

City of Keene
New Hampshire

AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 19, 2015

8:30 am

Airport Terminal Building

Members Present:

Doug Green, Chair
Clark Dexter
Robert Bergevin
Rod Thompson (arrived at 8:34 AM)
Bill Hutwelker
Richard Kasper

Staff Present:

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

Others Present:

Members Not Present:

Kris Roberts, Councilor
Kevin Provost
Peter Delaney

1. Call to Order

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

2. Approval of Minutes – May 15, 2015

Mr. Bergevin made a motion to approve the minutes of May 15, 2015. Mr. Dexter seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous vote of 5 to 0.

3. Airport Master Plan Update – Airport Director

Mr. Mattern reported that the update has been initiated. He continued that they had a first meeting a while ago of the Planning Advisory Committee. Since then they did a full airport tour with all members and it was beneficial, gave them a greater perspective on what they are talking about, such as the various acronyms, etc. They went out on the runways and were able to provide additional input. He wants to hear thoughts from others who were there.

Mr. Hutwelker stated that it was his first tour so it was quite an experience, quite an operation. Mr. Bergevin stated that it was good – he saw some things he did not know existed, even though he has been here for 30 years. He continued that the maintenance building is impressive. It was good for people who do not know much about the airport.

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
June 19, 2015

Chair Green asked how many people took the tour. Mr. Mattern replied that 11 out of 13 committee members. Chair Green asked about the public hearing. Mr. Mattern replied that that was separate.

Mr. Mattern continued that the committee decided to hold all future meetings here at the airport, so people have the opportunity to see more of what they are discussing. They are scheduling another meeting. They are all public meetings, for anyone who wants to attend. This upcoming meeting will be to establish goals. The committee will break into smaller groups and discuss a number of questions and report out to the larger group. Then they will facilitate a discussion which will narrow down on what the primary focus areas should be in the master plan. Some are based on what is required due to FAA guidelines. Another item accomplished is they began the process of creating the actual, printed document.

Mr. Thompson arrived at 8:34 AM.

Mr. Mattern continued that they accomplished the inventory of the airport. Later this morning they have a conference call with the IT department to set up a separate website for the master plan process, and a Facebook page. They got a bit of slow start but now things will start to move along at a better pace. Chair Green asked if the website will be separate from the City website. Mr. Mattern replied that that is part of the discussion. He continued that the City has certain parameters for websites and the airport is trying to expand it and maybe use a different format. He will talk with the IT department about how to accomplish that.

4. Public Relations and Marketing Committee Update

Chair Green reported that they had a meeting about a week ago, and he, Mr. Mattern, Mr. Provost, Mr. Moriarty, and Ms. Bendel discussed how to best promote the airport and make it something that everyone knows is a valuable asset to the community. He continued that the first goal is to set up a mission statement for the committee and branch out from there with different ideas that people have. He invites anyone who is interested to join them, or give a committee member ideas about promoting the airport. The next meeting is Wednesday, 9:00 AM, at City Hall.

Mr. Mattern stated that many people here were in attendance at the meeting and he invites their input. He continued that much of the discussion and efforts are about crafting the mission statement to be as concise and as useful as possible. He invites any input on the draft. One assignment given at the meeting was for committee members to edit the draft mission statement and come back with an alternative to discuss. Whatever the committee comes up with will come back to AAC. He spoke more about how the mission statement was drafted and the process of it. He continued that they also talked about short-term and long-term goals, and marketing versus public relations. At the next meeting they will talk about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the airport in general, which is a typical approach to this kind of a meeting.

Chair Green stated that regarding public relations and marketing, he saw that Ms. Bendel had the agenda for this meeting in her Monadnock Aviation newsletter, which he thinks is a great idea. He continued that Monadnock Aviation is co-sponsoring or hosting the walk-a-thon for the

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
June 19, 2015

Humane Society. Ms. Bendel replied that they are supporting them and teaming up with them, which is a better way of explaining it.

