

City of Keene
New Hampshire

AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Friday, March 17, 2017

8:30 AM

Dillant-Hopkins Airport Terminal

Members Present:

Clark Dexter, Chair
Robert Bergevin
Bill Hutwelker
Rodney Thompson
Joseph Bendzinski
Peter Delaney
Mitch Greenwald, Councilor

Staff Present:

Jack Wozmak, Airport Manager
Mike Moriarty, Airport Maintenance &
Operations Foreman
Ben Albert, Airport Maintenance

Monadnock Aviation

Beth Bendel, FBO

Members Not Present:

Robert Sutherland, Councilor
Fred Happ

1) Call to Order

Chair Dexter called the meeting to order at 8:32 AM.

2) Approval of February Minutes

Ms. Bendel noted it would be more appropriate for her to not be listed as City staff on the minutes.

Mr. Bergevin made a motion to approve the minutes of February 17, 2017 as amended, which was seconded by Mr. Bendzinski and carried unanimously.

3) Airport Manager's Report

a. Updates on:

- i. Transportation Center**
- ii. Marketing PR**
- iii. Master Plan**
- iv. Tree Harvesting**

Mr. Wozmak reported:

1. The City Manager confirmed the Chair position of the AAC is determined by a vote of the AAC.

Mr. Bergevin made a motion for Clark Dexter to remain as Chair of the AAC. Mr. Bendzinski seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

2. House Bill 124, which would repeal most aircraft registration fees was voted as “ought to pass” by the Transportation Committee of the House. It is presently in the Ways and Means Committee and is scheduled to come out of that Committee with a recommendation on March 16. Repealing these registration fees will make NH more marketable for jet registrations. Still, if Ways and Means does not find a method of recovering the \$1 million in revenue from registration fees, the NHDOT Division of Aeronautics as well as over \$15,000 in airport revenue will be lost. As of March 13, this bill has been retained in committee which essentially means it is dead.
3. Mr. Wozmak submitted his budget to the City Manager and while the numbers are essentially level-funded from an operating perspective, he has sought guidance on supplementing airport personnel budget. There is need to consistently staff two part-time positions currently on the books. He presented a memo in the meeting packet that supports converting two “seasonal” employees to two full-time employees. The airport is currently very understaffed and Mr. Wozmak is working to underscore the need the airport will have as it meets development success.
4. There are an increasing number of licensed drones operating in the region and all have been very compliant with contacting the airport for permission to operate within five miles of the airport.
5. Mr. Wozmak received positive feedback from the NHDOT regarding the non-aeronautical use of the APLS (Hillside Plaza) building by the Christian Life Fellowship in Swanzey. He submitted the formal request on March 16 and forwarded it to the City Manager (who, if approved, will negotiate the lease) and City Council.
6. The City Council appointed Frederick Haap, III as the newest member of the AAC. He will be at the April meeting.
7. The airport has agreed to host a fundraiser for the Hundred Nights’ Shelter in the form of the annual “Touch-a-Truck” exhibition.
8. Mr. Hutwelker had a real estate showing for the go-cart and mini golf areas and that showing went well. Mr. Wozmak will share updates if the tenant is viable.
9. Meetings continue with City legal staff to re-write all airport leases, backing away from “annual” leases and moving toward leases that automatically renew with a built in rent increase factor. This will save substantial labor hours processing nearly 50 leases each year.
10. The tree clearing is done, for the most part, save the area that continues to be part of the lawsuit. The area between the terminal building and the SRE building will be stumped (March/April) as the final stage preparing this area for development. This could be an excellent development site for a hangar.

11. As noted previously in discussion of marketing and development, now that a few projects such as the tree clearing and Airport Master Plan are in the final stage, Mr. Wozmak has begun researching companies suitable for marketing outreach. To develop this list, he spent many hours reading about each company, their annual reports, SEC filings, websites, and publications in order to make a focused marketing letter that aligns with their business interests or stated goals. This month, the following companies/entities received marketing packages:
 - a. **TVPX Trust Services** – provides aircraft acquisition and registration service for a variety of clients that do not want to go through the hassle of registration and FAA requirements. Aircraft registered to this company visit this airport from time to time.
 - b. **Wheels Up** – a private charter aircraft company that created a unique membership-based private aviation network and they visit this airport frequently.
 - c. **Tradewinds Aviation** – frequent visitors to Keene, they operate out of Oxford, CT, Westchester County, and San Juan with private charter jet services.
 - d. **Air General** – one of the fastest growing air freight companies in the US with a corporate office in Portsmouth, NH.
 - e. **FedEx Ground** – a well-known name in the movement of goods out of Coraopolis, PA.
 - f. **FedEx Express** – the NYC counterpart to FedEx Ground. FedEx has over 500 jets to move goods and 248 of these planes are Cessna 208's which would be a good fit for Keene.
 - g. **XPO Logistics** – a fast-growing freight-forward entity nationally and internationally. They bought the former Con-Way Trucking in Westminster, VT and have offices around the country.
 - h. **The Port Authority of New York/ New Jersey** – the port authority of these two states oversees a massive number of planes, trains, and automobiles as they track congestion and traffic patterns throughout aging (1960s) infrastructure. Key to alleviating congestion is the development of more capacity to move goods.
 - i. **Honda Aircraft** – this company recently built headquarters in Greensboro, NC and was recently given FAA approval to build the new HondaJet. However, their current location (Piedmont International Airport) has a shortage of available land as well as increased congestion.
 - j. **Greyhound Bus Lines**
 - k. **A local car rental agency** – with a goal toward layering competition as opposed to direct competition. A regional transportation center would have multiple transportation entities in one location.
 - i. Ms. Bendel asked to be kept aware of this progress as Monadnock Aviation is transitioning from Avis to Enterprise and is developing a strong relationship with them.
 - l. **Enterprise Car Rental** – they are increasing their profile at the airport currently and new signage is ordered.

