

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,  
April 17, 2015

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

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

**Friday, April 17, 2015**

**8:30 am**

**Airport Terminal Building**

**Members Present:**

Clark Dexter, acting Chair  
Robert Bergevin  
Rod Thompson  
Bill Hutwelker  
Richard Kasper

**Staff Present:**

Ed Mattern, Airport Director  
Mike Moriarty, Airport Maintenance and  
Operations Manager

**Members Not Present:**

Doug Green, Chair  
Kris Roberts, Councilor  
Kevin Provost  
Peter Delaney

**Others Present:**

Laurel Boivin, Eversource Energy  
John O'Connor, Eversource Energy  
Beth Bendel, Monadnock Aviation  
Ed Appel, Green River Aviation

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Dexter, acting Chair in the absence of Doug Green, called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

**2. Approval of Minutes – March 20, 2015**

Mr. Bergevin made a motion to approve the minutes of March 20, 2015. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 4 to 0. Mr. Hutwelker abstained.

**3. Request to Use City Property – Eversource**

Laurel Boivin, Community Relations & Economic Development for Eversource Energy, introduced herself and John O'Connor, Eversource Energy's Supervisor of the Operations, Planning and Emergency Preparedness group. She continued that it is a full time group preparing for Eversource's business during emergencies - restoring power as quickly and safely as possible. She and Mr. O'Connor want to talk to the AAC about their request for the City to consider partnering with Eversource so in emergencies they can have City property available to use as an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or a staging area for crews. They are also asking for the airport management to look at this facility and property and tell Eversource what parameters might work, and what they might be able to do. Is the facility an appropriate

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location, and if so, how?

John O'Connor stated that they used the airport a couple times in years passed and it has worked well. He continued that he has reached out to Mr. Mattern to come up with what they think is a layout for a worst case scenario with a storm. They do not know the restrictions at the airport, the fly zones, etc., and they do not want to hinder any operations or business at the airport. Regarding which space(s) at the airport Eversource could use for staging, Eversource would need airport management to tell them about the rules and regulations so Eversource can tailor it to whatever the needs are. During the Thanksgiving storm event they had about 30 trucks working out of here. They brought a command trailer here and ran it as a satellite restoration operation, which would be the other way of using the area, as opposed to a staging area.

Mr. O'Connor distributed a handout. He continued that they are trying to determine locations throughout the state to utilize to get crews closer to the damage and towns and get them out for restoration. NH is a long, wide state and travel can be an issue. They try to minimize travel for crews so they can get to work faster on restoring the power. They supplied Mr. Mattern with a proposal. They are not asking to have a contract saying "We need to use your airport 100% of the time whenever there is an issue." They would like to have Mr. Mattern as a contact and ask him "Can we use your facility?", hoping for a "yes," but a "no" would be fine.

Ms. Boivin stated that the 11 local crews cannot handle a quick restoration if it is a multi-day event. She continued that the Thanksgiving storm caused outages to several thousand properties in the area. Mr. O'Connor added that there were about 160 to 170 crews working out of the Keene area, and about 30 were working out of the airport. Ms. Boivin continued that they are looking for areas where crews can be, to be closer to where the damage is. She gave examples of what they have done in the past in other storms, such as the 2008 ice storm, for which Eversource established three fully-staffed, satellite EOCs. She continued that Eversource prefers working at their own facility but do not have the space for 100+ line crews there. It would be in Eversource's best interest to have several possible locations in the towns. They are looking at other locations, too. They want to have partnerships and be able to be fluid. Mr. O'Connor explained more about Eversource's work in emergencies, and how the power restoration is more effective when they divide areas up by circuits.

Mr. Bergevin thanked Ms. Boivin and Mr. O'Connor for the good service from Eversource. He asked Mr. Mattern if he has talked with Eversource and if the airport has the space. Mr. Mattern replied that Eversource is looking for whatever space happens to be available at the time of the incident. He continued that the airport has leased space to Thomas Transportation so Eversource cannot use that. He gave examples of airport spaces that may be available for Eversource in the event of an emergency. He continued that Eversource is looking to have a place in mind where they already have arrangements made and that they can draw upon as a resource, depending on

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the circumstances. If the airport's resources were not available at the time Eversource requests it, they would need to have a backup plan.

