

**City of Keene**  
***New Hampshire***

**AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Friday, May 15, 2015**

**8:30 am**

**Airport Terminal Building**

**Members Present:**

Doug Green, Chair  
Clark Dexter  
Robert Bergevin  
Rod Thompson  
Kevin Provost  
Peter Delaney (arrived at 8:36 AM)  
Bill Hutwelker

**Members Not Present:**

Kris Roberts, Councilor  
Richard Kasper

**Staff Present:**

City Manager John MacLean  
Ed Mattern, Airport Director  
Mike Moriarty, Airport Maintenance and  
Operations Manager

**Others Present:**

George Trahan

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Approval of Minutes – April 17, 2015**

Mr. Bergevin made a motion to approve the minutes of April 17, 2015. Mr. Hutwelker seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

**3. Request To Assign Lease – George Trahan**

Chair Green stated that George Trahan is here with a request to assign a lease. He continued that he needs to recuse himself because he represents Mr. Trahan and is familiar with the transaction.

Mr. Trahan stated that he has owned this hangar for 28 years. He continued that he does not need it now, and wants Jason Horne to buy it.

Mr. Bergevin asked if it will be used as an aircraft hangar. Mr. Trahan replied yes.

Mr. Mattern stated that the new tenant may seek to renew the lease agreement under his name and extend the term. He continued that there is about one year remaining. Based on his understanding of what they are doing he thinks that seeking an extension on the land lease term is appropriate.

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Chair Green asked if they have to approve the transfer of the building or if they have to ask the City Manager to negotiate a new lease. Mr. Mattern replied that the City has to grant permission for any kind of assignment and that will not be unreasonably withheld. His recommendation is for the AAC, if they are so inclined, to make a recommendation to City Council to authorize the assignment and renegotiation of the lease agreement with Mr. Horne.

Mr. Bergevin made a motion for the Airport Advisory Commission to recommend to the City Council that they authorize the assignment and renegotiation of the lease agreement with Jason Horne. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion.

Mr. Hutwelker asked what the remaining term is. Mr. Mattern replied about a year. Mr. Hutwelker asked if that is typical. Mr. Mattern replied that they typically have been renewing the leases for 5 or 10 years. They are close to route 32. It is unlikely that if the buildings were removed there could be a better use of the land. The best use is as they are. Someone who buys it wants a longer term to recoup their investment.

The motion passed by a vote of 6 to 0. Chair Green abstained.

### **3. Public Relations and Marketing – Idea Generation**

Chair Green stated that last month there was a lengthy discussion about public relations and marketing. He continued that someone asked what had been done in the past. In response, the agenda packet includes the document from September of 2010 with the Marketing and Development Subcommittee's ideas. Since then, money has been put in the City budget to promote the airport. The first question is how to utilize that money.

Mr. Delaney arrived at 8:36 AM.

Beth Bendel, of Monadnock Aviation, stated that she has ideas on how to spend the money. She continued that one of the most frequent questions she gets is what the airport's address is. GPS takes you down into the woods. At least twice a week she has people asking where 80 Airport Road is. A sign saying the address would be a great place to start.

Mr. Mattern stated that it is a good idea to think about the installation of a welcome sign and directory, including the address, at the corner where you enter the airport. He continued that that, in addition to some landscaping, would be a very welcome addition. Mr. Thompson replied that there is no room to do anything in the entranceway other than what is there. He continued that they would have to get involved with Swanzey and the State to widen the entrance. Mr. Mattern replied that he is talking about the raised ground outside the fenceline right where you enter the parking lot. Mr. Thompson replied that he was talking about the entrance.

Mr. Bergevin suggested that the City, if they make their own street signs, make one saying "80 Airport Road." He continued that the City could do that for them. The City Manager stated that the \$3,000 in the budget for airport promotion should be used for something like partnering with marketing with the FBO, not this sign – this sign is something they should be doing anyway. He continued that he will talk with Mr. Mattern now that he knows there is a problem. Chair Green

agreed. The City Manager replied that he will send some sketches back with Mr. Mattern to see if the AAC is okay with the sign and they will go forward with it.

