

City of Keene
New Hampshire

AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Friday, November 20, 2015

8:30 am

Airport Terminal Building

Members Present:

Clark Dexter, Chair
Mitch Greenwald, Councilor
Bill Hutwelker
Robert Bergevin
Rod Thompson
Joseph Bendzinski
Peter Delaney (arrived at 8:34 AM)
Richard Kasper

Staff Present:

Ed Mattern, Airport Director
Mike Moriarty, Airport Maintenance and
Operations Foreman (arrived at 8:39 AM)
Rebecca Landry, Assistant City
Manager/IMS Director
Andrew Mueller, IMS Assistant Director

Others Present:

Members Not Present:

Kris Roberts, Councilor
Doug Green
Kevin Provost

1. **Call to Order**

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

2. **Approval of Minutes – October 16, 2015**

Mr. Bendzinski made a motion for the AAC to approve the meeting minutes of October 16, 2015. Mr. Hutwelker seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous vote.

3. **Expansion of Swanzey TIF District Update**

Mr. Mattern reported that the City and the Town of Swanzey are exploring the possibility of expanding Swanzey's Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) District. Through the City's Planning Department, a map and additional information has been created, regarding the acreage to be included. The City provided that to the Town. The Town is going through the process of getting this onto the town warrant.

Mr. Hutwelker stated that that is correct. He continued that there are two parts the Town is working on – the committee in Swanzey meets on December 2 to review the information from the City. They need to decide whether to expand the current TIF District or create a new one, per the map provided. Then they need to make sure it makes economic sense for Swanzey. Liberty Utility wants to expand from Keene into Swanzey. He continued that he had a meeting with them three weeks ago and asked them to consider running a line down Route 32 to pick up

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the airport. They were unaware of this and will consider it. That could happen in 2017 or 2018. Liberty would/could run their lines above a sewer line. It would cut Swanzey's costs if they were able to coordinate a sewer line coming into the airport per Liberty's development. That would weigh heavily into the economics for the Town. He will know more after the meeting in Swanzey, and will continue to communicate through Ms. Landry.

Chair Dexter stated that he also attended the meeting, and it was educational. He continued that he did not know the airport buildings were on septic, not sewer. It would be beneficial to get a sewer line into the airport. He wants to note for the record that in October the AAC voted in favor of the TIF District expansion.

4. Airport Master Plan Update – Airport Director

Mr. Mattern reported that progress continues. He continued that the Planning Advisory Committee met and the presentation was about the capacity and demand forecast analysis. He has copies available for anyone who wants to see them. It will be on the Internet shortly.

Mr. Delaney arrived at 8:34 AM.

Mr. Mattern continued that the committee also continued discussions about how to involve the general public in giving input about the future of the airport and the Master Plan. That process will be ongoing.

Mr. Hutwelker stated that the committee meets again on November 30, at 3:00 PM, here in the airport terminal.

Chair Dexter stated that it was nice to see so many people at the meeting, but with the exception of himself and Mr. Bergevin, there were no other pilots. Beth Bendel, of Monadnock Aviation, replied that she is a pilot. Chair Dexter continued that it bothered him that there were not more pilots there. Some people present were not necessarily friends of aviation. He encourages AAC members to attend the meetings and give input. Whatever comes out of these Planning Advisory Committee meetings will affect the airport for the next ten years. Mr. Bergevin stated that Joe Briggs from C&S is on the committee but he is out of town right now.

Ms. Landry reported that the meeting on November 30 will not have the consultant present. She continued that they will get feedback from the committee on the consultant process.

5. Airport Marketing & PR Committee Update

Ms. Landry reported that the City Manager (John MacLean) is retiring and Mr. Mattern is soon retiring as well. She continued that they went back to see what the charge of the AAC is and what it says about the marketing committee. Mr. MacLean had the marketing committee as a separate entity, but the charge requires the AAC to have it as a subcommittee. They may ask the current marketing committee to become that subcommittee. But then, subcommittee members need to be AAC members. They are looking to clarify this. Ms. Bendel is currently chair of the marketing committee but is not an AAC member. They have to either change the ordinance to remove the requirement of having the marketing committee as a subcommittee of the AAC, or continue the activities of the committee as the subcommittee. She continued that she, Mr.

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Mattern, and Planning Director Rhett Lamb talked about it and they think the request will be to have the committee become the AAC subcommittee.

Mr. Moriarty arrived at 8:39 AM.

Chair Dexter stated that Ms. Bendel is a major player, and as Chair, he opposes anything that keeps Ms. Bendel out of the committee. Ms. Landry agreed. Chair Dexter continued that it would be nice if the City included the AAC Chair in what they are planning to do, so the AAC has input. The AAC's complaint over the years has been that they feel ignored and want to have input. Ms. Landry replied that she appreciates the sentiment. She continued that the City will do everything they can to keep Chair Dexter in the loop and they will not make decisions without his input. The current marketing committee is not a public body. If it becomes an AAC subcommittee it will be, which means anyone could participate. That is one way to keep Monadnock Aviation represented.

Discussion continued about the status of the marketing committee and previous marketing subcommittees. Mr. Thompson noted that the marketing subcommittee was run by Cindy Rodenhauer-Stewart, who worked in marketing, and they left behind a helpful report that everyone here should have a copy of. Mr. Delaney replied that that committee, especially former member Mark Hoefer, did a lot of work on the website, then lost its steam when those AAC members left simultaneously.

Mr. Thompson stated that he was very enthusiastic as a result of the most recent marketing committee meeting. He continued that marketing the airport is complex, but he thinks everyone present agreed that Ms. Bendel is the best person to do it. The Monadnock Aviation website demonstrates her skills and the newsletters she writes are fantastic. Monadnock Aviation pays for activities that benefit their business and the airport as a whole. He is in favor of putting Ms. Bendel in charge of/primary consultant for the website and electronic marketing. She does great work and would be a huge help. Mr. Bergevin stated that as a user of the airport for 30 years, he agrees. He continued that Ms. Bendel has done more for this airport than any other FBO.

Mr. Hutwelker asked Ms. Landry how they can make sure Ms. Bendel is a part of this. Ms. Landry replied that she will meet with the AAC Chair to discuss the ordinance that establishes the marketing subcommittee. She continued that they will make sure that anyone who wants to be involved in marketing can be, and that it is not restricted to just AAC members, even if only AAC members can be official subcommittee members. If the direction they want to take is to change the ordinance, that request would go to the City Council. It would start as a conversation with her, Acting City Manager Med Koczynski, Chair Dexter, and others.

Mr. Thompson asked if Ms. Bendel can be a member of the AAC, and spoke in favor of that. Mr. Delaney replied that the conversation in the past has been that airport business owners serving as AAC members might be a conflict of interest. Discussion ensued.

Chair Dexter thanked Ms. Bendel for providing refreshments today to honor Mr. Mattern as he approaches his retirement. He recessed the meeting at 8:49 AM and called it back to order at 8:54 AM.

AAC members thanked Ms. Bendel. Chair Dexter stated that this is to mark Mr. Mattern's retirement after more than 22 years of service. He spoke about Mr. Mattern's depth of knowledge of the airport and his great work, including raising about \$16 million in grants to improve the airport. The group applauded and thanked Mr. Mattern.

6. Airport Director's Report

Mr. Mattern reported that he has been told that the Governor and Council's report on December 2 will include approval for two airport grants – one for the Environmental Assessment Phase II study for the obstruction clearing project, and one for the replacement of the twin engine snow blower.

Mr. Mattern reported that some of the PAPIs were struck by lightning and are having issues. He continued that as soon as one is fixed, problems pop up in another. Mr. Moriarty can give more information. He is working on this and hopes to have it squared away soon.

Mr. Mattern reported that they have had interest in the restaurant in the terminal and the one at the south end of the airport. He asked Mr. Hutwelker to give more information. Mr. Hutwelker reported that there are two interested parties. He gave information about the first one, who has spent 15 years working in and out of an airport in Vermont. He has a great understanding of small airports and what it takes to have a successful restaurant at one. He continued that the second person is interested in using the space as an event-oriented facility – a theme that the marketing committee came up with. These are two good candidates.

Mr. Moriarty stated that aviation is its own language and world, and it is easy to get complacent and forget that everyone else does not know what they are talking about. Many people interested in the restaurant do not fully understand the dynamics, the relationship with the FBO, the differences between a typical small restaurant and one at an airport, and so on and so forth. The first candidate Mr. Hutwelker spoke of understands all of that and it was great to hear from him. Mr. Moriarty spoke positively about this person's knowledge and abilities, and spoke of how well the meetings with him went. He also has a good feeling about the other person, who had previously not been ready to commit to the airport space but now might be.

Mr. Mattern reported that they are continuing to pursue the hangar and administrative building that used to be leased by Green River Aviation. He continued that the City is trying to gain access at the earliest opportunity. Mr. Bendzinski replied that Green River is no longer paying rent and it should not be taking this long. Mr. Bergevin asked when Monadnock Aviation will be able to use that space. Discussion ensued. Ms. Landry reported that the City Attorney is well engaged in this process and is using all of the legal opportunities available to get the hangar available. She continued that they would like to have a new lease agreement before snow flies. The worst case scenario, legally, is that it would take two to three months. Discussion continued. Councilor Greenwald reiterated Ms. Landry's explanation, noting that the City Attorney is following the legal process with a series of filings at appropriate times. Mr. Delaney asked if Green River still has items in/is using the building. Ms. Landry and Ms. Bendel replied yes. Mr. Thompson stated that for the record, he offers to help move items out.

7. **Announcements**

Chair Dexter stated that he will be creating a permanent agenda item for Ms. Bendel to report on airport events. He asked if she wanted to speak now. Ms. Bendel asked if the AAC agendas can be posted online like they are for other City committees. Ms. Landry replied that yes, and she is surprised it is not already. She continued that she will take care of it. Not all committees post agendas online – it is up to each chair to decide. Chair Dexter replied that it makes sense for the AAC to have the agenda online.

Ms. Bendel reported that business has been very good. She continued that often she hears around town that “nothing happens at the airport,” which is completely false. Recently, Winco Powerline Services chose to come to Keene and be based here at the airport while doing some work. Currently, aerial surveyors also chose to be based here, and are buying fuel during their stay. Good things are happening at the airport every day. A trend they are seeing is larger jets, on a fairly regular basis – sometimes they talk about the ramp getting too small, which is a great problem to have. Monadnock Aviation is hosting a Manchester tour for January, which non-pilots are welcome to participate in if there is still room after pilots have been given the opportunity to sign up. Private pilot school is wrapping up soon and over 50% of the participants are under age 20, which is unusual. Instrument ground school is starting in January. Tomorrow at noon is the final BBQ of the year. All are welcome and encouraged to bring food and/or monetary donations for the Community Kitchen. It is great to show people that the airport is helping the community. She thanked Mr. Thompson for his generous donation.

Chair Dexter stated that there are people who do not like having the airport here. He continued that he is asking Ms. Bendel to give the good news so people can see that things happen at the airport that benefit the city. He will continue asking Ms. Bendel for a month report, and will also ask Mr. Moriarty to give a monthly report on operations at the airport.

Mr. Moriarty replied that this is a good opportunity to talk about Mr. Mattern’s retirement. He continued that he worked with him every day and wants to highlight some of his work. When Mr. Mattern first came here, there was no SRE building, fence, gate, security, or cameras - Mr. Mattern has made things happen, and it has been a pleasure working for him. Mr. Mattern implemented a security camera system, which was important to have. Soon they will be adding a security camera to monitor the card reader area, because that has been a problem – they see cars they do not recognize. They will also be getting a new HVAC unit.