Mr. Thompson stated that the equipment that Eversource would have, such as bright lights at night and vehicles in and out, would be a detriment to aviation safety. He continued that there are other open properties that may be available, such as the empty industrial complex by Rt. 10. He explained why he thinks that would be a suitable area. He imagines that at night the lighting might disrupt pilots' safety as they fly in. He does not believe Eversource could operate inside of the fenced in area, due to FAA regulations, and outside of the fences there is not very much space. If this was the only place in town he would recommend they work something out, but there are other locations in town they could look at.

Mr. O'Connor stated that they do not know the FAA regulations, issues, etc., but anything they would do here would be under Mr. Mattern's control. Mr. Thompson replied that it would require a lot from Mr. Mattern and he has a lot of work to do. He does not see advantages to having Eversource here.

Mr. Kasper stated that he thinks it could be coordinated with Mr. Mattern and could work well, and it would benefit the community. He continued that he does not have any problem with this. If the situation calls for them having a use here he has no objection and does not think it would affect aviation, and it would be temporary.

Beth Bendel, of Monadnock Aviation, stated that Eversource people were "great neighbors" when they were here during the Thanksgiving storm. She continued that they were courteous and she appreciates the rock salt they supplied the airport with. She is in favor of anything that gets the power restored quicker at the airport, and the power could be restored quicker if Eversource was set up here. The terminal building is not on a generator. This is good for the airport.

Mr. Moriarty asked Ms. Boivin and/or Mr. O'Connor to talk about the benefits to the restaurant, and about the airport's power being restored first. Mr. O'Connor replied that if a restaurant here could do catering Eversource would use them instead of bringing in food from elsewhere. The more they can use what is on hand, the less they need to coordinate elsewhere. They could probably even bring in a caterer to use the kitchen even if there was not a restaurant here. If so, they would look at bringing in generation. They cannot guarantee that the power would be on at the airport any faster. They would look to restore the power here since they would be here using it, but not knowing what the issue is [causing the outage], he cannot guarantee it.

Ms. Boivin added that if Eversource only needs the airport as a location to park some trucks in, and they did not need to use the building or restaurant, there is no reason to connect the generator

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to power the building. But if they need the building, and Mr. Mattern said that was okay, they have done that in the past. When they used a middle school in the past as an EOC they hooked up a generator and catered food. She gave other examples. She continued that Eversource has done a lot with the City and always looks to the City as a partner. The City has always been a good partner in helping Eversource do their job better and Eversource helps the City do their job better, too.

Mr. Mattern asked Ms. Boivin and/or Mr. O'Connor to talk about how they used space at the Manchester Airport. He asked for Mr. Moriarty's thoughts on how it went with the Thanksgiving storm. He asked about Eversource's priority restoration list – the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant is high on the list and airport takes its power from the same line.

Mr. O'Connor replied that they have used the Manchester Airport several times. He continued that they have some parking lots that Eversource is allowed to lease from time to time. Eversource has about five separate plans for all various parking lots depending on the airport's needs or activities at the time. They bring their crews into the airport as a check-in or staging, so they can look at the vehicles and crews coming in, assess their capabilities, give them a safety briefing, etc. They are in a parking lot as coordinated with the Director of Field Operations. There was a potential issue at Thanksgiving due to the influx of flights. They worked with the Director closely to make sure Eversource crews were out of the way. Anything airport staff asked for, Eversource complied with. Whatever facility or location they use, when done, they put it back to the way it was, or better, even down to street sweeping.

Mr. Thompson asked how much property they used at the Manchester Airport. Mr. O'Connor replied one parking lot of probably four or five acres. He continued that there were about 250 trucks parked and staged at that location for the anticipation of an ice storm that did not come to fruition. At Thanksgiving they moved approximately 650 trucks and tree crews through the airport. They probably had 30 to 40 trucks there at any given time. The crews were there for no more than an hour. Mr. Thompson asked if the activities at this airport would be the same size. Mr. O'Connor replied that he does not anticipate that, due to the size of the lots. He continued that the Manchester Airport is a great resource to get a large number of crews into the state and dispersed widely. But they do not want crews to have to drive to/through Keene if the areas they will be servicing are far from Keene. They would use the Keene airport as a gateway just for crews in this area of the state.