Chair Green asked for thoughts on spending money on reconstructing the entrance sign. Discussion continued. Mr. Thompson reiterated that they need to work within the footprint that is already there. Chair Green stated that the sign is antiquated looking. Mr. Moriarty spoke of how the sign would need to be refitted with new bulbs because the kind it has now are no longer being sold. The City Manager spoke of a group working on public murals, as an offshoot of Arts Alive - maybe they could give design ideas. He gave more information about it. Chair Green asked if he will talk with Mr. Mattern about these ideas. The City Manager replied yes.

Mr. Thompson stated that several months ago he and Mr. Bergevin attended a meeting at the library where the FAA introduced plans to identify airports in the area. He continued that they had a brochure, still in the production stage, but he has not heard anything about that since. It was a complete marketing program that they were coming up with for this airport and other airports in the area.

Mr. Mattern replied that the FAA provided the State with a grant to update their System Plan for all airports in the state. He continued that as a component they had funding to produce brochures on each airport's value and offerings. The brochures should be completed and given to airports in the next two weeks or so. Mr. Thompson replied that he was impressed by the concept and having a brochure like that would be significant. Chair Green stated that it is a question of how they distribute the brochures, to maximize them.

Mr. Mattern passed around a copy of the executive summary that shows an example of what the brochure will look like. AAC members spoke positively about the brochure and discussion ensued about how to best get it out to people.

Mr. Delaney asked what the criteria were for that, such as airport size. Mr. Mattern replied that it is a master plan for all of the airports in the state. They looked at the demand for aviation-related services statewide, resources available to satisfy the demands, and the economic impact of each airport on the surrounding communities; did interviews with businesses around the airports; and created an inventory of the assets available. It was designed to be used for planning purposes and for the next ten years or so to identify opportunities. It is broad ranging and took a lot of time and money.

Mr. Thompson stated that they went into the impact the airport has on the community, how much money is brought in because of the airport, how many people came in front out of town, etc. He continued that the research was very extensive. He was impressed by it – it shows the value of the airport. Right now they do not have a way of showing people the value of the airport.

Chair Greens stated that they had an economic analysis done [about three] years ago and it showed that the airport brings in 6.2 million dollars, which is an attractive number they need to get out there for the public. Mr. Mattern stated that they interviewed himself, Ms. Bendel, people from C&S, and others.

The City Manager stated that public relations and marketing are two different things. He continued that it is important to have a public relations piece. To be effective with marketing they have to level the playing field and create a partnership with the Town of Swanzey. Corporations considering coming to the airport want to see an inviting environment where two communities are working well together and that they have assistance, such as a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. They will have to work with the Town about that. He spoke more about how TIF districts work, and of the successful ones they already have, such as the Railroad Street area. The City Manager continued that they will have to go out there with the brochures and target specific businesses. The City cannot battle with the neighbors and also market with the airport at the same time. The airport has to get along with its neighbors so people wanting to come here will see that the community has a good relationship with the airport.

Chair Green stated that Mr. Hutwelker is a Swanzey Selectman. He asked how to get a dialogue going with the Town of Swanzey about a TIF district. Mr. Hutwelker replied that he has talked with the City Manager in the past and there was dissention previously between the two communities but they have overcome a lot of it and will continue to move forward. He continued that the Town recognizes that their success is pivotal on success at the airport and that their development is intertwined with Keene's. He has conversations with people about how instead of trying to pull from Keene and gain from Keene's loss, they need to work together so everyone gains. Most communities in Cheshire County have active economic development committees and they are all after the same thing. They need to get the legislators on board. Swanzey working with Keene is in Swanzey's interest.

Chair Green asked if Swanzey has an economic development committee and if they should have a liaison. Mr. Hutwelker replied yes, he is on it. He continued that it would be good to have AAC members coming to their meetings, and to the upcoming ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Safford Drive project. Chair Green asked Mr. Hutwelker to give more information about the Safford Drive project. Mr. Hutwelker replied that it was the first TIF district in the state, in about 1998 or 1999. He continued that he thinks the Town would be very interested in working with the City to create a TIF district here.

Chair Green asked if the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) helped. The City Manager replied that it was done with Jack Dugan. He continued that the best way to do this would be to extend the existing TIF district. They would have to ask, or at least advise, the County and school district. He explained how taxes generated in a TIF district go not to the County and school district, but for a very specific purpose that is defined before the area in the TIF district is developed. Taxes go to the Town to pay down indebtedness and are used for infrastructure. They could also consider Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), which they would be eligible for since the development would create jobs. There are lots of ways to be creative with financing and attract corporate interests. Corporations will want to be supported through those kinds of incentives. They can be careful with who they bring in - businesses that are compatible and would not upset the neighbors.

Chair Green asked how hard it would be to expand the TIF district to this side of Route 32. The City Manager replied that he does not know - they would have to talk with the Town and the attorneys about that. Mr. Hutwelker stated that the TIF district is on this side; it extends right up

to the airport property. Chair Green stated that they thought they had an opportunity to have a corporate hangar built but that stalled for a number of reasons and never happened. He asked, if the TIF district was extended onto airport property, could they utilize that to entice a corporate jet here? The City Manager replied that they would have to research that. Mr. Mattern replied that as he understands it, if there was a new structure there would be a new sewer line installed, extending down this road and picking up multiple locations, including the new structure. That might be something that would be funded through the TIF district. But he is not sure the construction of a private hangar would apply. Chair Green replied that the FAA says it has to be aviation-related; it cannot be a private office building or something. Mr. Mattern replied that the Airport Layout Plan shows areas that are not necessarily required to be aviation-use. He continued that the City purchased the plans and used the plans to construct the T hangar when they did the runway last year. They made it as easy as they possibly could for a private individual to come build on that site.

Chair Green asked if the corporate park on Safford Drive is all committed. Mr. Hutwelker replied no. Chair Green stated that marketing to get the word out that there is property available seems like a natural, symbiotic relationship that Keene and Swanzey can have. He continued that the brochure coming out in a couple weeks will be great timing. They could distribute those at the ribbon-cutting. Mr. Hutwelker asked if the airport will have a table there. Mr. Mattern replied that they can do that.

Chair Green asked about the ad hoc committee that [Emile Legere] put together, regarding developing land close to the airport, which petered out. Mr. Mattern replied that Mr. Legere did preliminary investigation into the soil types, to see if wetlands existed, but the engineering evaluation would have cost a significant amount of money and never happened. The City Manager stated that this was Mr. Legere's initiative, not the City's. He continued that at that time Mr. Legere was saying every acre was developable and the City did not agree. He spoke more about how and why Mr. Legere's idea never got off the ground.

Chair Green summarized that the things they can try and do to start enhancing the airport are: look into having the Arts Alive group give ideas about how to enhance the entrance; utilize the marketing brochure that is coming out; and attend the ribbon-cutting for the Town of Swanzey's corporate park on Safford Drive in a couple weeks.

The City Manager stated that he doubts that they could ever extend Airport Drive into property outside the airport. He continued that the environmental issues there are extensive. He does not want anyone to worry about this possibility because it will not work.

Mr. Provost suggested integration with local colleges like River Valley or KSC, which are a big part of the local economy. He spoke of the value of utilizing students who have interests in, say, website building or sign design. Chair Green replied that a couple years ago they had Architecture students from KSC give ideas for the terminal and other areas of the airport. He continued that five years ago the Marketing & Development Subcommittee recommended the airport have its own independent website and that is a good idea. Mr. Provost replied that there can be significant cost, and if a student does it, both the airport and the student benefit.

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Discussion continued about this idea, and Mr. Provost agreed to try and talk with someone at one of the colleges.

Mr. Moriarty stated that regarding the entrance sign, it would be good to have a digital one so they can constantly change the marketing on it, announce events, and so on and so forth. Discussion ensued.

Chair Green stated that the AAC no longer has a Marketing & Development Subcommittee. He asked if anyone would volunteer. The City Manager stated that Mr. Hutwelker and Ms. Bendel should be on it. He continued that Mr. Mattern should be associated with it and should go with Mr. Provost to any meetings with people from KSC or River Valley. Chair Green agreed that Mr. Hutwelker and Ms. Bendel would be great. The City Manager stated that the City can provide some staff support. Mr. Hutwelker replied that that would be helpful. Chair Green asked Mr. Provost to be on that committee also and he agreed. The City Manager asked for other volunteers. Discussion ensued. Chair Green stated that they will start with Mr. Hutwelker, Mr. Provost, and Ms. Bendel. He asked them to organize it and have a meeting to further define what they talked about today and other ideas that come up and talk about the template from five years ago.