Mr. Moriarty stated that he needs pilot input regarding the PAPIs – they are high tech “smart” devices with expensive parts. He was able to get three out of four working and will dig to see if the cable in the ground is bad. He wants to know if having three out of four working is useful at all, or if he should turn them all off if one is not working. Several AAC members replied that he should leave the three working ones on.

Chair Dexter asked if Councilor Greenwald, as City Council liaison, has any input for now. Councilor Greenwald replied that changes that are coming and it is a new beginning next year. He continued that they should stay the course. He remembers when the Red Roof and commuter airlines were here and this was a bustling place, and has great hopes that it will happen again. Mr. Mattern did a great job here.

Councilor Greenwald asked if there are membership slots to be filled. Chair Dexter replied yes, they will be looking for new members. Councilor Greenwald encouraged people to make recommendations to the Mayor. He does not know who the City Council member will be – he is here now as Councilor Roberts' alternate. In January the Mayor will maybe reappoint him, or appoint someone else. Mr. Bergevin asked if the AAC could recommend that the Mayor reappoint Councilor Greenwald. Councilor Greenwald replied that they can make a recommendation, but the Mayor makes his own decisions.

Chair Dexter asked if Ms. Landry will be the staff liaison for this committee. Ms. Landry agreed. She continued that she will meet with him and Mr. Kopczynski to talk about how to do things going forward.

Chair Dexter stated that three days after the AAC elected him as Chair, Mr. Mattern announced he was leaving and Ms. Landry told him he would have to make a presentation to the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure (MSFI) Committee. He continued that that is scheduled for January. He and Mr. Thompson met with Ms. Landry to find out what was going on with the website. They thought it would just be the three of them but it was also Mr. Mattern and Mr. Kopczynski and the enthusiasm was shocking. He thinks great things are going to happen here and it is up to the AAC to jump on the bandwagon and make it go. They are approaching the end of the year and may be losing four members. Some are up for renewal but others will need to be replaced. He asked Mr. Briggs and he is interested in being an alternate member. If anyone else knows of potential new members, let the AAC know. It is a value to have non-pilots but it is especially beneficial to have pilots because they understand what is going on. Mr. Bendzinski asked to put Ms. Bendel on the list of recommendations.

Mr. Thompson made a motion for the AAC to recommend (with strong emphasis) Beth Bendel as a member of the AAC. Mr. Bergevin seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Delaney asked about the geographical limitations. Chair Dexter replied that the AAC can have nine members total – five from Keene, one from Swanzey, and the rest from anywhere. Mr. Delaney asked if they discussed changing that. Mr. Mattern replied that originally it required a City Councilor and someone from Swanzey and were no other requirements. He continued that that was changed, under Mayor Blastos.

Mr. Bendzinski made a motion for the AAC to request that Mayor Lane reappoint Councilor Greenwald as the City Council liaison to the AAC. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion.

Mr. Bendzinski spoke positively about Councilor Greenwald. Councilor Greenwald thanked him but reiterated that it is up to Mayor Lane. Mr. Bergevin asked if Councilor Greenwald would still be able to vote on airport matters at City Council meetings if he is an AAC member. Discussion ensued. Mr. Mattern clarified that City Council members on the AAC can vote at both AAC and City Council meetings.

Councilor Greenwald asked for the minutes to reflect his hesitancy. The motion passed by a vote of 7 to 0. Councilor Greenwald abstained.

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Mr. Kopczynski; Assistant City Manager Beth Fox; and Parks, Recreation, and Cemeteries Director Andy Bohannon arrived at 9:25 AM.

Mr. Bergevin stated that previous AAC agendas has “New Business” at the end, to bring up new topics that could either be discussed then or at the next meeting, if the discussion was too involved. Chair Dexter replied that he was told that any discussion topic had to be noted on the agenda and publicized ahead of time, since these are public meetings. He continued that however, the agenda always includes “Announcements” and that can have a variety of topics.

8. Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Dexter adjourned the meeting at 9:26 AM.

Respectfully submitted by
Britta Reida, Minute-taker