



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

Airport Advisory Board

Wednesday, April 26, 2023
1:00 PM

Regular

City Hall
701 E. Broadway
Conference Room
1A/1B
Columbia, MO 65201

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:59 PM.

Present: 7 - B.J. Hunter, Matthew Jenne, Gary Thompson, Thomas Richards, Randa Rawlins, Jon Poses and Raman Puri

Excused: 2 - Todd Culley and Britt Smith

Non-Voting: 2 - Mike Parks and Amy Schneider

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Board Members, staff (Stacey Button, Lauren Weber, Amy Schneider), and guest introductions.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Gary Thompson made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted with a second by Randa Rawlins. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Attachments: [AAB Meeting Minutes March 2023](#)

The March 22, 2023 meeting minutes were approved as submitted with a motion by BJ Hunter and a second by Gary Thompson. The minutes were approved unanimously.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Tom stated he has reached out to City Manager De'Carlton Seewood to remind him of the changes recently made to the charter and was told by the City Manager that it was being reviewed. Tom stated that he will continue to follow up and that it will ultimately have to be approved by council.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Mike Parks introduced the Woodruff marketing team: Shannan Kenny, Hannah Thomas, and Scott Shade. Shannan stated that she is the Senior Account Manager at Woodruff, Scott is the Associate Director, and Hannah

is the Social Media Strategist. Scott gave the company background to the board. Shannan stated that she and her team have been working with Mike and Stacey Button on the scope of the work they hope to complete within the next five months, including identifying the outcomes that they are working toward: building brand awareness of COU in the 17 county catchment area and encouraging potential passengers to check COU for flights first to see if it works within their timeline and budget which will help put COU in a position to add new flights and routes. They completed a preliminary outline of the media outlets that they will be using for this marketing campaign, including event sponsorships, traditional marketing techniques such as billboards and magazine ads, as well as digital media. Shannan said that Woodruff will do ongoing campaign management and optimizations to make sure that the digital advertising is working as intended and midpoint and end of campaign analytics reports. Regarding social media, Shannan explained that Woodruff will be implementing a social media strategy and audit playbooks, identifying social objectives by market and by channel, provide content themes, types, and frequencies, develop calendars and graphics to be posted across social media, once weekly moderation of posts and comments as well as user generated content on social media. She stated that Woodruff will take a look at the current campaign concept and update it with a fresh look and feel to develop messaging to support targeted outcomes. Gary Thompson asked why they are only planning to work on this for five months. Mike explained that Woodruff is under a short-term contract for the balance of the fiscal year while the Airport goes through the bidding process for a contract with renewal options, which may be issued within the next 45 days.

Shannan asked those present to educate her on the current COU brand, target audiences, what COU has to offer that sets it apart, and the current goals from a marketing perspective. Gary said that ultimately COU would like to increase its market share, which will demonstrate the success of COU if successful. Randa stated that she sees a lot of ads in Columbia, but wonders what the public is seeing in Boonville, Moberly, and Macon. She said it's important to get the message out there about the airport being a more convenient alternative to driving to Kansas City or St. Louis. Gary noted that Springfield, Missouri is a bigger competitor to the Lake of the Ozarks area than St. Louis or Kansas City and felt it would be beneficial to target that area. Tom Richards expressed concern on how to measure "increased awareness" across the 17 county catchment area and what benchmarks would indicate that the campaign was successful. Shannan

replied that one benchmark they measure is “impressions,” which is whether anyone actually saw the ad, and then after defining what behavior COU would like the consumer to do after the impression (i.e. visit the website, stay on a blog article for a certain number of minutes, etc.) they can measure those outcomes. Scott added that digitally, metrics are easier to record than on a billboard for example. Tom noted that The Lake of the Ozarks is on the verge of \$700 million in rapid development, and with so many people moving there from all over the country, there will be an increase in passengers flying in and out of the area. He said that marketing COU as their “home airport” could be an excellent strategy. Tom went on to say that he heard a lot of feedback regarding the previous marketing campaign, including that it did not inform people about the airport, as it just assumed that they already knew about it. Scott stated that the theme that has come across in their research is convenience, which Woodruff is able to push through as a tangible benefit of flying COU. Randa added that part of what they’d like to communicate is that “we have room for you.” She said that with American Airlines changing and removing flights, there is some confusion on how many flights there actually are.