Ms. Boivin stated that the crews come in in the morning to get their assignments. The parking lot is full from 6:30 to 7:30 AM and then they leave for the day to do their work, and return in the evening to turn in their packets. There is not a situation where they have the parking lot filled all day. Mr. Thompson asked where they keep their cars. Mr. O'Connor replied at their parent company. He continued that they will have 5 to 25 line crews with one to three crew

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leads/supervisor vehicles. Mr. Thompson asked if there will be two or three cars taking a truck's place when it leaves. Ms. Laurel replied no, the employees do not have cars to leave behind; they come in crew trucks. She continued that at night the trucks are at whatever hotel they are staying at. Mr. Thompson asked if they require blacktop. Mr. O'Connor replied no, but they have to make sure the surface is suitable to handle a large truck. Mr. Mattern identified a wet area. Mr. Moriarty would tell them which areas to stay out of. Ms. Boivin added that maybe some areas would be okay only at certain times of year. It would be fluid.

Mr. Moriarty stated that Eversource is saying the situation will dictate where they park, how many trucks they have, whether the field is full of water, frozen, or dry, and so on and so forth. He continued that the Thanksgiving storm was a fast moving situation. There is a process to do anything in the city, but in an emergency he just had to take action. The power was out, the doors did not work, and the maintenance building was useless. PSNH (Eversource) contacted him, and he explained his needs to them, and the dos and don'ts, and it was pretty straightforward. At that time he could allow them to use the parking lot. They will probably always have pallets of materials, porta potties, etc. He showed them the area to use and what to make sure they did not block. The person from PSNH clearly let him know they would accommodate the airport as the airport accommodated them. Things went smoothly. Trucks were orderly. Management stayed on top of it. When a PSNH employee parked by the fence once, the manager came over quickly and told him not to. When they were done at the airport, they walked and inspected and offered to clean the bathrooms and floors. It went very well.

Mr. Kasper made a motion to have Mr. Mattern coordinate with Eversource Energy to use the airport in a way that Mr. Mattern sees as proper when the situation arises. Mr. Hutwelker seconded the motion.

Mr. Bergevin asked if Eversource would compensate the airport. Mr. O'Connor replied that they would be partnering for the betterment to the area. He continued that Eversource would not be in favor of paying the City but they are not against it. Ms. Boivin added that Eversource paying is not a typical practice in NH. Chair Dexter stated that this would be a conversation to be had with City management.

Mr. Mattern stated that the motion should be to recommend to the City Council that they negotiate, as opposed to a motion to have him personally negotiate. Mr. Kasper replied that he amends his motion as such. Mr. Hutwelker seconded.

The motion to amend passed by unanimous vote. The amended motion, for the AAC "to recommend to the City Council that the City negotiate with Eversource Energy to use the airport in a way that Mr. Mattern sees as proper when the situation arises," passed by a unanimous vote.

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**4. Public Relations and Marketing – Idea Generation**

Mr. Mattern reported that the City Manager is on vacation and apologizes for not being here today. He continued that at the last meeting, AAC members were given an assignment to come to this meeting with an idea on one topic for marketing. He also asked Monadnock Aviation and Green River Aviation to give their perspectives.

**a) Monadnock Aviation Perspective**

Ms. Bendel stated that today she can give general comments, but was not prepared to give a formal presentation. She continued that if you do a shotgun approach to marketing you will get a shotgun response: dispersed and ineffective. Her advice is for the AAC to decide who they are marketing to, because there are different marketing approaches for different audiences. (Former AAC member) Cindy Rodenhauser-Stewart is a very skilled PR person. She and her (Marketing & Development) subcommittee a few years ago came up with a whole marketing plan. It is not even on the airport website. Ms. Bendel continued that she recommends looking at the work Ms. Rodenhauser-Stewart did, before trying to reinvent the wheel.

Mr. Mattern replied that the subcommittee had a lot of ideas but they were never implemented. Chair Dexter asked if he has a record of those ideas. Mr. Mattern replied yes. Ms. Bendel replied that Ms. Rodenhauser-Stewart presented to the City Council, so there is formal record of it somewhere. She continued that it is fantastic to discuss who to market to and how, but the next question is who will do it. She assumes the AAC members do not want to spend 20 hours a week marketing.

Ms. Bendel continued that the airport website now indicates the Out of the Blue scholarship but does not acknowledge Monadnock Aviation for that – she worked very hard for it, and feels a little put off. The City needs to either give credit to Monadnock Aviation, or take the information off the website. Mr. Mattern replied that he did not intend a slight. He continued that he will fix it.

**b) Green River Aviation Perspective**

Chair Dexter asked Ed Appel, of Green River Aviation, if he wanted to speak. Mr. Appel shook his head no.

Mr. Hutwelker stated that he appreciates Ms. Bendel's comments. He continued that if they are going to market something they have to have something to market. The big hole is the restaurant. Once that piece is solved a lot of the marketing will then generate around that. Mr. Bergevin asked if he thinks an office would do better in that space. Mr. Hutwelker replied no, he feels confident that they will be successful with the restaurant and that it is the best way to go.