Chair Green asked for an update on the brochures. Mr. Mattern replied that the State has not released them yet. Chair Green asked if anyone had ideas on where they should be distributed. Mr. Bergevin replied the Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Bendel stated that it depends on what the brochures say. Mr. Thompson replied that it is a comprehensive brochure. He continued that it is something to link to the website and Monadnock Aviation's newsletter. It would also be good to send it to mailing lists with a good cover letter, and then follow it up with phone contact. Chair Green asked about giving the brochure to real estate agents. Mr. Hutwelker replied yes, they have packets they hand out to buyers. He continued that maybe the brochure could also go to hotels, inns, economic development committees in towns, and towns themselves.

Mr. Mattern stated that one other focus for the master plan is how to engage the general public in the process of the update. He continued that that is a task of the committee – to provide ideas and insight into how to generate interest from the general public. They will utilize mailing lists to let people know that this process is happening and that their input is welcomed. Chair Green replied that it makes it a more comprehensive, open process.

Mr. Moriarty asked if there can be an electronic version for the Facebook page. Mr. Mattern replied yes.

5. Airport Director's Report

a) Hangar/Office RFP Update

Mr. Mattern replied that the City received two proposals in response to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the available hangar and office space, from Monadnock Aviation and Green River Aviation. He continued that the City Manager will appoint a review committee, and the recommendation from that committee goes to the Finance, Organization, and Personnel (FOP) Committee. There is no specific time frame right now.

b) Snow Removal Equipment (SRE) Replacement

Mr. Mattern reported that they had to reject the bids they received because they were non-compliant with the specifications, such as the EPA guidelines about emissions from the engines. He continued that the EPA told them that manufacturers would probably be surprised about what the laws really are and that showed to be true. They reissued the bid with clearer language about what the requirements for engines are. Bids are due on Wednesday. They expect the bids to be significantly higher, since the previous bids were using equipment that was no longer legal. They got an extension from the State, regarding the application. The State recognized the tight spot the airport was in.

Mr. Thompson stated that several years ago the EPA instituted severe restrictions on emissions, which was difficult for people. He continued that he is not sure if the same rules that apply to truck manufacturers apply in this situation. Mr. Mattern replied that the EPA no longer distinguishes between road and non-road equipment. He continued that they broke it out based on the horsepower of the engine. Depending on horsepower and how you used it, you might have other regulations. To further complicate it, they allow flex credits. For example, a company

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
June 19, 2015

can use a non-compliant engine here because they did something good over there. But why would the customer want a piece of non-compliant equipment? That is the quandary they were in. They want to make sure the vehicle can be used for the next 20 years and is state of the art.

Mr. Thompson recommended requesting information on the maintenance of these vehicles. He spoke about the high maintenance costs. Mr. Mattern replied that those are good considerations. He continued that they are not able to ask certain things because of EPA requirements. Discussion continued. Mr. Bergevin gave information about equipment that lets you know when the system needs to be regenerated. He stated that if the manufacturers are buying updated engines it should not be a problem. Mr. Moriarty gave feedback on the topic, too, and stated that some equipment has features the airport cannot use, like anti-idling and automatic shutdown. He continued that the requirements are intense and have gotten more intense over time. It requires paying close attention to the specifications. Their arms are tied more than they were a few years ago. Discussion continued about automatic shutdowns.

Chair Green asked how the airport will be affected if the State's budget does not pass. Mr. Mattern replied that the State budget has no impact on the airport's ability to get federal funding. He continued that however, if the State furloughs staff, one result might be that the airport's applications to the State get processed more slowly.

Chair Green asked what happens with surplus equipment. Mr. Mattern replied that the FAA rules are strange for surplus equipment. He continued that sometimes the money from the sale of surplus equipment has to go back to the Federal Government, depending on the amount. If the amount is less than \$5,000 the City can get the proceeds from that. It begs the question – if a piece of equipment is valued at about \$100,000, why would the City sell it? On the other hand, why would they continue to maintain it? The reason they replace equipment is that it becomes harder to maintain, with parts not available. They will have to look more closely.

