

Minutes
Aviation Commission Special Meeting
November 2, 2022 – 7:00 PM
Municipal Center – Room 300

PRESENT: Frank Cawley; Reade Clemens; Mark DePucchio (via Zoom); David King; and John Onisto

ABSENT: Robert Mastrianni

STAFF: Michael Paulhus, *Town Manager*; Andy Cirioli, *Assistant Town Manager*; Robert Lee, *Former Town Manager*

GUESTS: Michael Mastrianni, *Town Attorney*; Nick Scata, *Interstate Aviation*; Benjamin Tripp, *Metro Realty*; David Underwood, *Town Council Vice Chair*

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chair King at 7:05 PM.

2. Discussion with Benjamin Tripp, Metro Realty – Leasing opportunities for seven acres of land adjacent to Perron Road

Mr. Lee introduced Metro Realty and stated that they were invited to give a briefing on leasing opportunities for seven acres of airport-owned land adjacent to Perron Road. FAA had indicated that their goal is to lease property rather than to sell. Mr. Tripp stated that there is a demand for distribution uses in the area. Some potential limitations of the property include the narrow nature of the 7-acre parcel and the construction of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail through the property. Distribution and other industrial uses would likely require full circulation around the building. This may impact the square footage possible development. The property's worth is hard to determine without engineering analysis of possible square footage of building. A building between 80,000-100,000 square feet would be marketable. Discussion ensued regarding value of the parcel, the impacts of the narrow shape and projected trail, and possible conditions of a land lease.

3. Other Business

A. Discussion with Atty. Mastrianni – Interstate Issues

Mr. Scata provided a brief update on the status of a pending legal motion against Interstate Aviation regarding the recent aircraft accident in early 2022.

Questions were submitted in advance to Atty. Mastrianni. Atty. Mastrianni responded to each question. He stated no outside counsel is necessary, but if the Town is named as a defendant, the carrier will provide an attorney. The Town of Plainville has not been named in any suit, but that may change upon the publication of the NTSB report. No other lawsuits exist in relation to the crash at this time. The State of Connecticut has yet to file anything regarding the environmental clean up due to the

fuel spill. In general, a transferee is not responsible for a transferers liabilities. But, if a second lease is created with the current principals of Interstate Aviation, then this may be seen as a continuation or reincarnation of the previous corporation and be subject to the same liabilities. It is too early to know if any issues exist with the current lease that could have prevented the accident. At this time, it is unknown what further provisions could be added to a lease to protect the Town of Plainville.

B. Discussion – Review of Aviation Commission Ordinance

Mr. Lee reviewed the ordinance and responded to questions. Town Manager Paulhus mentioned that the Town Council is floating the idea of creating a subcommittee of the Commission to discuss the lease with Interstate Aviation and other improvements to the Airport.

C. Airport Layout Plan Update

No update.

D. T Hangar Discussion

Mr. Lee provided no update beyond that the Town Council will be finalizing a subcommittee of the Commission to discuss a possible extension of the lease and possible hanger proposal. The subcommittee is likely to be formed by the end of the year.

E. Status of Property Release

Mr. Lee reported that the Town has not heard back from VHB. No further update.

F. Airport Grounds Security Discussion Update

No update.

G. AECOM Report

Mr. Lee reviewed the report submitted by Mr. Gerry D'Amico of AECOM, which included updates on the Moulison contract and a schedule of work to be done. Acting Chair King asked about the DBE program mentioned in the report. Mr. Lee described that the FAA requires a plan to engage DBEs in a certain percentage of contracts.

H. Interstate Aviation Report – Request regarding additional airplane

Mr. Scata provided no update. Mr. Lee reported that there is a persistent roof leak in the administrative area. The Town's Building and Grounds Department is continuing to address the situation.

Motion: Reade Clemens moved to not recognize any new aircraft and that this topic be combined with future lease contract negotiations.

Second: David King

Vote: 3 in favor / 2 opposed (F. Crawley and J. Onisto) / 0 abstentions.

Motion Carries.

I. Financial Report

Mr. Lee reviewed the financial report, most notably bills for the design of the fire alarm system in the administration building and the investigation of the roof leak. Landscaping has been completed but no payment has been made. Acting Chair King asked about the \$7,000 allocated for landscaping. Mr. Lee responded that this is an upper limit, but depending on the review of the bill, it may be less. Mr. Scata reported that he received the landscaping bill for \$15,800 with sales tax from Boykin Enterprises.

J. Any Other Items – Preliminary Lease Renewal Discussion (Continued)

- i. **Motion:** Reade Clemens moved to recommend to the Council to decline any new negotiations with Interstate Aviation regarding the existing lease until such time the legal issues from the aircraft loss have been fully resolved or until the expiration of the existing lease.

Second: Mark DePucchio

Mr. Clemens expressed concern over the Commission not being included in decisions the Council makes, such as the landscaping. Mr. Lee stated that if the Commission were to vote in favor of the motion, he would recommend to the Council that the Commission not be involved with any discussion of the next lease. Acting Chair King stated that lease negotiations must begin in March 2023. Mr. Underwood clarified that the Council has not discussed anything regarding the next lease. Discussion ensued.

Vote: 2 in favor / 3 opposed (F. Crawley, D. King, J. Onisto) / 0 abstentions.

Motion Fails.

- ii. Mr. DePucchio asked about number and availability of tie-downs at the airport. Mr. Scata discussed tie-downs vs hangers and airport competitiveness.
- iii. Acting Chair King stated the open house of the airport went well. Mr. Scata stated that a public open house is being planned for June 2023.

K. Election of Officers (Chairperson & Secretary)

- i. **Nomination:** Mark DePucchio nominated David King as Chairman.

Second: Reade Clemens

Vote: 5 in favor / 0 opposed / 0 abstentions. **Motion Carries.**

- ii. **Nomination:** Mark DePucchio nominated Reade Clemens as Secretary.

Second: John Onisto

Vote: 5 in favor / 0 opposed / 0 abstentions. **Motion Carries.**

4. Old Business

A. Meeting Minutes of September 26, 2022 Regular Meeting

Motion: Reade Clemens moved to accept the September 26, 2022 minutes.

Second: Frank Crawley

Vote: 3 in favor / 1 opposed (M. DePucchio) / 1 abstention (J. Onisto).

Motion Carries.

5. Public Comments

None.

6. Adjournment

Motion: Frank Crawley moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 PM.

Second: Reade Clemens

Vote: 5 in favor / 0 opposed / 0 abstentions. **Motion Carries.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Cirioli". The script is cursive and fluid.

Andy Cirioli, Assistant Town Manager