

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

**AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, April 22, 2025**

**9:00 AM**

**Terminal Building,  
Dillant-Hopkins Airport**

**Members Present:**

Elizabeth Bendel, Vice Chair  
Bill Hutwelker  
Peter Temple  
Nathan Jacobs, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

David Hickling, Airport Manager/Chair  
Rebecca Landry, Deputy City Manager

**Members Not Present:**

Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager  
Councilor Mitch Greenwald  
Luca Paris  
Bob Lyle  
Kristopher Radder, Alternate

**1) Call to Order**

Chair Hickling called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

**2) Adopt January Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Bendel made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 28, 2025. Mr. Jacobs seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

**3) American WWII Heritage City**

Chair Hickling stated that he has been approached by Bud Winsor, an acquaintance of the Mayor, about something put on by the National Park Service, called American WWII Heritage City. He continued that the National Park Service will recognize a city or pair of cities that had some kind of impact on World War II. Per Mr. Winsor's research, Keene meets the criteria to apply for this, as this airport was developed as a training base for Navy pilots. Mr. Winsor has done most of the work to apply for this. He proposes they do a joint application with Swanzey. Discussion ensued.

ADMC members questioned what the impact of this recognition would be, and whether it would limit the airport's future development in any way. Mr. Temple suggested they ask someone at

the Cheshire Historical Society to clarify in more detail. Chair Hickling replied that Mr. Winsor has done the research to confirm that the airport meets the criteria, but regarding whether having this designation would have any future impact, he is not sure.

Chair Hickling asked if anyone can work with Mr. Winsor on this. He continued that Mr. Winsor has done most of the leg work, but an ADMC member could help expand/edit the cover letter Mr. Winsor drafted, which would then go to Mayor Kahn and the acting Town Supervisor in Swanzeey to get them to sign off on and submit it. Mr. Temple replied that he can work with Mr. Winsor on this.

#### **4) Airport Runway 5K/Airport Open House 2025**

Chair Hickling stated that the Open House is coming up in about a month (on Sunday, May 18). He continued that the 5K is actually from 9:00 to 10:30 AM, not 8:00 to 9:30 AM as he had been previously been saying. The Open House will be from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. He named the food trucks that will be participating. He spoke about how he will soon promote the event on Danny Mitchell's radio show, and that he created an event on the airport's Facebook page. Ms. Landry spoke about marketing efforts as well. Brief discussion ensued about the website and advertising the event.

Chair Hickling shared information about what the event will involve and what they will have for displays, including the Experimental Aircraft Association, the Civil Air Patrol, Monadnock Aviation, the New England Aerobatics Club, and Monadnock Choppers. He talked about the Airport's equipment that will be on display as well. He continued that they are still looking for volunteers, including someone to help with parking. He showed a site plan for the event, and explained the locations for parking, aircraft displays, food trucks, tents, the race and associated activities, and so on and so forth. Chair Hickling stated that the race organizers understand that last year there was a problem with some people going on the runway after the race was over, so this year they are going to make sure that does not happen.

Ms. Bendel asked if Chair Hickling will NOTAM the airport closed during the race time, and somehow let people who are flying in know that they need to come before or after that closure. Chair Hickling replied yes. Discussion ensued about the planning for this.

Chair Hickling spoke about the planning for how and where the race participants will park and enter the event, making a concentrated effort to keep them out of the terminal. Ms. Bendel asked where people from the flight schools and CAP will have their informational tables. Chair Hickling replied that he was envisioning those right in front of the aircraft displays. Discussion continued. Ben Albert, Airport Operations and Maintenance Manager, spoke about plans for temporary fencing, necessary to detain the general public on the airfield. He and Chair Hickling spoke about the plan for how and where the food truck vendors will enter and set up.

Ms. Bendel noted that the area for static displays is fairly small. Chair Hickling replied that they could grow it. He and Mr. Albert gave more information about that.

Chair Hickling asked Ms. Bendel if Monadnock Aviation would have enough staff to coordinate fly-ins, in terms of someone to direct them on where to park. Ms. Bendel replied yes. Discussion continued about fly-ins and NOTAMs. Ms. Bendel asked/talked about what the plan is for aircraft flying in for other reasons, people who do not know that the Open House and 5K events are happening and are thus expecting the typical procedures, and discussion continued.