Shannan stated that the more they know about the audience, the better decisions they’re able to make, and asked how the Board would describe COU’s current customers. Randa answered that they’re primarily Columbia residents taking trips for business and pleasure. Shannan asked how old they are, if they have families, if they’re in college. Randa said that she sees a wide range when she flies, with which Gary agreed. Scott added that it sometimes depends on what time of year it is, such as in January when students are returning to town, the passenger demographic skews more toward college-aged. Gary added that although he does see more business travel occurring recently, he’s noticed a higher percentage of pleasure travel taking place since the pandemic. Amy agreed and said that before the pandemic, most travel was business-related, but now it’s reversed. She said she expects it to go back, but that it may be another couple of years, to which Gary responded that everyone has learned how to work differently now and it’s not guaranteed that business travel will ever get back to what it was pre-pandemic. Randa then added that one division within the target audience to pay close attention to would be rural versus urban, stating that some rural passengers may be watching more TV than their city counterparts making them less exposed to the digital marketing.

Shannan asked what types of things are important or high priority to COU’s

current customers. Jon Poses answered that being on time is the most important, and that making sure passengers are comfortable if their flight is delayed. He added that it may be worth promoting that folks no longer have to bring in their own food when the concessions vendor opens. Shannan asked what current customers and the public are thinking right now, whether it's correct or not. Randa answered that they're wondering when COU will be getting more flights. Jon added that there is a perception that it's expensive to fly out of COU, and also noted the perception that taking connecting flights equals more time spent traveling is false when you take into consideration drive time, parking, and going through security. Raman Puri stated that changing perception requires education, and that that should be a focus of this marketing campaign, as many people don't understand how much improved the new terminal is and the convenience it offers. Jon stated that there is a perception that when you're in a larger airport, there's the sense that you're not stranded, even when you are. Larger airports are like malls, and COU just doesn't have that yet. He added that one bad experience is hard to come back from, and that a tour of the new terminal could be beneficial in educating potential passengers about it.

Finally, Shannan asked the Board if COU was a person, and you were describing its personality, what kinds of words you would use. Gary answered "friendly," noting that it's a different experience dealing with the staff at COU than it would be at a larger airport. Jon answered "user-friendly," "accessible," and "pristine." Gary added "comfortable." Amy answered "approachable."

Shannan thanked the Board for their feedback and asked them to reach out to Mike with any additional comments. She stated the next step is to develop content, which they hope to be able to share with the Board in the near future.

VII. REPORTS

Mike Parks presented his report to the Board:

-He stated that enplanements for March were over 8,000, and that they are seeing a considerable increase month by month. May will have five flights per day with a sixth added for about half of the month.

-He said that Airport staff is currently working on a very minor pavement repair project. This work will take place at night and will not impact general

or commercial aviation. They will also be adding a new sidewalk from the gravel parking lot to the new terminal.

-Mike stated Airport staff just completed enhanced passenger boarding bridge training, meaning they will now be able to do preventative maintenance and minor repairs on the passenger boarding bridges without the need of an outside contractor saving thousands per year.

-The Master Plan will begin in a few months and will be about one year long. Staff will be looking for feedback from the board through this planning process.

-Mike said COU is currently negotiating with the food and beverage vendor and hopes to have an update next month.

-The design contract for the automated flight service station will be executed very soon after signatures.

-Airport staff is currently removing electric wiring from the trailers in the back of the old terminal to prepare for their disposal.

-Mike noted that next month's meeting will be held at the same time and place but that beginning in June the Airport Advisory Board meetings will be held in the Airport conference room at 3:00 PM.

VIII. GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Randa stated dragging suitcase across gravel lot is difficult and asked if there will be a short term solution put in place. Mike responded that it will be included in the Master Plan and that there will need to be an environmental study completed before that work is started.

IX. NEXT MEETING DATE

May 24, 2023

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:12 PM with a motion by Randa Rawlins and a second by Gary Thompson. Motion passed unanimously.

Members of the public may attend any open meeting. For requests for accommodations related to disability, please call 573-874-CITY (573-874-2489) or email CITY@CoMo.gov. In order to assist staff in making the appropriate arrangements for your accommodation, please make your request as far in advance of the posted meeting date as possible.