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AIRPORT FACTS!!

This is partially a response to the unsigned boxholder mailing sent during the week of August 2, 2004, which was inaccurate and negative. These are also responses to subsequent comments published by persons against airport improvement. These dissenters keep bringing up the matter that five years ago a referendum defeated the proposed realignment. The main reason the referendum was defeated was the wording which caused taxpayers to believe that their tax dollars would be required. The community was misled, as it was when the \$800,000 Jackson Harbor project was flushed down the drain and went to Baileys Harbor.

The reason this issue of bringing up airport runway realignment has come up again, in spite of the referendum vote five years ago, is because the problem did not just go away. It was and is an issue of safety and it will always exist until the public recognizes the problem and fixes it. The four runway incidents that have occurred on the short runway have not resulted in any deaths, thank goodness.

Lengthening the short runway approximately 1,000 feet will not attract larger aircraft. It will still be shorter than the main runway. We're talking about the same approximate runway length for the proposed enhancement, without the benefit of 1,000 feet plus of overrun available on the main runway.

The EAA Chapter has never had a Flight School, nor does it plan to establish one. There's no flight school at Escanaba, but if there were it would not recommend a student flying over water.

There are no immediate plans to pave the runways. We hope that might happen at some time in the future, just as our roads have been paved. The safety enhancement of a longer grass runway is all that's being proposed.

Regarding concerns about traffic over the Farm Museum or Downtown, aircraft are currently requested to fly a heading to avoid populated areas of the Island. Correspondingly, signs could be posted at the departure ends of the realigned runway to fly headings avoiding the Downtown and Farm Museum areas.

There is no reason to believe there will be cost overruns for the project. Recent experience with local projects such as the State Dock in Jackson Harbor and the Airport Maintenance Building indicate otherwise. As to the cost to taxpayers, the Town has adequate grants and credit with the DOT to fund the project.

All in all, we have an opportunity to enhance the Island's attractions and safety. We can and should do it! Be sure to attend the meeting on Wednesday the 25th of August.

Wayne Boshka, Win Jones, Ed Graf, Walt Nehlsen, Rich Moeller, Don Lockhart, Bob Swanston, Mike Berger, Steve Kieffer, Bruce McClaren, Sam Myers, Phil Murphy and Larry Harvell.