

# Wicomico County Airport Commission

August 10, 2020

**Present:** Calvin Peacock, Chairman; Matthew Creamer, Vice Chairman; Jerry DiCairano

**Staff:** Tony Rudy, Airport Manager

**Others:** John Psota, Acting Wicomico County Executive, Guest – Senator Mary Beth Carozza

**Absent:** April Jackson, Nola Arnold, John Cannon, Bud Church

## **Minutes**

July 13, 2020, minutes weren't approved due to not meeting the quorum. Minutes will need to be on the September agenda.

## **Airport's Manager Report**

SBY Airport Manager, Tony Rudy presented the Airport Manager's Report, as follows:

- 1. Master Plan and ALP:** The ALP and Master Plan had been approved by the FAA. Plan was sent out for digital signatures-- Tony Rudy and the MAA signed it, just waiting on the FAA to sign it. Expect a return soon, as well as hard copies sent out to key players. Will be posted on the website once available.
- 2. Assistant Airport Manager:** Interviews took place a few weeks ago. SBY Airport extended an offer to Christopher Davidson-- out of Tennessee near Nashville. He accepted and is expected to be starting around August 27, 2020.

### 3. Project and Contract Status Update

- a. **UAS Hangar Construction:** The building shell is completed. Utility work is just about done. They are beginning on the interior work-- building out the office space, restrooms, kitchen. Expected completion is in about 3 months.
- b. **Environmental Assessment (EA) and Land Services:** Delta Airport Consultants are continuing the process. The Environmental Assessment is expected to be completed by the end of this year.
- c. **Runway Benefit Cost Analysis:** This project is necessary for the runway extension. Any project over 10 Million dollars requires a benefit cost analysis to be conducted for the FAA. Work is continuing on pace.
- d. **Runway 14-32 Extension Design:** Delta Airport Consultants provided a task order to SBY Airport. The task order has been provided to the FAA for overview. Currently awaiting word from the FAA-- but doesn't need their approval since the design is funded by SBY Airport money alone. However, the FAA needs to review it.
- e. **Taxiway A:** Phase 1 has been complete for several months. Phase 2 construction of the remainder of the taxiway, hopefully, is to start in September, but grant funding needs to be finalized. The announcement came out that SBY Airport Entitlement Money, the AIP Grant Money, has been awarded. However, SBY Airport is still awaiting for the FAA to give the grant offer, so it can be taken to the Wicomico County Council to be approved. The grant only covers \$1.1 million dollars of the project. Another 1.9 Million dollars needed to cover the costs of the project-- that money is planned to be covered by the CARES Act funds. The FAA is awaiting guidance for development projects to be funded out of the CARES funds. They are expected to get guidance in another 3-4 weeks. Until the funding is in place, SBY Airport cannot sign the contract with the contractor, which could delay the start of the project.
- f. **Air Carrier Apron:** Project is continuing. SBY Airport is expecting it to be completed in about 2 weeks. There is minor crack filling and repainting being done. This work is expected to give the Air Carrier Apron another 7-10 years of life before starting the process over again.
- g. **Airport City Water:** The Wicomico County Council confirmed the State Grant and the loan, as well as the amendment to the capital budget. It is unsure of when construction will begin.

- h. Construction of Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Facility:** Project was fully designed with Value Engineering to bring the cost down. It is ready for bid. Current waiting on the FAA to receive the CARES Act Grant Amendment Guide to fund the project. Looking to start construction later this year, early next year.
  - i. Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Truck:** The MAA has indicated that they are willing to give SBY Airport a grant up to \$315,000 this year. There are funds available and the airport has applied for the grant. However, the balance of the truck (462,000 dollars) would need to come out of the CARES Act Funding. This purchase should be eligible and are expecting the FAA to sign off on it soon. As soon as the approval is in, the contract can be signed. Expecting the factory construction of the truck to take one year.
- 4. Passenger Activity:** The numbers continue to increase. Piedmont reported total enplaned passengers in July 2020 was 3,494 (about 52% of July 2019 numbers). Seeing improvement from June of 2020 (numbers only hitting 30% at that time). Load factors are continuing to increase-- June 2020 numbers hitting 50%, and now hitting 67% in July 2020.

**Questions:**

Senator Carozza:

1. Do you need any assistance with anything with Environmental Assessment?
2. Airport City Water Project-- is there anything, at the state level, that would be helpful to you?
3. Should we engage our federally elected officials on the projects that are being funded through CARES funding?

