

City of Keene
New Hampshire

AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Friday, March 18, 2016

8:30 am

Airport Terminal Building

Members Present:

Clark Dexter, Chair
Robert Sutherland, Councilor
Robert Bergevin
Rodney Thompson
Joseph Bendzinski

Members Not Present:

Peter Delaney
Bill Hutwelker
Richard Kasper
Joseph Briggs

Staff Present:

Mike Moriarty, Airport Maintenance and
Operations Foreman
Ben Albert, Airport
Rebecca Landry, Assistant City
Manager/IT Director
Kürt Blomquist, Public Works Director
Don Lussier, City Engineer
Jack Wozmack, Airport Manager, Interim
Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Director
Andrew Bohannon (arrived at 9:06 AM)

1) Call to Order

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

2) Roll Call

Roll call was conducted. Chair Dexter stated that they have always had two alternates. He continued that Councilor Greenwald is an alternate for the City Council. They barely have a quorum of five today and they really need the two alternates. He hopes the Mayor gives two alternates in addition to the alternate to the City Council.

3) Approval of Minutes – February 26, 2016

Mr. Bendzinski made a motion to approve the minutes of February 26, 2016, which was seconded by Councilor Sutherland. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

4) Airport Director's Report

Ms. Landry reported that there are encouraging things happening. She introduced Jack Wozmak, who is the new contract Airport Manager. She continued that he brings a lot of experience. He was with the County for many years, and more recently, the State. The AAC will be seeing a lot of Mr. Wozmak from this point forward.

a) Restaurant

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
March 18, 2016

Ms. Landry reported that they are waiting on a signature on the final draft of the airport restaurant lease, and they are feeling good about where it is now. The agreement calls for the lessee to be in the building by April 1 and to start serving the public by May 1. Whether/which improvements will be done by the City or lessee will be mapped out. She gave examples of such improvements, including an outdoor patio of some sort. Councilor Sutherland asked for more information about the type of deck or patio. Ms. Landry replied that it has not been decided yet and they will work on it later, in the interest of getting the tenant in quickly. Mr. Bergevin asked if the jets will be a problem, regarding the outdoor seating. Ms. Landry replied that they will figure that out and come back to the AAC with more information. Mr. Moriarty spoke of the benefits of and possibilities for a deck or patio. Beth Bendel, of Monadnock Aviation, asked that a lock be put on the inside gate so people cannot go on the airport ramp. Ms. Landry replied that staff will talk with her and come up with a solution.

b) Hangars

Ms. Landry reported that there is a person interested in the “taxiway to nowhere” hangar and they are near the point of being able to start negotiations. They just need a little more information to go through the FAA approval process. Another party is interested in building a T hangar of his own so he can have heat and water. That discussion is moving forward.

Mr. Thompson asked where these people are coming from all of a sudden. Mr. Moriarty replied that one is a current tenant and the other has done a substantial amount of business with the airport. He continued that a lot of it is coincidence, but also, people are seeing a new vibe at the airport. Ms. Bendel stated that these people are also clients and associates of Monadnock Aviation who is always getting the word out and bringing business in. Ms. Landry replied that that is acknowledged and appreciated.

c) Discussion of Airport Master Plan

Ms. Landry reported that the Master Plan public input session a couple nights ago, the first of three or four, had great attendance from the local community, the neighborhood, and people involved with the airport. There is a survey that people, including the AAC members, are encouraged to complete. It is available on the website, and Chair Dexter distributed hard copies.

Dwight Anderson, of 103 Greenwood Ave., stated that at the public input session, figures were given about the number of employees, wages, and economic impact of the airport. He asked if someone could repeat those figures. Ms. Landry replied that a document on the State’s and FAA’s website has the numbers. She continued that she will put it on the airport website. Chair Dexter replied that he can talk with Mr. Anderson after the meeting, too.

d) Other

Ms. Landry reported that the New England Aerobatics Club (NEAC) approached the City Council for permission to be at the airport in May and June. She continued that the request was referred to the Planning, Licenses, and Development (PLD) Committee, and they will discuss it at the meeting on Wednesday at 7:00 PM. She does not know if the committee will make a decision that night or if it will take more time.