Mr. Kasper stated that he thinks Ms. Bendel makes a good point. He asked Mr. Mattern to put

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together something about what the Marketing & Development Subcommittee did. He continued that it is awkward for the AAC to promote the airport because they always have to go through the City; everything has to go through the bureaucratic process. Mr. Mattern replied that this board provides advice to the City Council. He continued that not everything that happens here goes to the City Council. If the group wants to close a certain runway it might be a good idea but impacts more than this group, for example. For promoting the airport, if it does not require an appropriation of money the AAC can do certain things that do not need to go through the process. Sometimes they need City Council approval and sometimes they do not. Mr. Kasper replied that some office in the City should be taking the recommendations and running with them; otherwise it is an awkward process.

Mr. Thompson asked if there is a budget for marketing or funds. Mr. Mattern replied that there is a line item in the budget and there is \$3,000 in it now. He continued that if there is an initiative to pursue there are some funds to do it. Mr. Hutwelker stated that four people met last week about the airport but they met in Keene. He continued that those meetings should happen here at the airport if it does not burden staff. Chair Dexter requested Mr. Mattern bring, to the next meeting, thoughts on how to get things moving through the City's process, because yes, it gets tiring.

**5. Update – New England Aerobatic Club (NEAC) Request to Use City Property**

Mr. Mattern reported that the AAC recommended to Planning, Licenses, and Development (PLD) Committee the City support the NEAC's request to use City property. He continued that the PLD Committee appreciated the AAC's work and thoughts. People were still displeased with the granting of the license, which was done by the City Council. He will work with the NEAC on getting the license with the terms discussed. Their first date using the airport is May 16. The City will provide notice to the neighbors and invite them to the safety briefing in the morning so they have a better understanding of the flying activity. Mr. Bergevin added that he thanks the City Manager for the support and recognition at the PLD Committee meeting. Ms. Bendel stated that inviting neighbors to the NEAC meeting has the potential to impact her business. She asked who from the airport will be present for that. Mr. Mattern replied that he will.

Mr. Appel stated that originally, Mr. Mattern recommended saying "no" to the NEAC's request. He asked what changed his mind. Mr. Mattern replied that he had said "Without changes, I cannot recommend it," but there were changes. He continued that he changed his mind and he can support it based on implementation of the changes. Mr. Appel asked what the changes are. Mr. Mattern replied an increased floor to the box by 500 feet, flying on the south side, inviting neighbors to the safety briefing, not starting before 10 AM, and no Sunday flying. Mr. Appel asked if the approaches will be more uniform, so pilots are not coming in here "hot dogging" and scaring neighbors in their yards. He asked what he should do if he witnesses this – video tape it, or call Mr. Mattern? Mr. Mattern replied that he should report anything he feels is unsafe and

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they will investigate it. Chair Dexter replied that the NEAC would be more than happy to stop that activity if they have evidence of it. Ms. Bendel added that NEAC would talk with Mr. Appel's instructors if there is concern with the flight patterns.

**6. Airport Master Plan Update – Airport Director**

Mr. Mattern reported that the Airport Master Plan Update Committee met for the first time this week, in Keene. He continued that the next one will be at the airport. It was an introductory meeting to give an overview of the entire process. They are still looking for ideas from AAC members and others on how to engage the public and get the public's input. They will get more in depth about that at the next meeting. There is no date set yet. The AAC members are welcome to attend. It will probably be sometime around May 24 in the afternoon.

Mr. Bergevin stated that he thinks it was a good meeting. He continued that there was confusion about what is really going on and what they really can do. Once things get further in it will be alright. They have to stay more focused than having a report in six or nine months from now.

Ms. Bendel stated that the committee has a lot of interesting people from different backgrounds, which is great, but many people did not understand the mission or know that there are any parameters. For example, the non-aviators thought they could do anything, like put a Ferris Wheel at the airport. The consultants could have done a better job explaining the parameters. Mr. Mattern replied yes, there is room for improvement. He continued that the consultants are focused on doing Airport Master Plans, which are very specific, but what the airport is trying to do is go beyond that and essentially create a business and development plan in addition to the Master Plan. He does plan on meeting with the consultants prior to the next meeting to better prepare them for what the airport's plan is.