#### **4. Airport Master Plan Update – Airport Director**

Mr. Mattern reported that as discussed last month they had the first Planning Advisory meeting. He continued that it did not go as well as hoped. People were wondering what it really entailed. Some people have no aviation background and have never seen an Airport Master Plan and had wrong assumptions. They will take a step back and go at it a little differently. They are involving additional people and when they have a public input session they will have a facilitator. The next meeting is May 21. It will be a very in-depth tour of the airport so people who do not have aviation experience and knowledge can get a better understanding, as a basis for discussions at future meetings. They are not on a particular time frame. They just want to make sure their efforts are focused and result in a good product.

Mr. Hutwelker asked if he missed a meeting. Mr. Mattern replied no, there was just one. Mr. Hutwelker asked what caused them to back up. Mr. Mattern replied that many people came out of the meeting scratching their heads. He continued that it is because the consultants do these master plans all the time and there is a set process that the FAA uses, but Keene is trying to push the limits to include other things that involve a business plan, marketing, and the use of the terminal, which a typical master plan would have nothing to do with. They are going forward with this approach and want to end up with a plan used as much as the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) is. Years after completion the CMP is discussed every time development conversations occur. They want the same thing to happen with the Airport Master Plan. Mr. Bergevin added that some people at the meeting knew that airplanes come in and out of the airport but that is all they knew and needed more information.

#### **5. Airport Director's Report**

##### **a) Hangar/Office RFP**

Mr. Mattern reported that regarding the hangar and office that Green River Aviation is in, the City has issued a new Request for Proposals (RFP), with proposals due by June 10. He

continued that they will be evaluated and a recommendation will be made to the Finance, Organization, and Personnel (FOP) Committee. Chair Green replied that he saw that in the newspaper.

**b) SRE Grant**

Mr. Mattern reported that they are applying for a grant to replace the 22-year-old snow blower. He continued that they received three bids. All three were non-compliant regarding EPA engine compliance. They are reformatting the specifications and will re-issue soon. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) gave them a deadline but it was extended to July 1, which was good news. They hope that next time the bids are in compliance and it can be funded.

Chair Green asked if airports do anything to get the advantage of group buying of equipment. Mattern replied that the City does belong to some joint purchasing groups but the difficulty is that these programs cannot certify that they are in compliance with the Federal code of regulations that the airport is obligated to comply with.

**c) Mount Caesar Beacon**

Mr. Mattern reported that at the last meeting the AAC recommended that the Cheshire County Sheriff's Department be given a license to use the Mount Caesar Beacon. He continued that they had a meeting and found that there were additional opportunities for the Police Department of Swanzey to use it, too, for emergency communications. It would have been quite convoluted for the Town to give the City a license to locate the beacon and the City to give the Town a license to locate their antenna, so they decided to do an inter-municipal agreement instead. They got advice from the Planning, Licenses, and Development (PLD) Committee, and that committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to negotiate and execute this inter-municipal agreement. The City Council will decide on Thursday.

**d) New England Aerobatic Club**

Mr. Mattern stated that the New England Aerobatic Club (NEAC) was scheduled to be here tomorrow but decided that the weather is too iffy. He continued that they will try June 20 instead. They had a number of conditions on the issuance of the license. One was that they would invite the neighbors to attend their safety briefing and to help them understand what they are doing and how. They are still planning that for June 20 and will send out a notice so people know they are not flying tomorrow.

**e) Restaurant**

Mr. Mattern asked Mr. Hutwelker to talk about the restaurant. Mr. Hutwelker replied that there was a hiccup. He continued that the City thought the restaurant owners he was talking with were interested in doing business at the airport in late summer or early fall, but then they said May of next year. He is continuing to talk with them, as well as an event planner and caterer, and other people who are helpful resources. The good that came of this is an understanding of how much support there is to help people with a restaurant.

Mr. Bergevin asked if the hangar and office space that the City is requesting proposals for is leased out now. Mr. Mattern replied that it is being used (by Green River Aviation) under the

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expired agreement. He continued that there is not a current agreement. Mr. Bergevin asked if it being used, because people have gone there and it has been locked up. Mr. Mattern replied that the administrative building was primarily being used for flight instruction and he thinks that instructor got a permanent job elsewhere. The City Manager asked if they are paying for the space regardless of use. Mr. Mattern replied that he will check with the Finance Department but he thinks they are current with their payments.

Chair Green stated that the next meeting is June 19, at 8:30 AM.

**6. Announcements**

None.

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 AM.

Respectfully submitted by  
Britta Reida, Minute-taker

Reviewed by  
Ed Mattern, Airport Director