ADOPTED

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

# AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, June 3, 2025** **9:00 AM** **Terminal Building, Dillant Hopkins Airport**

**Members Present:**
Elizabeth Bendel, Vice Chair
Bill Hutwelker
Nathan Jacobs, Alternate
Kristopher Radder, Alternate

**Staff Present:**
David Hickling, Airport Manager/Chair
Rebecca Landry, Deputy City Manager

**Members Not Present:**
Councilor Mitch Greenwald
Peter Temple
Luca Paris
Bob Lyle

## 1) Call to Order

Chair Hickling called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Roll call was conducted.

## 2) Adopt April Meeting Minutes

Mr. Jacobs made a motion to approve the April meeting minutes. Mr. Radder seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

## 3) City Code Regarding Quorum Requirements

Chair Hickling stated that the City Clerk's Office sent an email to the staff liaisons for all of the City's boards, committees, and commissions, regarding quorum requirements. He continued that he does not think the ADMC has ever had this problem, but the message reminded groups to not start a meeting without a quorum and not continue a meeting without a quorum. However, something for the ADMC to keep in mind is that it is also a violation for members to chitchat about agenda items when they are sitting and waiting for the meeting to begin, before there is a quorum.

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

Chair Hickling stated that the Airport Open House and Runway 5K was a great success, considering the weather. He continued that the 5K went very smoothly with 244 runners and successfully raised $18,000 for the Senior Center. He gave more information about how the Open House went and expressed appreciation for everyone who participated, and the great support from the airport community.

Chair Hickling asked if the ADMC members had feedback about the event. Mr. Radder suggested they try to team up with a radio station next year and have them do a live broadcast. Mr. Jacobs stated that he liked the setup they had, when people came in to walk around and check out the vendors. Discussion continued. Chair Hickling thanked Mr. Radder for his great photos.

Mr. Jacobs asked how they advertise the good things that were done, like the money that was raised. Mr. Radder replied that it would probably be a press release to various media outlets with a couple photos attached. He continued that they should include regional media outlets, not just local ones. Ms. Landry replied that she likes that idea. She continued that they could use images from the event monthly, throughout the year. However, they (the City) should focus on the Open House, and let the Senior Center focus on the 5K. It is important to make sure everything they (the City/ADMC) advertise, support, and issue invitations for is based on support for aviation.

Mr. Radder asked if Chair Hickling thinks the FAA would approve the event for next year. Chair Hickling replied that he is optimistic.

Mr. Hutwelker asked if there might be an opportunity next year for drone footage. Chair Hickling replied yes, if the weather is okay. Brief discussion ensued.

## 5) Hangar Development Proceedings

Chair Hickling reported that they signed a lease for Parcel 3. He continued that the goal is to have the hangar completed by winter, which is ambitious but possible. He issued a letter of things the City needs before they can issue a notice to proceed, such as the performance bond and FAA approval. The site plan he saw is not the final one, but it looks good. He hopes they (the developer) sends those items within the next week or so and construction can begin.

Ms. Bendel asked if site plan review has to go through the Town of Swanzey, too. Mr. Hutwelker replied yes, the Town of Swanzey has already approved it. Ms. Bendel asked about Keene approval. Chair Hickling replied that it does not require Planning Board review, but the lease says (City staff) will look at the plans and he has talked with the City Engineer, who will take a look at it.

Mr. Jacobs asked if they (the developer) are using their own fuel storage tanks, like C&S does. Chair Hickling stated that they would not have fuel tanks. Mr. Jacobs also asked if the site plan included floor drains and if there was an oil/water Separator. He continued that for example, if they de-ice in the hangar, he wonders where the run-off will go. Discussion ensued. Chair Hickling stated that he will have to take a look at it. Ms. Landry stated that it comes down to what is in the construction agreement.

Julie Schoelzel, the new CEO of the Chamber, arrived at 9:14 AM and introduced herself, and the ADMC welcomed her.

Discussion continued about hangar drainage. Chair Hickling stated that they said in the lease that any design has to meet local, State, or Federal rules and regulations and that should ensure compliance with any environmental concerns. The lease also states that the tenant must comply with the Airport Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

Chair Hickling stated that the second item pertaining to hangar development is a proposal for Parcel 2, which is the “prime development location” between the terminal and the maintenance building. He continued that in the past, his intent was to save it for the development of a hangar of up to 20,000 square feet or larger, but now there is a proposal from someone wanting to build a 12,000 square foot hangar, or two 7,000 square foot ones. The question is whether to take this opportunity that is here, or keep the parcel for a potentially larger hangar in the future. The City Manager asked him to get the ADMC’s input on the proposal. If the ADMC says yes, they should take this opportunity, it does not necessarily mean it will happen, but they would like the ADMC’s thoughts.

Discussion ensued, and Chair Hickling answered ADMC members’ questions. Ms. Landry stated that if they want to sit on that property, they need to decide for how long, given the market conditions. She continued that she thinks if they are not sure what to do or whether to accept someone’s idea for the parcel, the answer is to issue an RFP for that parcel and perhaps others. Discussion continued about hangar/facility sizes, and Ms. Landry stated that in an RFP, they can include a preference for the ideal (size), but not a requirement.