Tony Rudy: Appreciates the offer for the support.

1. For the Environmental Assessment, he doesn't believe there's anything with MDE in terms of core work that can be done faster.
2. Airport City Water: John Psota, acting county executive, can weigh in.

John Psota: The council accepted the project and are moving forward. The next council meeting (August 18, 2020), they are doing the declaration of intent and are also doing the legislative bond bill for \$2.9 million. He believes that they are going to also suggest and get a consensus from the council to allow the moving forward of construction. The contractor does not start until December, but they want to keep it moving along.

Tony Rudy: 3. He thinks the email sent out the other week states the case with all of the projects SBY Airport has in line shook things up on the FAA side. He spoke with Mindy Lee with the FAA, and things are starting to move. Have to wait a little longer to get the guidance within 3-4 weeks.

Senator Carozza : Extends an open-ended invitation from the state level, especially to get those projects moving forward. If a strategy needs to be coordinated at the federal level, they would be glad to be a part of that. She's happy to hear that these projects appear to be on track.

Calvin Peacock: Asked Tony Rudy to update Senator Carozza on the Drone Hangar.

Tony Rudy: Drone Hangar is expected to be completed in about 3 months. Should be having a ribbon ceremony. SBY Airport is familiarizing themselves with SRS. They are the ones that will be starting the drone operations out of the SBY Airport. He and Calvin Peacock went to a meeting to get a better understanding of their proposal and operations at SBY Airport. They are planning on regrouping and going through the proposal item by item to be on the same page and be able to provide SRS the support they need to get started. They may have funding needs for kickstarting their operations.

Calvin Peacock: If we needed funding for marketing the drone operation, is that something that the state can help us with? One of the items in the proposal was the funding for marketing-- that could be the responsibility of SBY Airport. Do you know of some area that can provide funding?

Senator Carozza: She's willing to see what the Department of Commerce may have to help or she's wondering if we should coordinate with Salisbury Chamber of Commerce for help. She is willing to follow up with the MD Department of Commerce, but she wants a more specific request to bring up the chain. If Tony Rudy could have a conversation with Bill Chambers to see if we can narrow in on the request. There may be some programs within the MD Department of Commerce that can assist.

## **Chairman's Report:**

### **Calvin Peacock updates as follows:**

- Jerry was contacted SBY AOPA Volunteer Representative, Christopher Bounds to look into the possibility of hosting a smaller scale fly-in depending on the COVID restrictions next year in the state of Maryland. They are looking to bring the public back as soon as restrictions are lifted. Calvin asks Jerry if contact has been made?

Jerry Diairano: he's contacted and has gotten a written response back. We haven't gotten a call scheduled to speak over the phone about it. He explained and expressed what SBY Airport was interested in. As well as asked for input. He has ideas of his own to present, but they aren't appropriate to commence now.

Jerry asked about placing video cameras on the Air Traffic Control Tower to send a feed into one of the TVs in the John Hall Passenger Lounge. When previously discussed last year, Piedmont had concerns about the air carrier ramp and the passengers. This needs to be clarified.

### **Questions/Open floor:**

NONE

### **Public Comments**

Senator Carozza: For the fly-in, we should involve Lorie Brewster from the Wicomico County Health Department. She is able to make sure that it can be done in a way that operations are within the safety protocol. She believes that the general public is not aware of these projects that are on track. It's time to start bringing the public back out-- but in a safe way. We can start brainstorming and bounce the ideas off the health officer early in the process to be approved.

Calvin Peacock: Agrees that involving the health officer would be essential to the planning process.

### **Airport Commission Comments**

Jerry DiCairano: Asks Tony Rudy if SBY Airport is selling the old ARFF Truck?

Tony Rudy: Yes, SBY Airport is selling the truck. Looking to put it for auction through Auctions International. They not only sell in the United States, but also worldwide. Airports in other countries, like in South America, often look for these trucks. The other option is to sell it to a company that refurbishes the truck, but he thinks that the international option is the best return. If there are airports looking for one, that would be an option as well. Served its purpose, but expensive to maintain. The truck is in need of 8 new tires costing about 3,000 dollars a piece.

### **Adjournment:**

No motion necessary due to not meeting the quorum.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be held on Monday September 14, 2020.