Ed Appel of Green River Aviation asked if there is another place in the city that the snow removal equipment they are replacing could be used. Mr. Mattern replied possibly, but given the size of the equipment, that is unlikely. Mr. Moriarty replied that it does not have a directional chute and only goes one way. Mr. Mattern replied that directional heads could be put on it. He explained that the equipment fund is maintained by the Fleet Department and the airport pays that department a monthly rental fee for the equipment, taking into account replacement value, fuel, maintenance, insurance, etc. The airport pays the Fleet Department to take care of all of that. The rates are based on repair history, replacement cost, and all of those factors. They do not want to drive up their expenses to maintain a piece of equipment that costs the airport a lot of money through that rental fee.

Mr. Bergevin asked what year it is. Mr. Mattern replied that it was purchased new in 1994. Chair Green asked if there is a restriction that it has to be used at the airport. Mr. Mattern replied that the FAA would not hold them to that, now that it has been used at the airport for more than 15 years.

c) Mt. Caesar Beacon

Mr. Mattern reported that the City Council authorized an inter-municipal agreement between the City, the Town of Swanzy, and Cheshire County, relative to the Mt. Caesar Beacon. He

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
June 19, 2015

continued that the City thought they had an easement to put the beacon in its Swanzey location, but it turns out it was a license that the Town gave to the City back in 1943. The fact that it is a license instead of an easement will not change the project. The draft agreement is in the City Attorney's Office for review. The Town and County want to put antennas up for emergency communications. The benefit to the airport is the emergency generator. All in all it is a win win. They hope to finalize the agreement very soon.

Mr. Mattern reported that the Humane Society is having their walk for animals here tomorrow. He continued that that this is their biggest fundraiser. It is a great group to work with. Also tomorrow, the New England Aerobic Club (NEAC) is doing a practice session, beginning at 10:00 AM. They have issued invitations to their safety briefing at about 9:30 AM.

Mr. Thompson gave kudos to Monadnock Aviation for introducing the NEAC on their website. Chair Green replied it was a letter from NEAC, with a photograph and overlay of the box for aerial maneuvers. He continued that it was clear, straightforward, and informative to the public in general.

Mr. Mattern reported that Mr. Bergevin was reappointed by the Mayor to serve another term with the AAC. He continued that former City Councilor Joe Bendzinski was also appointed as a new member.

d) Restaurant

Mr. Hutwelker reported that they had a showing with a group that Mr. Bergevin had initiated contact with. He continued that they are more oriented to catering and events, which is not exactly what they are looking for but it would bring activity here and be consistent. Mr. Mattern is talking with the previous person about reconsidering and coming here sooner than planned. They should have more information by the next AAC meeting.

6. Announcements

Mr. Dexter stated that he wanted to return to the topic of the RFP. He continued that there are two businesses here at the airport. They have to be run with particular time constraints. The airport is run by committee, which has no time constraints, but time is important to a business.

Mr. Dexter made a motion for the AAC to send a letter to the City Council asking them to expedite the RFP process. Mr. Hutwelker seconded the motion.

Mr. Bergevin asked if the RFP will come back to this committee like they used to do. Mr. Mattern replied that it depends on what format it is in, whether it is for informational purposes or for advice and input. He continued that the City Manager is in the process of creating the review committee, which will be comprised of City staff members and some members of this committee. The review committee will assess the proposals' strengths and weaknesses, the pros and cons of each, and so on and so forth. That information will be provided to the FOP Committee for their consideration. The FOP Committee will make a recommendation to the City Council. Chair Green asked how long that process takes, and if the timeframe is set by City ordinance. Mr. Mattern replied that it is not set by ordinance; it is up to circumstances – the ability to gather the committee, how long the review takes, and so on and so forth.