Mr. Jacobs asked how they are advertising the event. Ms. Landry replied that they have a whole plan, worked out with the Senior Center (which is sponsoring the 5K). She spoke of how it involves radio, web, and social media. Chair Hickling stated that maybe Mr. Jacobs can help him advertise for fly-ins. He continued that he was going to start posting information on the New England Pilots Association and social media sites. He asked if Mr. Jacobs had other ideas for reaching out. Mr. Jacobs spoke about other websites he has looked into, and about how it would be helpful if other local events encouraged fly-ins and how they could combine marketing efforts. When people search online for New England events they could fly to, they might find a Keene event they are interested in, but if they do not know Keene has an airport, they have to look that up separately. If Keene event promotions included information about the airport and available shuttles, it would help. Discussion ensued about this idea. Mr. Jacobs stated that his other thought was about how any downtown Keene event, like Art Walk, could be advertised as a fly-in event; a fly-in does not have to involve an event at the airport. Discussion ensued. Ms. Bendel stated that a marquee board would be an easy, inexpensive start.

Ms. Bendel stated that transportation (from the airport to downtown) becomes the issue. Discussion ensued about how it currently works, what the possibilities are, and how it connects with the master plan. Chair Hickling spoke about how it would need to be “on demand” transportation, because there is not enough demand for a regular, scheduled route. He continued that transportation is not something they will solve here or today, but it is definitely something they need to figure out, if they are looking to increase fly-ins. He thinks advertising city events to a potential fly-in market is great. Discussion continued with ideas and thoughts, such as Uber/rideshare apps, City vans, taxis, public transportation, vans of local residents, paid versus volunteer/donation-based, on-demand shuttles, and how the different amounts of people in need of transportation require different methods.

Chair Hickling asked if there was any more discussion on the Open House. He continued that he will email the ADMC regarding volunteering at the event. Ms. Landry stated that she would appreciate having a list of all the things that Chair Hickling read off to them about what is happening at the event, so she can include all that in the promotional materials.

**5) Hangar Development Negotiations**

Chair Hickling stated that for Parcel 3, they are in final negotiations with the developer, and they are moving forward with their plans. He continued that they do not have a signed lease yet, but it is looking good. If everything goes according to plan, they should have a lease signed and maybe even work starting in June, which would be great. They also have another developer who is very interested in developing here, who was interested in that parcel. He has been talking with them about Parcel 1. There are some hurdles to get over. C&S has first right of refusal for that parcel. C&S needs to see a lease the City negotiated and then they will make the determination on whether they want to execute the first right of refusal. There are some other issues for the developer – the lack of pavement means an apron and taxiway would need to be built. What he sees happening is the airport putting out an RFP for that parcel, negotiating a lease, then taking it to C&S to see if they want to execute their right to first refusal, and if not, the City can work something out with that pavement.

Mr. Jacobs asked who is responsible for the pavement in front of the hangar. Chair Hickling replied usually the developer, but this involves taxiway, too. He continued that they could see about getting funding from the FAA and DOT. The funding timeline is the issue. It is a discussion they need to have. Brief discussion ensued about the potential cost and options. Chair Hickling stated that he thinks the developer is on the fence about whether to develop on that parcel, because of the infrastructure cost.

Mr. Jacobs asked if there are minimum required sizes for the parcels. Chair Hickling replied yes, and spoke more about what the developer wants and his plans for future expansion. Discussion continued about this and hangar development in general.

**6) Airport Fly-In Promotions**

Chair Hickling stated that they talked about this previously in the agenda.

**7) City Hall Airport Display**

Chair Hickling stated that he wants to give a big shout-out to Ms. Bendel for the display at City Hall, which came out beautiful. He continued that Ms. Bendel did all of that, and it came out perfect. He has heard some great comments about it. They are thankful to Ms. Bendel.

**8) Other/Miscellaneous**

Chair Hickling stated that they have a budget to replace the signage at the airport. He continued that they got quotes last year or maybe earlier, which were very high, so the project was put on the back burner. Now, they will be doing the sign in the next couple of months, and he wanted to reach out to the ADMC to see if anyone wants to work with him on this. Ms. Bendel and Ms. Landry replied that they will help. Discussion ensued.

9) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Hickling adjourned the meeting at 9:44 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
David Hickling, Airport Director