Mr. Jacobs stated that since the property (Parcel 2) is so close to the road, for water, sewer, plug-ins, he recommends it be for a larger hangar. Smaller hangars should be somewhere else. Discussion continued about the size, and about what size airplanes would fit in a 12,000 square foot hangar.

Chair Hickling asked if the ADMC’s consensus is to save Parcel 2 for a larger development opportunity, or to put out an RFP and see if they get something. He continued that no one else expressed interest in developing 20,000 square feet. Ms. Landry replied that people are not coming to Keene; people in Keene need to go out and find people. There is a difference. She continued that if they put out an RFP, they would need to advertise it heavily.

Mr. Jacobs asked where Chair Hickling would recommend a 12,000-foot (hangar go), if not in that space. Chair Hickling replied, and discussion continued. Chair Hickling stated that there is the possibility of a large facility at Parcel 15, but it would require a tremendous amount of infrastructure to put that in.

Mr. Jacobs asked about Parcel 5, and discussion ensued about the location and size of it. Chair Hickling stated that there is someone looking at that spot. He continued that the person interested in Parcel 2 has looked at other available parcels but was not interested in them. Discussion continued about other possible locations. Ms. Bendel suggested one that might work (for the person interested in Parcel 2), and Chair Hickling replied that it might work, and he will look into it. Mr. Jacobs asked how Chair Hickling proposes vehicles would get to that hangar parcel, and discussion continued.

Chair Hickling asked again if the ADMC members want to wait until someone wants to build a hangar of approximately 20,000 square feet on Parcel 2, or if they think the City should put out an RFP and advertise it nationally.

Ms. Bendel asked if the City would be obligated to accept an offer if they did an RFP. Ms. Landry replied no. She continued that the City has a great Purchasing Manager who has the whole process down to a science. She continued that he would lean on the ADMC for suggestions on where to advertise the RFP. Mr. Jacobs replied that the best place to advertise would be to aircraft manufacturers that are selling new airplanes.

Ms. Landry asked what the status is of the discussions that had been happening with Medevac. Chair Hickling replied that they stopped replying to him. Discussion ensued. Ms. Landry stated that she and the City Manager can try talking with them, if Chair Hickling helps her with the context.

Mr. Jacobs asked more questions about Parcel 3, which Chair Hickling answered. Discussion continued. Ms. Bendel asked if there is ever a chance of getting a sewer connection. Chair Hickling replied that would involve Swanzey. He continued that he thinks it would be more realistic if there was development they knew would be using it. Discussion continued, and Mr. Hutwelker stated that Keene and Swanzey should have that conversation.

**6) <u>American WWII Heritage City Nomination</u>**

Chair Hickling reported that the City of Keene and the Town of Swanzey applied jointly for the American WWII Heritage City nomination. He continued that her received a response that the nomination was received, but he does not know what the timeline is for when they might hear back. This (recognition) would be great to have.

**7) <u>Airport Fly-In Promotions</u>**

Chair Hickling stated that the ADMC has had a couple of discussions about airport fly-in promotions. He continued that the Jumanji celebration will be happening, which would be great to advertise for fly-ins. Transportation from the Airport to downtown Keene/the event was an issue they had not found a solution for. He asked if they still want to try and advertise the Jumanji event.

Ms. Landry replied that she has been at all the event protocol meetings and has repeatedly said that they should talk with the Airport about fly-in opportunities to increase awareness and participation. She continued that she can bring it up with the event coordinators, who might have ideas about how to get people from the Airport to the event. Discussion ensued about possibilities like Uber, which ADMC members noted is not always available when needed, or Thomas Transportation.

Chair Hickling asked if someone would contact Thomas Transportation to ask how much it would cost to run a shuttle (between the Airport and downtown) for the hours of the event. Then they could look at how to potentially split the cost of the shuttle. He continued that he did increase the Airport's budget line for public relations.

**8) Other/Misc.**

Ms. Landry asked if Ms. Schoelzel wanted to introduce herself or say anything. Ms. Schoelzel replied that she was invited to this meeting and is glad to be here, and is interested in learning the background and goals of the ADMC. Chair Hickling replied that it is focused on marketing the Airport and development at the Airport. He continued that they have accomplished quite a bit so far. McFarland Johnson did an Airport land use study, and a market study was completed to explore the viability of development, and over the last couple of years, multiple people have expressed interest in hangar development. They also had a consultant help with Airport branding/identity. They have accomplished quite a bit.

Ms. Schoelzel asked if there is any information about who currently uses the Airport, because the Chamber does a lot of marketing, and they could tailor some stuff for that. Chair Hickling replied that this meeting is almost out of time, but he will talk with Ms. Schoelzel, and maybe at the next meeting, they could talk about marketing the Airport to local businesses. Discussion continued. Ms. Schoelzel replied that that sounds good, and she would also love to hear about people flying in for events and for vacation.

**9) Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Hickling adjourned the meeting at 9:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
David Hickling, Airport Director