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
June 19, 2015

Chair Green stated that what he hears in the motion is concern with time lag with proposals, which has been an issue before – sometimes by the time a proposal moves through the process, the momentum and opportunity gets lost. He continued that yes, the municipality has to do due diligence, but it would seem appropriate to try and streamline the process in a way that still protects the public but gets through the process in a timely manner. Some proposals are more complex than others. They have heard the time delay sentiment many times over the years.

Mr. Kasper stated that the City wanted to establish a protocol for all RFPs. He continued that he does not think that anything the AAC says today will affect that process or protocol, which will be city-wide. He does not think the City will do anything special for this RFP. Mr. Dexter replied that that is probably the case but when there is something wrong, it is not right to do nothing. His hope is that the AAC's recommendation will get the bureaucracy moving.

Mr. Mattern stated that he understands the focus of the discussion and he can communicate it to the City Manager, which would be beneficial. Chair Green replied that that is a good idea. He continued that this concern is not always related to RFPs – for example, if Mr. Hutwelker has a good customer, they would not want to lose the opportunity due to a time delay.

Chair Green asked Mr. Dexter if he wants to continue with his motion, or just have Mr. Mattern talk with the City Manager. Mr. Thompson spoke in support of Mr. Dexter's motion, stating that if the AAC were behind a statement like that, it is important. Maybe the City would expedite the RFP. It is unfair to businesses to not know what will happen next.

Chair Green asked Mr. Dexter if his motion is to ask the City Council or the City Manager to streamline the RFP process to be more timely and efficient. Mr. Dexter replied yes. Chair Green called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Dexter asked about the status of the project that was supposed to happen in the fall to correct the problem of flooding in the hangars, including his. Mr. Mattern replied that it was never a planned project, but the idea was to use the unallocated funds left over from the runway project to deal with the apron. He continued that it turned out to be too expensive. It will probably be done in a couple years when they do the Runway 14/32 project, which the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) supports.

Mr. Dexter expressed concerns and asked if the City will adjust his rental rate until the problem is fixed. Mr. Mattern replied that that is a City Council discussion. Chair Green advised Mr. Dexter to discuss this matter with the City Manager and Airport Director. Discussion continued.

Ms. Bendel reported that last night at the graduation ceremony for Symonds Elementary's fifth grade students, many of the students' speeches included memories of their field trip to the airport as Kindergarten students. She continued that over and over, students mentioned that candy drop and picnic at the airport as the best field trip they had. This is great marketing and PR.

Mr. Hutwelker reported that he is working with a developer who is looking for 50 to 100 acres to lease for a solar field. He asked if that is of interest to the AAC, and if he should ask the developer to consider this airport. Mr. Appel spoke in support of this idea, because solar is popular and people want to invest in it. This could bring business to the airport. Chair Green

Airport Advisory Commission meeting minutes,
June 19, 2015

stated that he has heard complaints about glare coming off the solar array (at other airports). Mr. Appel replied that most pilots adapt to it.

Chair Green asked Mr. Mattern if he is aware of solar panels at other airports. Mr. Mattern replied yes, he has seen them, but he cannot give specifics. Chair Green asked if the FAA has given feedback pro or con. Mr. Mattern replied that there is an initiative in the FAA to make airports more green and sustainable. He continued that in concept there is support for it but it is an operational issue. The circumstances have to be right for it. He would be willing to hear more information about it. Chair Green replied that they can keep an open mind and see what is proposed. Discussion continued.

Mr. Thompson suggested having a proposal drawn up. What effect would it have on the airport? How much space is needed? What are the maintenance requirements? Where would it be? More information would help them make a better decision. Chair Green replied yes, the proposal would have to come here and to the City Council; it would not be a simple project. But it would be interesting to consider. Mr. Thompson replied that he is all in favor of going green.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 AM. The next meeting is July 17, 2015, at 8:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted by
Britta Reida, Minute-taker

Reviewed by
Ed Mattern, Airport Director