

**MINUTES**  
**WATERLOO REGIONAL AIRPORT BOARD**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**Friday, November 17, 2017**

**I. ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Field called the special meeting to order at 11:59 a.m.

Board Members Present: Hugh Field, Steve Dust, Arlene Humble, Scott Voigt and Gwenne Berry.

Board Members Absent: Dr. Linda Allen, Chuck Needham.

City Officials Present: Mayor Quentin Hart.

City Officials Absent: Councilman Steve Schmitt, Councilman Tom Lind.

Airport Staff Present: Keith Kaspari, Airport Director and Sheila Combs, Airport Bookkeeper.

Other Attendees: Tim Newton, Livingston Aviation, Wendy Wilson, AvFlight.

**II. AGENDA AS RECEIVED OR AMENDED**

N/A

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**IV. REPORTS**

N/A

**V. BOARD APPROVAL**

N/A

**VI. OLD BUSINESS**

N/A

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

A. General Discussion: Community Response to USDOT Essential Air Service Invitation.

Chairperson Field opened the discussion on the air service proposals by stating that what we don't want is to be served by SkyWest for American, operating the CRJ-200, due to the poor service we have received from them since SkyWest took over for Envoy earlier this year.

However, the proposal received from American (Page 3) shows the CRJ-200 as the aircraft designated to serve ALO beginning on May 1, 2018.

Director Kaspari stated that the public input he has received seems to lean more towards retaining American, but only if they will commit to quality service.

Kaspari suggested that the response to the USDOT should state that we accept the American bid with the caveat that we want the ERJ, operated by Envoy, and if they want the operational flexibility to substitute a CRJ, that it should be a CRJ-700, which is a 66-Seat, 2-Class aircraft.

If American is not willing to make this commitment, then we would ask that the USDOT award our scheduled air service to SkyWest Airlines dba United Airlines (Option A), as Option B is much higher and it would be unlikely the USDOT officials would be willing to accept that proposal.

Steve Dust went over the survey that was sent to approximately 1,800 community investors, businesses and frequent fliers.

The survey asked if they would prefer American or United, whereby the data revealed the following: Fifty (50) percent of respondents chose United with the other 50% being equally split at 25% each between American and no preference.

The respondents who chose United were then asked which option they preferred, as follows:

Option A: Thirteen (13) weekly roundtrip flights to and from Chicago; and, Option B: one daily flight to and from Chicago; and, 1 daily flight, 6 days per week to and from Denver – with 80% choosing Option B.

An additional question asked which three (3) airports they preferred to fly out of and whether switching ALO's carrier from American to United would change that. The overwhelming response was no.

Mayor Hart contrasted the difference between the meetings held with American and United.

Mayor Hart stated that American officials have their set plan to serve ALO with 13 flights per week to Chicago, with no chance of expansion with either a 3<sup>rd</sup> flight per day to Chicago or a future daily flight to Dallas.

United officials listened to what our group had to say during our meeting at United's Corporate Offices in late March, and responded with the two separate proposals. United also gave the impression that they would consider expanding our service in the future.

Mayor Hart asked if United would help with marketing. Kaspari stated that they had told him they would, as United's proposal has marketing funds allocated at \$20,000 per year, each year over the two-year term. American never has, and their proposal provides no allocation of marketing funds.

Arlene Humble stated her concern that frequent fliers with lots of miles built-up on American may drive to Cedar Rapids to continue to fly on American, rather than staying in Waterloo to fly United.

Kaspari had asked United if they would honor American flier miles or status but he has not received a response.

Scott Voigt stated that he spoke with many frequent fliers who told him their biggest concern was reliability and they would fly out of ALO if we had better service.

Many ALO passengers have experienced problems with American out of ALO and now refuse to fly out of ALO.

Bringing United in may lead to many of those passengers coming back. If United provides good, reliable and on-time service our passenger numbers could grow enough to justify future expanded service to Chicago and possibly in the future westbound service to Denver.

Gwenne Berry stated that it seems American is not interested in providing good service, or their proposal would not have shown the aircraft operated by SkyWest. Berry continued they (AA) stated they have no interest in expanding beyond the current 13 flights per week schedule.

Voigt moved that our response to the USDOT be a recommendation to accept United's Option A, with the justification that we have received very poor service from SkyWest dba American Airlines on the CRJ-200 aircraft that was inserted on April 3, 2017, and their proposal included continued service on the troublesome CRJ-200. The motion was seconded by Dust.

Humble asked that we add a request to United to match passenger's American frequent flier status.

Ayes: 4; Nays: 1 (Humble).

Motion carried.

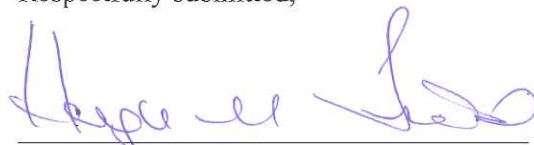
**VIII. STAFF AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENT**

None.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

With no additional business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Hugh M. Field, Chairperson