

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

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

**Friday, May 20, 2016**

**8:30 am**

**Airport Terminal Building**

**Members Present:**

Clark Dexter, Chair  
Robert Sutherland, Councilor  
Robert Bergevin  
Peter Delaney  
Joseph Briggs  
Joseph Bendzinski

**Staff Present:**

Jack Wozmak, Airport Manager, Interim  
Ben Albert, Airport, Airport Maintenance

**Members Not Present:**

Rodney Thompson  
Richard Kasper  
Bill Hutwelker

**1) Call to Order**

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

**3) Approval of Minutes – April 15, 2016**

Mr. Briggs made a motion to approve the minutes of April 15, 2016, which was seconded by Mr. Bergevin. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

**4) Airport Manager's Report**

Interim Airport Manager Jack Wozmak distributed copies of his report to the AAC, with 16 items. He read the 16 items and reported on each, beginning with explaining that airport management is developing a forest management plan, to be responsible with the land and manage it sustainably. He continued that he will be interviewing foresters to see what their approach is and report back on that and the AAC can make a recommendation to the City Council.

Mr. Wozmak continued that they are interviewing contractors for the construction of the new, privately-owned hangar. The Airport's role is to facilitate the relationships. They will be helping coordinate the permitting process and planning process and similar items to help keep the project moving forward. It will be about 100x100 feet to hold several aircraft.

Councilor Sutherland asked if it will be privately built. Mr. Wozmak replied yes. Councilor Sutherland asked if additional paving will be required for access to the tarmac. Mr. Wozmak replied that the Airport had already created elements of the runway in anticipation of a hangar

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going there. Councilor Sutherland asked if additional investment from the airport is needed. Mr. Wozmak replied not substantial; he anticipates no expenditures on the City's or FAA's behalf.

Chair Dexter stated that the "taxiway to nowhere" was put in in anticipation when the runway was done for the future use of whoever wanted to build a hangar. Councilor Sutherland asked if there is capacity for additional hangars there. Mr. Wozmak replied that he thinks so, but it depends. The interviews yesterday were to help them meet with regional contractors who have the right skills so they can pick their team.

Mr. Bergevin asked if they will present to this group. Mr. Wozmak replied that they would probably be happy to. He continued that they will have to deliver to the Swanzey Planning Board so he assumes they would do it for AAC, the Keene Planning Board, Swanzey Planning Board, and the City Council. He is happy to keep anyone in the loop that wants to be there.

Mr. Wozmak stated that he will be working with the Town of Swanzey to follow up on the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district that was started last year. There is continued interest in either expanding that one or creating a new one. That will offer advantages to development that takes place here. That TIF district or expansion would be a warrant article for the Town of Swanzey. Towards the fall they will be submitting a plan consistent with the statute about TIFs. That will be vetted through the AAC and all of the players.

Chair Dexter stated that it would enable Swanzey to put in a sewer line so property around the airport can be developed. Mr. Wozmak stated that the big discussion as he understands it is that folks from the City of Keene think you can establish a TIF without knowing what will go in it, whereas the Town of Swanzey wants a better idea of what would be in it, to know if they can better support it. Neither is right or wrong; it is just a difference in viewpoints.

Mr. Wozmak continued that they have had good success renting T hangars. They have only three left and two inquiries, so could max out pretty soon.

He continued that he started communications with Daniel Webster College to see what the opportunities are. People from the college are looking forward to meeting. They suggest that the Keene Airport also meet with the Nashua Airport. There may be great opportunities for regional collaboration, they say. He will pursue that will them and see where it goes.

Mr. Wozmak continued that he started to examine vehicle flow patterns onto Rt. 32, which becomes an issue as they start to have more events here. He has started discussions with New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), the Town of Swanzey, and the City Manager, with respect to signage or moving Rt. 32. Discussion ensued about the traffic and possible routes and/or possible signage. There could be a better traffic flow for vehicles exiting the airport. Mr. Wozmak stated that if Rt. 32 were to be aligned with Lake Street it is less cumbersome to attach to sewer because they would not have to deal with the State. The NHDOT thinks they have the necessary easements for that. Those discussions need to begin and they need to see where the issues are for everyone involved.

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Councilor Sutherland stated that there are issues with egress to the west. Mr. Wozmak replied yes, he has been talking with Stantec about that as part of the Master Plan Update process. He explained how there could be a better route, which might make financial sense as the airport grows.

Mr. Wozmak stated that there have been two plane crashes since the last AAC meeting. He gave some information about those. The first had no injuries, but destroyed some lights, which will be fully covered by insurance. With the second crash, due to deer on the runway, there were minor injuries. With both crashes, the planes were destroyed. Responses went well and they have debriefed on both incidents.

Mr. Bergevin asked if they still use "bird bangers." Mr. Albert replied yes. Mr. Wozmak stated that they follow a wildlife management plan. Mr. Briggs asked if there is a consideration for a fence. Mr. Wozmak replied yes, there will be additional fencing included in the Master Plan Update. Mr. Bergevin stated that previously, people could hunt these deer if they were considered a nuisance. Discussion continued.

Mr. Wozmak stated that the Flight Deck restaurant opened a week ago. Mr. Bergevin reported that six of them ate there last night and the food, drinks, and service were excellent. He hopes people support it. He gave more information about the experience. Discussion ensued about the menu. Mr. Wozmak stated that there have been a couple of bumps but it is going well overall.

Mr. Wozmak continued that they worked with the Humane Society and the Public Works Department to hold the annual Walk for Animals in June.

He continued that he began drafting on a marketing brochure. He plans on showing it at a meeting of the Marketing Committee, which they have now made Ad Hoc, hopefully within the next month or so.

Mr. Wozmak reported that he and Beth Bendel have had conversations with the restaurant to see if they can coordinate a Wings and Wheels event, maybe the same night that the New England Aerobatic Club (NEAC) is here. He gave more information. He has also been talking with the Kiwanis Club and they will see where that goes. It could be a one-time gathering or regular event.

He continued that met with the Swanzy Police and Fire Chiefs to strengthen the relationships between the Airport and those agencies. He asked if anyone had any questions.

Councilor Sutherland asked, in regards to the events, if there are any fees that would be charged or if the intent is just to bring more traffic here. Mr. Wozmak replied that for the car event it is just to get people down here, to make the Airport more of a destination. Having an air show next year could cost \$75,000 to put on; it is complicated with a lot of details and needs to be planned well. He continued that Ms. Bendel might have more to say about whether or not to charge admission and how much. Discussion ensued.

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Chair Dexter asked if there is anything happened with Thomas Transportation's request at the last AAC meeting to build a transportation center at the airport. Mr. Wozmak replied not directly but he will be getting back to Mr. Thomas about that. He continued that they have to decide what that will look like and where it will go. One issue is there are a lot of wetlands, more than he had expected, and there is the question of water and sewer. The building really should have municipal water and septic and it becomes a bigger issue, and ties back into the TIF. They have to see what that looks like. These issues are not insurmountable, they just have to really work through it.

Councilor Sutherland reported that the City Council approved enabling the City Manager to negotiate. He continued that they fast tracked those types of engagements specific to the Airport. Chair Dexter replied that he wants to keep this topic at the forefront.

Ms. Bendel asked if the City Council approved the City Manager to negotiate and execute something related to the transportation center, or just negotiate. Councilor Sutherland replied just negotiate.

Mr. Bergevin asked if there is anything further about a dog park at the airport. Mr. Wozmak replied that that is a conversation that has not come to his attention. They would have to decide where to put it and what the cost/benefit analysis is. As they move through the Master Plan Update process they determine with greater certainty what the Airport Layout Plan is, there may or may not be an opportunity for a dog park here.

Councilor Sutherland stated that the dog park had been approved by City Council to be located at Wheelock Park but the private group that is funding it is not happy with the current proposed location. It could come back. It is in limbo.

Chair Dexter asked if there is an update on the fire tower removal. Mr. Wozmak replied that he cannot remember but he does not think it will be removed soon. Chair Dexter asked if the other items there have been removed yet. Mr. Albert stated that he has not seen activity over there so he does not think anything has been removed. Councilor Sutherland stated that he recalls that the Fire Department says it is secure.

Chair Dexter spoke of the importance of keeping on top of the AAC's previous discussions so they do not lose track of things. Follow-up is important. He asked about signage. Mr. Wozmak replied that he has not advanced signage anywhere because he wants a better handle of what will be put on the sign and how they are allocating those resources.

John Norris of Brattleboro spoke of how large, visually attractive, and helpful the signage is directing people to the Rutland Airport, in comparison to how frustrating the signage is leading to the Keene Airport – some of the signs are not visible. He continued that he sent a photo of a sign to Mike Moriarty and will show it to Mr. Wozmak. He took photos of each approach to the roads to the Keene Airport. Some are not visible and they do not help people decide whether or not to come to the airport.

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Chair Dexter asked him to bring his photos to the next AAC meeting. Mr. Wozmak stated that DOT makes signs and they can work with DOT to put informational signs up in certain locations, if the Airport/City pays for them.

Ms. Bendel stated that Monadnock Aviation has a sign on Route 12 in one direction but DOT would not allow them to put one in the other direction because it is City of Keene-controlled space. Mr. Wozmak replied that they will try to learn what the process is for these signs and make it happen.

Councilor Sutherland stated that the City's Highway Department has a sign maker and that might be worth looking into. They can check to see where the City has the authority versus the State.

#### **5) Operations Manager's Report**

Chair Dexter noted that Mr. Moriarty, the Operations Manager, is not present today. He asked Mr. Albert if he had a report from Mr. Moriarty. Mr. Albert replied no.

#### **6) Marketing Committee Report**

#### **7) FBO Announcements**

Ms. Bendel reported that it would be great to have a sign saying "80 Airport Road," so people know. She continued that people sometimes come to Monadnock Aviation looking for C&S.

Ms. Bendel continued that Monadnock Aviation has a lot going on. They are teaming up with the Flight Deck for tomorrow's BBQ. Monadnock Aviation has been doing BBQs for about eight years since there was no food, but now with the Flight Deck here, she does not want her staff competing with them. They will combine efforts - Monadnock Aviation will provide a welcoming environment while the Flight Deck sells food.

She continued that next month is the Walk for Animals. May 28 is first NEAC practice. They invited City Councilors for tours and maybe for rides, although that is not a promise. She asked Councilor Sutherland to extend the invitations to other City Council members.

Mr. Wozak agreed that it would help the City Council to see and experience it firsthand.

Councilor Sutherland stated that the City Council got a lot of complaints about the noise of the activities. Someone even went to his house to talk to him. The City Council talked about trying to come to the airport to have a firsthand experience of the sound so they can understand.

Ms. Bendel replied that she encourages that. She is having Wes Liu, of the NEAC, give a safety seminar in July and another in August. In regards to Councilor Sutherland's earlier question about whether events here generate revenue via an entrance fee, she thinks they are doing a two-pronged approach: public relations to have the community see what the NEAC is doing, which is not a revenue-producer, and bringing aircraft in, which produces revenue.

Councilor Sutherland replied that the comments he has about what causes revenue is in the interest of maintenance issues here and how to fund them. He continued that it would be nice to

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have a nicely paved parking lot. It is always a matter of where the money comes from. The more revenue they can bring in the less of an issue it is.

Ms. Bendel reported that they are very excited about the potential of an air show, whether it is next summer or another time. She thanks Mr. Wozmak and stated that this has become a very positive environment because of him.

Chair Dexter reported that the Ad Hoc Marketing Committee met this month. He continued that they decided that since Mr. Wozmak is here it will meet as needed, to discuss ideas and present them to the AAC.

Mr. Bendzinski stated that he is sure that as activities and events increase there will be a rise in complaints from neighbors about noise. He asked if there is a path to address those complaints or people. Mr. Wozmak stated that he is looking forward to establishing and maintaining a closer relationship with the neighborhoods so they can get that feedback and get a sense of which activities are more successful than others, which have the best balance, and which are the most problematic. That will help the AAC and the City Council decide which types of activities they are more supportive or less supportive of.

**8) Topics for Next Agenda**

Chair Dexter stated that signage will be on the next agenda. He asked if anyone has other topics to add. Hearing none, he reported that Tuesday the 24th at 6:00 PM is the meeting of the Environmental Assessment, at the courthouse. He encourages everyone to go.

**9) Next Meeting is June 17, 2016**

**10) Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Dexter adjourned the meeting at 9:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted by  
Britta Reida, Minute-taker