Mr. Hutwelker replied that he agrees that it felt like too broad a brush without enough specifics. He continued that the meeting was not focused enough, but it is a diverse group and this was only the first meeting. He agrees that the time frames being tightened gets things done more efficiently. Mr. Bergevin stated that he thinks there should be more aviation-related people in that group. Chair Dexter asked for Mr. Mattern to send out a reminder email the day before the meeting.

**7. Community Relations – Airport Director**

Ms. Bendel stated that in the newspaper, it was reported that Edwin Hopkins' remains are being returned to the Keene area after having been buried in Hawaii. She continued that the airport is named after him, and he died at Pearl Harbor. Some recognition by the airport would be appropriate. Mr. Thompson asked if they could communicate with the VFW or other groups to hold a ceremony here. Mr. Hutwelker asked about talking with C&S to have them actually land here for that ceremony. Ms. Bendel replied that she does not know what state the body is in or

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whether the family would want that. It is his cousin in CT who is dealing with the process. Someone could contact him. Chair Dexter suggested they ask the Mayor if this is something his office would like to coordinate. Mr. Thompson and Mr. Bergevin agreed that this is important.

**8. Airport Director's Report**

a) **AWOS Upgrade**

Mr. Mattern reported that he met with the FAA and learned that one branch of the FAA sent out the notice prematurely. He continued that the FAA does not have the parts yet to upgrade the AWOS. Also, they can only upgrade a certain number per year. He will keep people informed of when this might occur.

b) **Hangar/Office RFP**

Mr. Mattern reported that he reported to the Finance, Organization, and Personnel (FOP) Committee regarding the process they will use for reissuing the RFP, the selection criteria, and who might serve on the review panel. He continued that the FOP Committee wants a staff committee to do the review. They suggest that several members from AAC serve on that. The City will form that committee and invite AAC members. They will release the RFP next week and allow 30 days for responses. Mr. Bergevin asked if it will come back through this committee. Mr. Mattern replied that the results should come back here, yes.

c) **SRE Grant**

Mr. Mattern reported that the City is seeking bids for a new piece of snowplow equipment. He continued that the bids open on Monday. They will review the submissions and the qualifications of the lowest responsible bidder. It will be approximately \$700,000.

d) **Phase 2 Environmental Assessment (EA) Grant**

Mr. Mattern reported that the grant application for Phase 2 of the EA is due on Monday. He continued that he provided the FOP Committee with an informational report on that process. Phase 2 will incorporate as many of the neighbors' concerns as possible. They are in the process of finalizing negotiations with the professional services agreement related to that. They hope to receive offers about a month or so after submittal of the applications.

Mr. Mattern asked Mr. Hutwelker to give an update on the restaurant tenant search. Mr. Hutwelker reported that they had a positive showing on Monday. He continued that Mr. Mattern, Ms. Bendel, and Mr. Moriarty have been terrific resources. People came through on Monday from 5:00 to 7:00 PM with the City Manager, who did a great job on the tour. The people are from an existing restaurant but he cannot say which one. He feels confident. It is a cuisine that is appealing to the market but not all American type food. They have a catering business, too, with many established customers in Keene and Swanzey. Mr. Mattern wants to work with them. The City can propose an attractive lease package. Swanzey, too, wants to see a restaurant be

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successful. They will have more information next week or the week after and that will be the decision point. He is optimistic. Mr. Bergevin and Mr. Thompson thanked him.

**9. Announcements**

Chair Dexter reported that the AAC and its members are not listed on the City's website anymore. He asked why, and what happened. Mr. Mattern replied that he will look into it.

Mr. Bergevin thanked Chair Dexter for doing an excellent job as Chair. He continued that regarding community input for the Airport Master Plan, he does not want it to be a contest between the [neighbors who are concerned about the environment] and the safety of the airport, and opening this up to the public could make it into [a debate of that sort]. This is an airport and they should focus on that, and on what the airport is for. Mr. Hutwelker replied that after attending the meeting he has a much better appreciation of what Mr. Mattern and the City Manager are going through. He continued that this is a delicate position but the trees do need to come down.

Mr. Mattern stated that they need to pay heed to everyone who has an opinion relative to tree removal. He continued that it is a safety issue and they do need to be majorly concerned with the safety of airport users. But the property owners have a right to speak their minds. They need to go through this process and come up with a resolution that takes their concerns into account. It took over 20 years to address obstructions affecting Runway 20 at the south end. It is unfortunate that it took that long but sometimes it does.

**10. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 AM.

Respectfully submitted by  
Britta Reida, Minute-taker

Edited by  
Ed Mattern, Airport Director