

ADOPTED

City of Keene
New Hampshire

AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Friday, October 21, 2016

8:30 AM

**Dillant-Hopkins Airport
Terminal Building**

Members Present:

Clark Dexter, Chair
Robert Sutherland, Councilor
Rodney Thompson
Bill Hutwelker
Bob Bergevin
Peter Delaney
Joseph Bendzinski

Staff Present:

Jack Wozmak, Airport Manager
Beth Bendel, FBO
Ben Albert, Airport Maintenance

Members Not Present:

Mitch Greenwald, Councilor
Richard Kasper
Joseph Briggs

1) Call to Order

Chair Dexter called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

2) Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Bendzinski made a motion to approve the minutes of September 16, 2016, which was seconded by Mr. Thompson and carried unanimously.

3) Airport Manager's Report

Mr. Wozmak provided the following report to the Committee before the meeting:

1. The City Council has approved the grant funds for the design of the runway 14/32 reconstruction in the amount of approximately \$411,000.
2. Mr. Wozmak is working with an insurance broker to better manage insurance certificates for the planes that reside on the airport. He thinks management of certificates should be outsourced to a third party or a not-in-motion coverage should be included for all tenants as part of the rental agreement.
3. Mr. Wozmak has been working with the City's engineering staff to assemble a Capital Improvement Plan for the airport (CIP) that will include renovation of the

- two existing bathrooms as well as construction of a new bathroom and shower for visiting pilots and crew. In addition, the CIP plan will incorporate municipal water and sewer to the terminal building area to accommodate future development.
4. Conversations with Thomas Transportation continue with the goal of building a transportation center at the airport directly opposite the terminal building where there would be other retail/office space with Thomas Transportation as the anchor tenant. Good progress has been made.
 5. There will be a community meeting at the airport on November 5, from 8:30 to noon, to present the forest management plan to members of the neighborhood association and the broader community. The agenda will include a discussion session in the terminal building as well as field walks to various sections of the forestland around the airport.
 6. We have removed the former airline counters in the lobby and installed new carpeting and some used furniture to soften and redecorate the lobby area. We have begun painting the walls and made repairs to the front step areas.
 7. Airport staff conducted the visiting hours and funeral at the terminal building for Edwin C. Hopkins. There has been unprecedented cooperation between numerous agencies, including the CT National Guard, Civil Air Patrol, Monadnock Aviation, Swanzey Police and Fire, Keene Police and Fire, Cheshire County Sheriff's Office, the Flight Deck Restaurant, Fletcher and Foley Funeral Home, the local radio stations and newspapers, the American Legion, In the Company of Flowers, Syd's Carpet and Snooze Room, Keene Agway, the Chesterfield Fire Department, the Brattleboro Fire Department, the NH Governor's office and the offices of our congressional delegation, Airport staff Mike Moriarty, Ben Albert and Keith Atkins (who spend countless hours working on renovating the terminal and setting the stage for the funeral).
 8. The funeral planning and renovations have consumed a great deal of Mr. Wozmak's time that may delay the first draft of the marketing material he promised last month to be ready for this month. He hopes to have it finished in the coming weeks.
 9. We have worked through the waiting list for the t-hangars and are down to one potential tenant on the waiting list.
 10. We met with NH Department of Safety personnel to discuss CDL training/examination on the east side of the airport property and, in cooperation with NH DOT-FAA, we will continue to discuss this opportunity that could have significant benefit for local communities seeking to hire and train CDL drivers.
 11. We will likely have to remove the trees located in front of the terminal as they have grown to an extent that they are growing into the building and over the roof area. We are thinking that we will remove the trees as part of a general redecorating of the outside of the building that will also likely include new signage. More details later but this is just to scope out any difficulties with removing the trees and re-landscaping this area.

Mr. Wozmak welcomed any questions about his report. Mr. Thompson noted he prefers the Airport Manager's Report being sent to Committee members in advance of the monthly meeting.

Mr. Hutwelker asked, with regard to grant funding for runway 14/32, if the 40% difference between the projection and actual cost is common. Mr. Wozmak replied it may not be frequent or common, but it happens. Possible causes include the time lapse between drafting a cost projection and receiving the grant and going to bid. The FAA does request independent bid assessments to evaluate the pricing submitted. The bid package is then reviewed independently to validate the figures, particularly if there is a discrepancy. If there is a discrepancy, there is a process to consider the next bids in line until a reasonable one is found. Mr. Wozmak said in this case, the independent review by NH Aviation deemed it was reasonable because the figure was under the initial estimate.