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
March 18, 2016

Chair Dexter asked how many days they want. Ms. Landry replied that the letter was just a general request for 2016. Mr. Moriarty replied that he can get the dates.

Mr. Bergevin stated that this is one of two items he has heard this morning that should have first come to the AAC for a recommendation. He continued that he does not remember the AAC talking to the NEAC members this year; that was last year. Chair Dexter replied that last year the AAC recommended five days. Ms. Landry replied that Mr. Bergevin is right. She continued that the PLD Committee will want a recommendation from the AAC. If they are not prepared today to make a recommendation, they can ask the PLD Committee to put it on more time. The dates the NEAC has set are May 28 and July 9.

Chair Dexter asked AAC members if they have feedback about the NEAC being at the airport for two days. Hearing no response, he asked for public feedback.

Mr. Anderson stated that he is opposed. He continued that he has not surveyed, but most people in the approximately 300 houses and 100 apartments within a mile of the airport are opposed.

Mr. Thompson stated that his purpose here at the AAC is to promote aviation. He continued that this is the best facility in the area for the NEAC to practice in. It is only for a couple days, it is a fun sport to watch, and he is all in favor, as long as they stay within the parameters that are set.

Sarah Louder, of 215 Scotland Rd., Winchester, stated that she was once a neighbor of the airport and always enjoyed it. She knew she bought her home near the airport and she liked it.

Councilor Sutherland stated that he presumes the NEAC would be flying during daylight hours, and not too early or late.

Ms. Bendel stated that the NEAC did not know they would be discussed today and no NEAC representatives are present. She continued that these men are aviation professionals. They are receptive to community needs to the extent they can be. They welcome neighbors to be a part of their briefing. They are willing to show their planes and sometimes give rides. They limit their hours so it is not too early or late. They practice just in the southwest quadrant which is much less populated. From her perspective as a business owner it is an economically advantageous situation. They buy fuel and sometimes need maintenance. They also sometimes stay in area hotels, eat at restaurants in town, and so on and so forth.

Rick Horton, from Winchester, stated that the future of the airport hinges on people being able to use the facility. He continued that putting a restaurant in and inviting the NEAC here reinforces that this is a destination. He thinks they should support any aviation activity here at the airport.

Ms. Landry stated that she told the NEAC about the City Council process, but did not specifically tell them about this meeting this morning. She sent a notice to the surrounding neighborhood, to the best of her ability, regarding this being on the PLD Committee agenda.

Mr. Bergevin stated that he has heard the NEAC's presentation a number of times, and in his opinion, they stick to what they say they will do.

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
March 18, 2016

Mr. Bergevin made a motion for the Airport Advisory Commission to recommend that the Planning, Licenses, and Development Committee accept the New England Aerobatics Club's request and let them fly at the Dillant-Hopkins Airport. Mr. Bendzinski seconded the motion.

Mr. Moriarty stated that he was the first person notified about the request. He continued that because of the changes going on at the airport and the lack of an Airport Director he was not aware of the process exactly. They have had success with the NEAC over the past several years. They are great communicators and respectful. He apologizes for having to fast track this.

John Norris, of Central St., stated that the NEAC's minimum altitude is about half a mile off the ground, which reduces the noise level. He continued that the noise level is only intense when they climb out momentarily. He thinks the base of the box is 3,000 feet.

Ms. Landry read a portion of an email from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) out loud, which states that coordination between the parties is required. Getting the AAC's or PLD Committee's blessing is only part of the process.

Mr. Anderson stated that last year when they moved the box further south and higher it made a huge difference. A couple times the planes strayed from the box.

Councilor Sutherland asked if the AAC would be making a recommendation subject to approval from the FAA. Ms. Landry replied yes, the City looks to the FAA as the authority figure. Councilor Sutherland asked if there are requirements for notifying abutters. Ms. Landry replied that she will look into that. It is nice to do as a common courtesy.

Mr. Anderson stated that last year (former Airport Director) Mr. Mattern said that the NEAC cannot advertise the event because that would make it an air show. Mr. Bendzinski asked if notifying is different than advertising. Ms. Landry replied that she will look into it.

Mr. Moriarty asked if the box is the same as for air shows. Ms. Bendel replied no. Mr. Moriarty stated that an aircraft performing aerobatics can at any time stop the aerobatics and enter the pattern and be over the neighborhood just flying, like any other aircraft. He continued that the aircraft are brightly-colored and visually noticeable, so sometimes residents might see them in the pattern, just landing, and mistakenly assume they are doing aerobatics.

Mr. Thompson stated that they will be practicing, not performing for judges. He continued that they fly one at a time and are monitored via radio from the ground, and will not leave the box unless they are coming in to land. Ms. Landry asked who supervises that/who the people on the ground are. Ms. Bendel replied that they are members of the NEAC, mock judges with binoculars and radios, giving feedback and suggestions to the pilots in the air. In addition they monitor the airport unicom that Monadnock Aviation runs for the City.

Chair Dexter stated that as Chair he recognizes that the AAC's mission is to take a proactive role in the promotion and development of the airport. However, they are all in this together, and it is important for them to work together with the neighbors as best they can. Last year the AAC

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
March 18, 2016

recommended five days for the NEAC and this year they are talking about two days. This is a good faith gesture to reduce the impact on the area. He does not want the neighbors to think the AAC is disregarding them. Yes, there is noise, but it is an airport.

Councilor Sutherland proposed amending the motion to say “subject to requirements from the FAA.” There was no second.

Chair Dexter called for a vote on the original motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0. Mr. Thompson stated that he votes in favor but the AAC does not have a full description of the request and he wants to see the NEAC’s request approved, but the PLD Committee needs to listen to the details of it because there are questions unanswered. Mr. Bendzinski replied that the PLD Committee will definitely ask the necessary questions; they are quite thorough. Councilor Sutherland replied that it is on the agenda for March 23.

5) Operations Manager, Mike Moriarty

a) Airport Status Update

Mr. Moriarty reported that they are doing everything they can to thoroughly prepare the restaurant space for the new tenant. He continued that new employee Ben Albert is great to have aboard; he is very knowledgeable and doing great work.

He continued that electricians did work in the hangar formerly rented by Green River Aviation to make sure it is safe and up to code, and work was done to the doors. They will do a final clean up and make sure the building is good to go. Councilor Sutherland asked if the administration building will be demolished. Ms. Landry replied yes, that is the tentative plan, but they are still working on the process – e.g. whether City Council action is required.

Mr. Moriarty stated that the AAC has talked multiple times about a new airport sign. The current one is dated and in disrepair. He contacted Sign Works to get quotes and proposals, for either replacing just the signs, or the whole island. They are having difficulty with the logo. He agrees it is dated, but it cannot be changed quickly; there is a process. For starters, he asked for Sign Works’ ideas for what it should look like. Then Ms. Landry, the AAC, and others can weigh in.

Mr. Bohannon arrived at 9:06 AM.

Mr. Thompson proposed having a sign that can have changing text, such as the sign by the schools on Maple Ave. They could have a vivid, bright, modern sign that changes to advertise airport businesses and activities. Mr. Moriarty replied that he agrees 100% that that would be the best sign, and very useful. He continued that the damper is that those start at about \$25,000.

Councilor Sutherland stated that signs can get expensive quickly. He continued that he assumes the sign, located in Swanzy, is subject to local ordinances. He asked what the budget is. Mr. Moriarty replied that they do not know yet; that is why he asked for multiple options. Ms. Landry stated that she had to put a number in the budget, because of the deadline. She continued that she recommended increasing the airport’s marketing budget to \$5,000 and adding \$10,000 for signage. It is put through as a supplemental request, subject to the City Council looking at whether this additional funding is necessary. Councilor Sutherland stated that the joint

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
March 18, 2016

committee has also been discussing wayfinding, and maybe signage elsewhere in the city directing people to the airport should also be included as part of the budget for the airport.

Mr. Moriarty stated that the sign's location is difficult. It creates a choke point for turning trucks. Directly across the road, the transformers were removed. An AAC member had the brilliant idea of leasing that space. They could have much bigger sign and it would not limit traffic the way the current placement does. They will look into that.

Ms. Landry stated that it might help the City Council, when they are looking at the budget, to have a recommendation from the AAC to approve a supplemental request for signage. Chair Dexter asked if anyone wants to make that motion. Mr. Bendzinski replied that that is hard to do, given the absence of estimates and location questions still to be answered. Ms. Landry asked if she should come to the next AAC meeting with more information. Chair Dexter replied yes.

Mr. Moriarty reported that the Wilson Pond Gate is fixed. He continued that also, every gate has been dialed in by the manual and properly calibrated. Everything is working great. The software was updated to eliminate glitches and cards are working well.

He continued that the new snow blower will be here any day. Someone from the Aeronautics Division of NHDOT will be here for that delivery. This will increase the airport's efficiency in snow operations and it is exciting. He explained the benefits of this piece of equipment.

Mr. Moriarty reported that due to the trees that are obstructions and in need of removal, the FAA will shut down night operations for runway 20. This is a problem for C&S. Ms. Bendel replied that only instrument landings are being shut down. You can still land visually.

Mr. Moriarty reported that the old Remote Communications Outlet (RCO), a means of relaying radio traffic through the facility, is being put out of service. There was confusion at first, but everything is fine – the new RCO that is in use is still fine.

Chair Dexter stated that the AAC wanted maps of the airport so they could look at how things are being used. Mr. Moriarty replied that the City Manager had asked for current mapping of the airport property showing exactly what they have, so when someone calls wanting to build a hangar, they know where the developable properties are. That has been done and is updated and he can get anyone who is interested a copy. Ms. Landry replied that the City Manager wanted something broader than the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) that comes out of the Master Plan process so they can, for instance, look further into how to cooperate with the Town of Swanzey and other non-aviation related things.

Mr. Bendzinski asked about putting a copy of the map on the wall in the terminal for people who might walk in and want to know that information. Mr. Moriarty replied that he is not opposed, but these maps are professional, engineering ones, meant for trained eyes. Mr. Thompson asked if it can go on the website. Ms. Landry replied yes.

Mr. Bohannon stated that the AAC had talked about using the restaurant space for event rentals, like at other rooms in other City facilities. He continued that he talked with the person who will

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
March 18, 2016

be leasing the space and it could work to her advantage. He put together a recommendation to bring to the PLD Committee this coming cycle. It is the standard agreement form, reviewed by attorneys. He needs the AAC's guidance about the fee structure and the timeframe. The recommendation says no further out than four months. That has a lot to do with the tenant; she might want it changed, or the City could be flexible. For fees, and this might change at the City Council level, he proposes \$25 per hour for non-profits, \$75 per hour for for-profits, a maintenance fee of \$125, \$15 per hour for the building supervisor, and \$25 for a key deposit. If no building supervisor is needed but the space would be locked it would be accessed through a key deposit. Another question is who would be staffing this space if that was needed. Parks & Recreation staff is usually occupied. This would get worked out.

