

Glenda Wiles

From: Bob or Kathy Dewante <bkdewante@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 24, 2014 4:58 PM
To: dan@rpa-hln.com
Cc: Glenda Wiles
Subject: Ravalli's County Airport Improvements

Mr. Norderud,

We are writing you to let you know we are very much in favor of the proposed improvements to the Ravalli County Airport. There is so much misinformation out there that we just can't let this go without stating the facts about this matter. My wife and I were at a get together over the weekend at a friend's home off Golf Course Drive. While we were talking with a group of 5 or 6 folks, the subject of the airport improvements, or as some said that evening, jet port expansion, came up. There were several who said the extension of the runway was going to allow larger commercial jets, like Delta Airlines, to land and take off at our quite little airport and the extra noise and air traffic was going to be completely unacceptable to everyone living South of the airport. One person even quoted last Sunday's (July 13th) Valley Viewpoint saying, "that our new supersized runway will allow 'big rattling the windows' jets like short landing 747's to land in our narrow little alpine valley" and the lead poisoning and jet engines exhaust will be toxic to all, including the prairie dogs. Another person said the taxpayers were going to be on the hook for the more than 7 million dollars this was going to cost everyone living in Ravalli County.

I began by telling everyone who was within earshot that everything they had just said was absolutely false and nothing could be further from the truth. I told them I had reviewed the EA Report, not all 660 pages, but a good chunk of it to know the facts. I told them the following:

1. The improvements to the runway were strictly needed for the safety of 100% of the airplanes currently based at our airport and that's why the FAA was recommending lengthening the runway by 1000 feet.
2. The runway improvements would still only be for aircraft weighing less than 25,000 lbs dual wheel, as is currently the case. And commercial jet planes weigh in excess of 500,000, so they cannot and will not be landing at our little valley airport.
3. Moving the runway 400 feet to the East and 1,550 feet to the North would lessen the noise for everyone living South of the airport. And in fact, this move would also improve the safety of all on the ground, like the high school and downtown Hamilton. I told them that everyone living off Golf Course should push hard for these improvements because this fact alone.
4. The FAA will be covering 90% of the cost and the extra 10% would be coming from Aviation Fuel Tax, Ravalli County Aviation Safety Foundation and private donations. Plus I also told them the Airport actually makes money for the County via the real property taxes each hanger owner pays every year.
5. I also reminded them that if the airport improvements are voted down, and the FAA then withdraws funding for maintenance of the airport as they have said would happen, THEN the County taxpayers will be facing increased taxes to keep the airport maintained and open in obligation to existing agreements.

I told them I didn't understand why so many were opposing these improvements, because if you understood the facts, that safety for everyone in our community was the main reasons for these improvements, then how could you be against this. Lastly, if people want a benchmark as to the health and prosperity of a community, we feel they need only look to the airport serving that community. An airport in abandonment or decline reflects the sentiments of the community, and the region as a whole will suffer.

Please put us down as two votes in support of the airport improvements.

Thank You,

Bob and Kathy Dewante