Councilor Sutherland asked if the separate incidences of crashes at the airport have been resolved. Mr. Wozmak replied that all are resolved, cleared, and repaired with the exception of one plane which will be dismantled and removed in a few weeks.

Mr. Bergevin asked when the Committee members will have a more active role. Mr. Wozmak replied that there are things that will come before the Committee soon such as the Airport Master Plan, the first draft of the marketing report, and the transportation center. He said particularly for the transportation center, the timeline is to open for business next year but there are still private negotiations taking place. When all parties have agreed on their independent deals, the Committee will be more involved.

Councilor Sutherland noted that beyond the Town of Swanzey and the Keene City Council having to approve anything that moves forward at the airport, there are also sewer issues to consider in developing a transportation center. Mr. Wozmak replied yes, and he is putting together a typical CIP for the airport and has received estimates from Public Works, Engineering, etc. on the cost to run water and sewer down Route 32, into Edgewood, and to the airport. Also in the plan is upgrading bathrooms to ADA compliance. Mr. Wozmak said he does not have a sense from the developers that municipal sewer is essential for the transportation center; they could put in a septic system which may at some point receive connection if the municipal sewer system moves toward the airport; but he does not think relying on municipal sewer is a useful long-term plan.

Mr. Thompson asked if there have been changes to bus access on Route 32. Mr. Wozmak replied no, but as a part of his long-term economic plan for the airport, he hopes to reconfigure the signs at that intersection so that bigger trucks have a more comfortable turning radius. Thomas Transportation busses already access the airport from Route 32 without difficulty. The Southwest Regional Planning Commission conducted a traffic study which showed an approximately 10-13% shift in traffic from Route 32 to the Lake Street rotary. That report will go before the Board of Selectman in Swanzey to determine if they want to move forward with reorienting Route 32.

Chair Dexter asked the status of work with the PR company. Mr. Wozmak replied that because of the funeral the marketing report was not ready for this meeting, but he expects it to be ready for the next. The Committee agreed to move forward with marketing decisions as a Committee and not as the previous Marketing Sub-Committee.

Chair Dexter asked the status of the noise study. Mr. Wozmak replied that study is completed and those results will be included in the second environmental assessment.

Chair Dexter and Ms. Bendel noted that the airport phone lines have not been functioning properly for incoming calls. Mr. Wozmak will continue looking for a solution to that issue.

- 4) **Operations Manager's Report**
- 5) **Marketing Committee Report (Committee in Recess)**
- 6) **FBO Announcements**

Ms. Bendel stated that planes continue to come to Keene and there are many upcoming programs that can be found on the display monitors in the airport. Saturday, October 22 was the first drone operator ground school. She has already administered 10 drone exams in the airport's testing center. She is interested to see how many people follow through. Mr. Wozmak noted the airport receives three to four calls per month asking permission to operate a drone within five miles of the airport; five miles is the FAA regulation but smart drones automatically shut down within one mile of an airport.

Mr. Wozmak added that with the new restaurant, airport traffic has increased from approximately 100 people per week to over 1,000. Mr. Bergevin added that a pilot recently wrote an article about the restaurant for the NH Pilot's Association; he will bring that article to the next meeting.

Mr. Bendzinski asked if all hangars are rented with the increase in airport visitors and if hangar space could run out. Mr. Wozmak replied that he continues to work off the waiting list which continues to have turnover. He said if it gets to the point that the waiting list is quite long, the question of more hangars could come up. However, he thinks the waiting list will continue to suffice until that point.

Chair Dexter noted the City has increased the fee for the T-Hangar Association in their lease. Mr. Wozmak replied that was news to him but he anticipates that is the normal lease with a five-year or periodic CPI rent adjustment of the lease. Chair Dexter said he only asked because there is increased flooding on the north end of the property and hangars are seriously flooding in the winter months. He said he will be pushing the fees issue because he does not feel the City is adequately caring for that property. Mr. Thompson agreed, noting it is a hazard. Mr. Wozmak stated he does not know the origin of the flooding but he will try to have more answers about that at the next meeting. Councilor Sutherland noted that fee could have been negotiated prior to this year. The only fees the Council has voted on this year were related to cemetery fees. Chair Dexter noted his complaint is not about the fees, it is about charging a fee without responsibly

managing the property. Mr. Thompson added that if someone were to get hurt as a result of the flooding, the City could be sued.

Mr. Bergevin asked if all Committee members received information on the October 20 webinar. Only Mr. Hutwelker received that information and attended the webinar with Mr. Bergevin and Dr. Anne Shedd. Mr. Hutwelker noted this is a frequent activity and this one in particular was on sustainability.

