up the point of the honesty of owners, and standard of care.

Paul Flinsky asks about Good Samaritan protection for emergency landings.

Rick Hammonds informs committee that only a few private airstrips are on aeronautical chart for emergency landings. However, this does not grant pilots to land on the airstrip without permission. He is not sure if there are any laws or guarantees protecting these land owners or pilots.

Pete Kamarainen passed around an article about Minnesota and how to "Changing Your State's Recreational Use Statute to Include Private Airstrips." He also brings up the topic of an aviation caucus. Rick Hammond lets us know that most states do not have an aviation caucus, although Michigan did for a few years, but not recently. This is going to be a topic at the Office of Aeronautics Open House.

North Fox Island Airport

Pete Kamarainen and Brad Frederick scheduled a meeting with former Director Stokes after the last GA meeting. The morning of the meeting, Director Stokes was promoted to Urban Czar and his replacement for Director was named. They are going to allow the

new Director to get acclimated to his new position before discussing North Fox Island with him.

Facebook Page

Pete Kamarainen informs committee that the Fly Michigan page is up and running.

Aviation High School

Pete Kamarainen brings up the topic of aviation high schools, such as West Michigan Aviation Academy. The GA committee needs to support these schools.

Rick Fiddler told the committee how West Michigan Aviation Academy came to be a popular school. Retired teachers were hired and turned the school around. There is now a waiting list to be enrolled, and students come from all over Michigan. The school is currently under construction to increase its size and should be done within a few weeks. Freshman students enrolled in the school have an option to visit Ionia and take a ride in a glider. If the students receive a certain grade point average, they are given the option to solo. A fundraiser has also been set up to purchase an airplane and hire an instructor to teach flying lessons to students with certain grade point averages.

Pete Kamarainen talks about the need for new pilots because of new restrictions and retirements.

The idea was presented to hold the next GA committee meeting at the school.

Long Range Plan

Dick Acker brings up the revision of a 20/35 long range plan.

Rick Hammond tells the committee that the Office of Aeronautics does not work off of the Michigan Department of Transportation's long range plan. The Michigan Airport System Plan is more widely used with aviation. The long range plan does not go into detail regarding what the Office of Aeronautics does on a daily basis.

Eric Jaroch talks about Aeronautics funding. He believes that in the future, the Aeronautics funding should be involved in MDOT as a whole.

Rick Hammond tells the committee that the Office of Aeronautics can only draw funds from its own funding, and legally, from the comprehensive transportation fund.

Pete Kamarainen adjourned the meeting at 2:15.