Chair Dexter stated that he is confused. He continued that this proposal would be for if they were unable to lease this space, but it about to be leased. He thinks that any money generated in the space would go to the tenant, not the City. Mr. Bohannon replied yes, but it could be good to have this event rental structure in place for if the tenant leaves. If they put this in place it does not have to be utilized until the space becomes vacant again. Ms. Landry added that when Mr. Bohannon was tasked with coming back with this, it was before the tenant was locked in. The tenant is now very close to being in here and she would be surprised if it did not happen. They could put this event rental structure in place now so it is on the books, or they could hold off.

Mr. Bergevin asked how the tenant feels. Ms. Landry replied that she is excited about doing events and will do that whether or not it is in cooperation with the City.

Mr. Bendzinski asked who would be the "event coordinator" keeping track of the scheduling. Mr. Bohannon replied the Parks & Recreation Department. He continued that to understand the schedule he would work with Ms. Bendel and airport staff.

Mr. Thompson asked where the funds generated by the use of this building would go. Mr. Bohannon replied that the revenue would go back to the airport funding. Ms. Landry added that that is by FAA grant assurance.

Councilor Sutherland asked if the future lessee would be able to capture the revenue from events she holds in the space, for her business. Mr. Bohannon replied yes.

Mr. Bendzinski asked how it would work if someone wanted to have a wedding in the space. Mr. Bohannon replied that if someone came to the restaurant lessee and asked to use her space for a function it would be her decision. If someone asked the City, he would call the restaurant lessee and ask if she is open or interested in opening for such an event. He would work with her. He wants the restaurant to be successful and for this to not impede on that success.

Mr. Bergevin expressed concerns and stated that the City should not be scheduling events here if the money is not going to the restaurant lessee. Chair Dexter clarified that Mr. Bohannon's proposal today is a "plan B" for how the space could be rented for events if there is no tenant leasing the space. He continued that if a restaurant is operating here and someone asks the City if they can rent the space, that person would be referred to the restaurant to work it out.

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
March 18, 2016

Councilor Sutherland made a motion to put this on more time. He continued that he appreciates Mr. Bohannon coming to them with this information but he thinks there are questions they might have relative to leasing space, insurance policies, roles and responsibilities, etc. Mr. Bergevin seconded the motion.

Mr. Moriarty clarified that when the tenant moves in they will operate independently and they will be able to lease this space to allow functions. Mr. Bendzinski asked if other airport space is rentable for events. Mr. Bohannon replied no.

Chair Dexter called for a vote. Mr. Thompson asked about the motion. Councilor Sutherland reiterated that the motion was for more time. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bendzinski asked if this “plan B” is the general contract for all City rentals. Mr. Bohannon replied yes.

Chair Dexter stated that this will be on next month’s agenda. Councilor Sutherland replied that this is unique because they are an airport subject to FAA regulations. He continued that they just need a little more information to make sure they are doing this properly. Mr. Bohannon replied that he will come back next month with more information.

6) Marketing Committee

Ms. Bendel reported that the last meeting was called off so people could attend the Regional Transportation Forum hosted by the Chamber of Commerce. She continued that it was interesting but the airport was not even mentioned, which she will talk to Phil Suter about. Ms. Landry replied that she, too, was surprised by that, and called Mr. Suter. She continued that he says this was intended to be one segment of a series. They will have a forum just for aviation and the airport. Chair Dexter replied that he wrote to Mr. Suter about it, too, and heard the same.

Mr. Bendzinski asked if Ms. Bendel was apprised of the AAC’s conversation about the newsletter. Ms. Bendel replied somewhat, but she missed the last meeting. Mr. Bendzinski replied that one issue they discussed was asking her if she would be willing to publish, in Monadnock Aviation’s newsletter, news about City events happening at the airport, instead of the AAC having a separate newsletter. Ms. Bendel replied that she talked about this informally with Chair Dexter and Mr. Moriarty, and yes, she already does that – she already puts out things not specifically related to Monadnock Aviation, like notifications about Master Plan meetings and a link to the survey. Mr. Bendzinski thanked her.