7) Topics for Next Agenda

Mr. Thompson asked for an update on airport security. Mr. Wozmak replied they tried to add the pan/tilt/zoom camera but the FAA did not approve its location so it was moved further away; they are still using it to try to count traffic on Runway 02. No other cameras have been added since. Mr. Thompson asked if the system will be updated to cover the terminal buildings, hangar areas, etc. Mr. Wozmak replied there are cameras that monitor all parking areas, the fuel farm, outside the restaurant, and on all gates. Airport access is tracked by the cards used to open gates. The only area not monitored is the very south end of the property where there is little activity. Mr. Thompson asked how long that security information is stored for. Mr. Albert replied the cameras store information for a long time because they only record activity.

Ms. Bendel asked if there is good coverage of the ramp behind the terminal building or if that camera faces the fuel farm. Mr. Albert replied there are two cameras watching the ramp from two different angles. A damaged camera on the Green Hangar will be replaced soon which will give a broader view of the ramp. Mr. Wozmak added they are in the process of switching entirely from analog to digital cameras to have more detail.

Councilor Sutherland asked if there is back-up power for security purposes. Mr. Albert replied he does not think cameras away from the terminal building have back-up, but all gates are backed-up by battery.

Ms. Bendel noted at one point, Eversource wanted the airport to be an emergency location and in that case they were going to install a generator. Mr. Bergevin stated that emergency station has been moved to the Cheshire Fair Grounds.

John Dunnell of Swanzey asked if there has been any increased interest in the Alps Restaurant. Mr. Wozmak replied he has consistent interest but nothing has come from it yet. He had an inquiry from a church group which he is waiting for more details on. There has also been interest for a dog park and a smoke shop. Mr. Dunnell asked if the City still owns the old racetrack golf center. Mr. Wozmak replied yes, there is talk about what to do with the golf carts and the City is moving toward auctioning them. He is unsure of the history but does not think the City owned the property when it was designated for such a specific use.

Dwight Anderson of Swanzey noted that someone has been camping under the fire tower. Mr. Wozmak will look into that.

Chair Dexter stated it is becoming difficult for him, as Chair, to see minimal Committee participation. Councilor Sutherland replied that personally, he is waiting for the strategic plan to have a better understanding of requests and opportunities for review. He said it would be good to better understand what to expect in that report as well as a line-by-line assessment of the properties associated with the airport and which are core to operations. Mr. Wozmak replied a lot of that will come from marketing development and the Airport Master Plan. He hopes to have a draft of the Master Plan for the Committee in November.

Chair Dexter added he is struggling to involve people in the Committee and keep things moving. Mr. Thompson replied it is his feeling that it is not the Committee's job to just advise on things brought to their attention but to also bring questions for discussion. Mr. Delaney said he would like to commend the new process of receiving the Airport Manager's Report in advance of the meetings. Mr. Bergevin said he felt more involved in airport decisions before Mr. Wozmak became an active manager.

Chair Dexter encouraged everyone to attend the forestry presentation on November 5. He also hopes to see the marketing report at the next meeting. He added that there are two openings on this Committee, one regular membership and one alternate membership. He encouraged any Committee members with ideas to contact himself or Mayor Lane. Mr. Wozmak added he thinks the forestry management plan addresses every concern the neighbors have raised for many years. He said once City owned land is dealt with, he will work with private landowners to manage tree obstructions. He has begun working with the FAA to change the easement language so it is limited to merely obstruction removal.

Councilor Sutherland added that as the Committee discusses the transportation center, they should keep in mind the new Cheshire Rail Trail Bridge over Route 101 which could increase recreational traffic around the airport.

Mr. Delaney added that Yale University manages one of the oldest continuously managed forests in the country which is adjacent to airport property. He asked if the airport has spoken with those forest managers. Mr. Wozmak replied that in general, the airport plan is being created by the same people and the cooperative extension has offered to let the airport use their forests as examples of good forest management.

Mr. Hutwelker asked Mr. Wozmak if access to the webinar series offered at City Hall can be obtained for the Committee. He said they had some good ideas focused on creating a hub for green technology and industry in Cheshire County. Mr. Wozmak agreed to speak with Phil Suter about that.

Topics for next agenda include:

- A restaurant update (if Tracey would like)
- The hangar flooding problem/ asphalt on runway 14/32
- Airport Master Plan

AAC Meeting Minutes
October 21, 2016

Hearing no further business, Chair Dexter adjourned the meeting at 9:46 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker