

WICOMICO COUNTY AIRPORT COMMISSION

FEBRUARY 13, 2017

Present: Matthew E. Creamer, Vice Chairman; Nola Arnold; James Brooke; Gerard DiCairano; April Jackson; Calvin Peacock

Staff: Dawn Veatch; David Hynes; Denise Shellaby

Other: David Goslee, Ex-Officio Member; Duane Frantz, Jack Levering, Mel Snyder, T-hangar Tenants

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Creamer called the meeting to order at 3 p.m.

INTRODUCTION

Vice Chairman Creamer introduced and welcomed new Airport Manager Dawn Veatch. Mrs. Veatch proceeded with a brief biography of her experience, which includes being a pilot, her 30+ years with the Federal Aviation Administration, and her last position with Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. The Airport Commissioners also introduced themselves.

MARYLAND STATE TAX BILLS

Mrs. Veatch explained there are two Maryland State tax bills that need to be supported. The first is a maintenance tax bill to exclude taxation on parts and labor. The other is a fuel definition bill. Due to the new specifications on unleaded fuel, aviation fuel is included. The Maryland Aviation Administration is supporting both bills, and Vice Chairman Creamer will ask the County Executive to write a letter of support as well. Mr. Brooke stated that Senator Eckhardt and Delegate Anderton are on board with Senate Bill 159. He is still waiting for a response from Delegate Sample-Hughes and Senator Mathias.

SAFETY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The airport is in process of a regulatory compliance audit. An Emergency Plan tabletop exercise has been scheduled with Wicomico Emergency Management for February 12. Airport Management has requested both the Federal Aviation Administration and the Transportation Security Administration postpone their annual inspections until the airport conducts its own self audit and action plan. The Baltimore/Washington International Airport is sending down a team to evaluate the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting equipment. The government has surplus fire equipment that the airport may be able to obtain. The open gates at the airport are a security concern. The current system is outdated. The employee parking lot will soon be locked, and tenants will be given codes to access the lot. Training is needed for tenants that have access to the Airport Operations Area. Airport Management is also checking into relocating eagles to the Blackwater Wildlife Refuge in Cambridge.

DELTA AIRPORT CONSULTANTS

Delta Airport Consultants continue to design and develop engineering improvements at the airport. The HVAC project is almost finished and the baggage belt project should be finished by March 1. The emergency generator project should be starting soon.

MINI MASTER PLAN

The Federal Aviation Administration is requiring the current master plan to be updated. The runway 32 overrun/displaced threshold project is still in the planning and budgeting phase. It will not be Federal or State funded. An area is to be designated for unmanned aircraft systems (drones). Opportunities need to be expanded for new corporate hangars, and a decision needs to be made whether to refurbish the T-hangars or replace them with new corporate hangars. A public/private partnership is needed to fund new hangars. Mr. DiCairano will forward his report to Mrs. Veatch addressing the cost benefit analysis for the north T-hangars. A plan would be put together to relocate current T-hangar tenants. First State Packaging is currently in the eviction process and once the hangar is vacant, it will become the airport's fire station. The building can save a lot in insurance costs if it becomes a dual purpose (airport and business/personal) fire house. A restaurant could also be located on top of the building. Restaurants are typically leased options but it all depends on the public/private partnership.

NEW IMAGE

A new logo was presented to the Commission. It has been approved by both Chairman Hall and Administrator Strausburg. Mrs. Veatch wants to change the image of the airport and renovate the office with new furniture, paint, and carpet. She would like to set up a multi-purpose conference center that can be leased out as a venue. Mrs. Veatch has obtained approval from the County Attorneys to have area restaurants provide food along with beer and wine in this area. The space would be free for the restaurants, but in return, the airport would get free catering for meetings and events. The rental cars will be moving their overflow parking back to the terminal area. Piedmont Airlines' Dash 8 aircraft are temporarily parked near the fuel farm and will be relocated to the closed taxiway E until they are flown to the desert.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Veatch would like to hold a T-hangar tenant meeting during the first week of March in the conference center to discuss the change in the gate lock system on the airfield. Vice Chairman Creamer advised upon approval by the Airport Manager, Mr. DiCairano can pass out a survey at the meeting and have Ms. Cheryl Phillips post a story on the website advising of all the new staff members at the airport. Mrs. Veatch would like to obtain email addresses of all tenants so information can be disseminated efficiently. Once staffing is complete, in addition to the website, the airport will have a Twitter and Facebook page. Mrs. Veatch will be putting the website, Twitter, and Facebook information on her business cards.

ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Mrs. Veatch presented a short video "America's Community Airports – Going Higher" to address the economic impact value of airports. With funding, pilot associations can help mentor students. The Pilots and Paws program to relocate animals is a great resource to train today's youth.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Levering commented that Executive Culver and the selection committee did a wonderful job with appointing Mrs. Veatch as Airport Manager.

AIRPORT COMMISSION COMMENTS

Mr. DiCairano inquired if television monitors for advertising can be utilized. Mrs. Veatch will check into it as the terminal is re-vamped. Mr. Goslee questioned the status of the maintenance building clean up. Mr. Hynes advised all items, including the aircraft and vehicles, were auctioned off. The hills still need to be leveled out and landscaped. Mrs. Veatch added that the family of the cemetery needs to be contacted so it can be relocated. Mrs. Arnold stated that the Airport Commission needs more

notification as to updates at the airport. The Executive staff meets weekly with the Airport Manager, Chairman, and Vice Chairman. Further communication should come from either Chairman Hall or Vice Chairman Creamer.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held March 13, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Matthew E. Creamer, III, Vice Chairman