Councilor Sutherland asked if the City’s airport website could include a link to Monadnock Aviation’s newsletter. Ms. Landry replied yes. She continued that the discussion last month was that there is value in having both the Monadnock Aviation newsletter and a Dillant-Hopkins Airport one, with references to both. There could be common ground as well as independence. That was left up in the air. A newsletter needs content. Maybe over the coming month they will have a better idea of what to communicate to the public. Mr. Moriarty added that the airport’s Facebook page already links to the Monadnock Aviation newsletter and it works well.

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
March 18, 2016

Chair Dexter stated that the AAC did not decide whether it is appropriate for the airport to share a newsletter with Monadnock Aviation or have its own and link one to the other. Councilor Sutherland stated that airport websites often have general news related to the airport and links to businesses at the airport, which would be beneficial. Chair Dexter asked if he is in favor of the AAC having its own newsletter. Councilor Sutherland replied that he is in favor of the airport website articulating whatever news is relevant from the City and links to airport operators.

Mr. Thompson praised Ms. Bendel's phenomenal work on her informative, engaging newsletter. He continued that it should not be her job to create an official airport newsletter but if the airport creates one they can link to each other. He suggested they wait to hear from the Airport Manager.

Mr. Wozmak stated that they need a conversation about who they are marketing to, and by what pathways. He continued that there should be a variety of avenues – sometimes reaching New England-wide, or just the local community, or having specific focus areas for specific events. They can decide on an event by event basis. A newsletter is more about information. Probably they would issue notifications for events mostly electronically. There is a platform established for communicating with people connected to Monadnock Aviation. As they look towards what to do with the airport that group of people to communicate with will expand. Working with Ms. Bendel and the Marketing Committee, they can decide which vehicles to use to get the message out and which populations to reach out to and when.

Chair Dexter stated that he will table this and put it on next month's agenda.

Mr. Bendzinski stated that there used to be advertisements downtown for airport events, like a noticeable sign in front of the Post Office. He asked if they can still do that. It helps people who do not see the newsletter or have a computer. Ms. Landry replied yes and no. She continued that the signs by the Post Office are usually set up by whoever is hosting the event being advertised, but probably the City can do that, too. She is not sure what the airport would be advertising, without a specific event. Mr. Bendzinski replied that he was thinking of this for specific events.

Mr. Anderson asked if there has been any talk of getting rid of the partially collapsed fire tower, because he sees kids there sometimes. Mr. Moriarty replied that he has been giving tours to the Fire Department crews, and the Fire Chief has plans to take it down. He continued that he agrees that it is a hazard and he will revisit the conversation with the Fire Chief. Chair Dexter stated that he will put it on next month's agenda.

Mr. Bergevin introduced a gentleman who was the first Keene Airport Director. The gentleman stated that he lived at the end of the runway for 20 years and watched the changes. He continued that they still have a good opportunity here to do a good job.

Mr. Bohannon stated that, regarding signs, the City has one in front of the Recreation Center to advertise City events. If there is an upcoming event at the airport and the AAC has a piece of plywood, the Recreation Center can post it. If they go through him, he can eliminate the fee.

7) Topics for Next Month's Agenda, Meeting Date: April 15, 2016, 8:30 AM

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
March 18, 2016

Chair Dexter stated that they can talk about the 38.6 acres of land that can be used for non-aeronautical uses. These areas range in size. They can talk about leasing them. Next month's agenda will also include the sign update, the restaurant and "plan B," what to do about the newsletter, and what happens with the fire towers. He asked for other topics.

Councilor Sutherland suggested they get a copy of the map discussed earlier. They can consider recommending properties to sell that are not necessary to airport operations. Chair Dexter replied that the City has been hesitant to sell anything. They can talk about it.

Mr. Norris stated that some pilots are interested in having a grass runway. Mr. Bergevin replied that they used to have one.

8) **Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Dexter adjourned the meeting at 9:52 AM.

Respectfully submitted by
Britta Reida, Minute-taker