12. In April, or sooner, Mr. Wozmak will develop ad copy for newspaper and other periodicals to regionally (Nashua, Manchester, Burlington, etc.) announce that Keene airport is open for business.
13. As the issue of trees and aviation easements continues, there will be discussion of efforts over time to secure aviation easements on some parcels of privately owned land. The approach to this process is as follows:
 - a. Any property owner can, at their own expense, remove trees on their own property. This would not require that an easement be obtained.
 - b. The City of Keene, at its own expense, can ask permission from a private property owner to remove trees that are obstructions to aviation. This would not require that an easement be obtained. This merely requires permission from the property owner.
 - c. The City of Keene, using federal and state funds, could remove trees on private property. This *would* require an easement. The property owner would consent to this easement and be paid fair market value for this easement.
 - d. Federal and state funds may only be used for the purchase of easements where there are trees that are obstructions to aviation.
 - e. The City of Keene has plans to identify those private properties that currently have trees that are obstructions to aviation and will initiate conversations with those property owners to remove trees using one of the options above.
 - f. Fair market value for purchasing aviation easements is determined by an independent, qualified real estate appraiser at no expense to the private property owner.

End of Airport Manager's Report.

Mr. Delaney asked how close the airport is to complying with the FAA on obstructions and if there is a time frame for when that work has to be completed. Mr. Wozmak replied he is not aware of a timeframe and the airport will not lose opportunities if it takes time. The Precision Approach Pathway Indicator (PAPI) lights are turned off right now because there are trees as obstructions and the lights are due for replacement. The airport will not get funding for new lights until the trees are removed because they cannot be used with obstructions. So, trees can interfere with grant funding in some ways. Councilor Greenwald noted a viral video of snow coming off trees when a jet lands/takes off and noted it could be a good marketing strategy to show how cutting is for safety.

Mr. Bergevin asked if stakeholders will present relevant projects to the AAC as they move forward. Mr. Wozmak replied that it is his intention that groups he is reaching out to for marketing will come to this Committee for feedback. He hopes to keep developing that list over time and continuing to send out marketing packets.

Chair Dexter asked the status of discussions with Thomas Transportation. Mr. Wozmak replied the owner came with their broker from the Norwood Group and after years of tepid conversations, the conversations really picked because the land is clear of trees.

There is a much higher level of interest now that they can imagine space for a development. The Norwood Group continues to work with Thomas to design and price a building. If something financially viable comes from the next steps, Mr. Wozmak will begin negotiations with the City about terms of a land lease, packages, etc.

Chair Dexter asked the status of the Airport Master Plan (AMP). Mr. Wozmak replied there will be another AMP Committee meeting in early April to get comments on the final draft of the AMP which is currently being reviewed by staff. There will be a subsequent public information session on the final draft in May. The plan will then be presented to City Council in June/July after which it will be referred to the PLD and MSFI Committee's and then back to Council. There is a current pathway for the AMP to pass through review. Mr. Wozmak and Chair Dexter will determine a time for the AAC to hear about the final draft.

Ms. Bendel suggested including updates on activity of airport businesses (The Flight Deck, Monadnock Aviation, etc.) in the Airport Manager's Report. Mr. Wozmak and the Committee agreed with that idea.

Chair Dexter noted the marketing subcommittee has been dissolved and asked if it should reconvene again or if the Committee should continue as is. Mr. Wozmak replied that ultimately this whole groups hears about it all anyway. Councilor Greenwald agreed it could give this Committee more to contribute. Mr. Thompson shared an FAA marketing manual with Mr. Wozmak and will develop a synopsis for the Committee. He said marketing should be a mutual plan that includes the Committee. Chair Dexter noted that developing a marketing plan is a part of this Committee's charge. Mr. Wozmak said from his point of view they need a simple plan to identify and reach companies of interest. Councilor Greenwald noted the Economic Development Committee's observations and implementation efforts as well as the new Downtown Revitalization Committee. He thinks the AAC needs input but is unsure if that is a need for a professional marketing consultant. Mr. Wozmak agreed it is good to synergize with other efforts in the City like the Economic Development Committee. He added that airport economic development is also connected to Swnazey. Mr. Delaney suggested staying as a Committee for 30 minutes after each regular meeting to discuss marketing with Mr. Wozmak; the Committee agreed. Councilor Greenwald also suggested inviting Ms. Bendel and Ms. Keating.

4) FBO Announcements

Ms. Bendel said that business is still strong in all aspects; hangars are 100% filled and the flight school is operating at summertime levels. Jets are coming in and the rental business is strong. She has many seminars and events coming up, all of which have been well-attended lately. They will be hosting a Back to Basics series for pilots all over the region to brush up on fundamental piloting skills; this is being advertised through the FAA. Ms. Bendel has been asked by the FSDO of the FAA to consider being an FAA Safety Team member; she is considering it. Ms. Bendel also complimented the work of

AAC Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2017

Mr. Moriarty and Mr. Albert, despite being understaffed; Keene was one of the first airports in the state open after the last snow storm.

Mr. Bergevin asked if the EAA Young Eagles Program still comes to the airport. Ms. Bendel replied no, there has been a problem with pilot volunteers for several years. Mr. Bergevin also asked about the WINGS program which Ms. Bendel said continues as part of the FAA safety program.

Mr. Moriarty and Mr. Wozmak reported that the restaurant is doing well and hosting regular, very busy events.

- 5) **Next Meeting – April 21, 2017**
- 6) **Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Dexter adjourned the meeting at 9:23 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker