

MINUTES
Aviation Commission SPECIAL MEETING
August 11, 2022 – 6:00pm
Robertson Airport

PRESENT: The following members were present: Frank Cawley, Mark DePucchio, David King and John Onisto

ABSENT: Reade Clemens, Robert Mastrianni

STAFF: Robert Lee, *Town Manager*

VISITORS: Constance Bastille – Manager Meriden Markham Airport, Catherine Battista – Meriden Markham Aviation Commission, Gerry D’Amico – AECOM, Nick Scata via Zoom – Interstate Aviation, David Underwood – Town Council Liaison

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman DePucchio at 6:02pm

2. Old Business

- Meeting Minutes of April 25, 2022 and June 27, 2022

Motion was made by: David King to accept the April 25, 2022 and June 27, 2022 minutes

Seconded by: Frank Crawley.

All in favor 4 to 0

Motion passes.

3. Other Business

A. Discussion with Meriden Markham Airport Representatives
– Airport Hangar Construction Project

The Town Manager gave a quick overview of the purpose of their discussion which was to decide if they expand and add more hangar space at the Airport, do they look to use public funds or seek private funds. They invited Meriden Markham representatives, Constance Bastille and Catherine Battista, to talk about their project and how they were able to move forward using public funds. Their process started back in 2005 before it was owned by the City. Initially, some tenants formed their own organization to take on the build and took permits out from Wallingford where the build was going to begin. That project fell through, but the permits were still on the books and

valid. After the city took over the airport (over 10 years ago), they began to have issues with their hangars, two of which were built in the 40's. After evaluating the situation, they determined it was not cost effective to renovate/repair the existing hangars and that is how the City got started with their project.

Meriden did not do a lease analysis. They already owned the hangars, they had the layout, permits were set with Wallingford so they moved forward from there with City Council approval. Their \$3mil project was put out to bid in anticipation of the Airport Manager leasing out the spaces and giving revenue back to the city each year to pay off the bond. The hangars were completed in 2019; all have been leased. Currently have a waitlist of about 30. They keep their rents under \$500. T-hangars are most in demand. They have a community hangar. Tenants in the community hangar agree (as part of their lease) that their plane can be moved when another tenant needs to get their plane in or out.

Zoom connection with Nick Scata was lost. He did not reconnect.

B. Airport Layout Plan Update

Robert stated as part of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail going across the airport field, DOT will hire a consultant (Mark Jewel, VHB) to perform work to connect sections of the trail. This work will also update some portion of the ALP. The Town will get together with VHB in the next week or two. There will be some revenue that comes through at the end of this work due to the easement when constructed. This work by DOT will be part of Phase 2 which is in design right now. The section for Phase 2 runs from the kiosk on Northwest Drive down to a tunnel at the end of Rte 72 near Cody Avenue. Phase 2 is expected to be constructed in the fall of 2024.

Discussion began with regard to the 7 acres of FAA land. The Aviation Commission needs to make a recommendation whether to use it for aviation use or look to lease it for non-aviation use. Metro Realty has expressed interest in marketing the property. Another option is the Town's Economic Development Agency can market it. If we're looking for aviation use, 15 acres of land can be marketed. There's the possibility of selling the 7 acres as well. Gerry reminded Commission members if the land is sold, that limits the expansion and future development of the Airport. The Commission would like to have Geoff Sager from Metro Realty attend a future meeting to discuss the possibilities.

The Town Manager will contact Geoff Sager to attend a future meeting.

The Commission discussed the number of hangars, types of hangars as well as size. The consultant for the master plan may make suggestions on how

the future hangar area can be laid out. The current ALP is 12 years old so it may end up different from what it looks like now.

C. Carling Technologies Tree Removal

Robert stated as part of the PAPI/AWOS project and number of trees needed to be removed. The Sketch put together by AECOM was reviewed showing trees that need to be removed. Carling Technologies gave permission to remove trees and replace with bushes. Gerry confirmed AECOM has coordinated everything with Carling.

Robert met with two contractors (McLellan and Holcomb Tree) and received two quotes for tree removal and stump grinding. The low quote is from Holcomb at \$22,500 – McLellan's quote was \$26,000. Holcomb can do the work within a week. This will not be funded by a grant since it is not Airport property and will use airport funds. The budget for the bushes is \$3,000.

Motion was made by: David King to accept and approve the quote from Holcomb Tree Service for \$22,500

Seconded by: Frank Crawley. Motion passes unanimously.

All in favor 4 to 0

Motion passes.

D. T Hangar Discussion

Reviewed during discussion with Meriden Markham.

E. Status of Property Release

Discussed during ALP update.

F. Airport Grounds Security Discussion

Mark is looking to see if there's a way to integrate and cover a portion of the security camera install. The Commission would like to have the discussion when Nick is in attendance.

Dave mentioned he has a product that he will discuss with Nick. He believes it would meet Interstate's needs for the Airport.

G. AECOM Report

Per Gerry, a grant has been issued for the PAPI/AWOS Project. A contract has been initiated with Moulison. In addition AECOM has updated the DBE Program for the Town. The Town is required to have a Disadvantages Business Enterprise Program because they receive FAA grant funds equal to or greater than \$250,000.

The relocation of the two Wind Cones will not be covered by the FAA. They will both be removed from their current position. Discussion turned to

pavement cracks. There are several cracks that need to be sealed. Robert mentioned the Town is doing crack sealing around town. He will instruct staff to review the areas Gerry pointed out. Gerry reviewed the locations that need sealing.

The new FAA engineer is Dave Rich.

H. Administration Building Renovation Update

No update.

I. Interstate Aviation Report

No update.

J. Financial Report

Robert provided an update of Capital Projects and what has been spent to date June 30, 2022 – total of \$490,397. He then reviewed the Projected Cash Flow and the beginning balance as of July 1, 2022 is \$180,000.

Projected expenditures if \$94,913 for FY23; \$97,760 for FY24 and \$100,693 for FY25 for a total anticipated expenditures of \$293,367.

K. Any Other Items – Thank You to Jennifer Dahlstrom

Chairman DePucchio announced Jennifer had to resign due to family reasons. He thanked her for her service. Commission members, Town Manager Lee and Councilman Underwood made donations for the purchase of a gift card.

4. Public Comments

5. Adjournment

Motion was made by: Frank Crawley to adjourn the meeting at 8:33pm.

Seconded by: John Onisto

All in Favor 4 to 0

Motion Passed

Meeting Adjourned at 8:33 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Metayer

Lisa Metayer
Executive Assistant