

Memo

To: City Council
From: Bryan Myrkle, Community Development Director
Date: December 21, 2016
Re: Replacement of ceilometer portion of AWOS system

Among the installations at Beach Airport is an AWOS system -- AWOS stands for Automated Weather Observation System. The system provides real time weather information for pilots flying in to the airport. The information can be accessed remotely from other airports, or from the airplane itself, making the AWOS an important safety feature for Beach Airport.

One portion of the AWOS instrumentation is a ceilometer. This instrument is used to measure the height and thickness of cloud cover.

More than a year ago, we were told by the MDOT Bureau of Aviation (which maintains our AWOS system) that our ceilometer would have to be replaced as it had reached the end of its useful life and was no longer being supported by the manufacturer. Therefore, continued maintenance of the device is not practical, and replacement parts are no longer available.

Originally, this was expected to be a local cost borne by the individual airports which have this outdated technology. The cost was estimated at approximately \$30,000. However, since that time, MDOT reallocated unspent funds to pay the majority of the cost of these replacements.

The department has now contracted with a vendor to install new ceilometers, and will be funding 90 percent of the \$29,000 cost.

On your council agenda for Monday evening is the approval of a contract with MDOT for the installation. Due to the uncertainty of this expense, we did not budget specifically for this project. Depending on the balance of the airport expenses for the year, this could require a budget adjustment later in the year.