



Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission

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NEWS RELEASE

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Commission Approves Grants for Airports in McAlester and Frederick; Will Pursue Funding for CASQ

OKLAHOMA CITY – The Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission, meeting in Oklahoma City last Thursday, approved a state grant for McAlester Regional Airport, along with an emergency grant for Frederick Municipal Airport, for various infrastructure improvements.

McAlester Regional Airport was awarded a grant for \$47,696 that will be used to improve the runway safety area and runway object free area. The project includes relocating a drainage structure at the end of the runway and extending the runway safety area to meet FAA guidelines. In addition, an earth obstruction that is situated near the runway and within the object free zone will be removed.

The total cost of the McAlester airport project is \$1,924,976 and will be funded mostly through a \$1,828,166 federal grant. Along with the CIP grant from the Aeronautics Commission, the City of McAlester is providing \$49,114 in matching funds.

The grant to McAlester Regional Airport is part of the Commission's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which provides funding to Oklahoma airports for various infrastructure needs, such as runway maintenance and construction; installation of navigational aids; land purchases; terminal improvements; and installation and repair of airfield lights and signage.

"One of the Commission's goals is to improve runway safety area standards at our public airports, especially for those airports that have jet traffic, and McAlester certainly fits that bill," said Victor Bird, director of Aeronautics. "Once the project is completed, aircraft that land either long or short of the runway will have an additional level of protection for them and their passengers."

Commissioners also voted to award an emergency grant to Frederick Municipal Airport for \$9,225 to help replace the airport's constant current regulator, a piece of equipment that controls the runway lights. The total cost of the project is \$10,250, and the City of Frederick is providing \$1,025 in matching funds.

Other highlights from last week's Aeronautics Commission meeting included a legislative report in which Bird shared that he would again pursue state funding for the Center for Aerospace Supplier Quality, a state program housed within the Aeronautics Commission that helps, at no charge, small to mid-size Oklahoma aerospace businesses capture more contracts from the Department of Defense and its prime contractors such as Boeing and Pratt & Whitney. He said that he would be asking for \$500,000 from the state Legislature next session to fund the program and that Rep. Gary Banz (R-Midwest City), who authored the original legislation in 2006 that created CASQ, would be leading that effort.

Allen Shipes, site manager for Logistic Specialties, Inc. (LSI), a consulting company that has been contracted to perform the day-to-day operations of CASQ, shared that since its inception, CASQ has counseled nearly

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150 companies, and out of that group, 23 companies have received about \$39 million in federal contract awards, which represents a 24 to 1 return on investment for the state. To date, approximately \$1.6 million of state funds have been expended on CASQ between 2007 and 2011.

The Aeronautics Commissioners also approved the appointment of Tamara Alexander as Assistant Operations Officer for the agency. She previously served as an administrative technician for the State Board of Tests for Alcohol and Drug Influence.

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The mission of the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission is to promote aviation, which includes ensuring that the needs of commerce and communities across the state are met by the state's 111 public airports that comprise the Oklahoma Airport System, and fostering the growth of the state's aerospace industry.