



TAUNTON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT
COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING
November 27, 2013

Commissioners: Fred Terra, Chairman
Bob Adams, Vice-Chairman
William Manganiello
Jim Madigan
Burton Schriber (absent)
Charles Malo
Jan Boboruzian

Airport Manager: Dan Raposa
Treasurer: Joe Lawlor
Recording Secretary: Gwendolyn Borden
Airport Ground Services: Ted Porada

Others in Attendance: Jim Miklas: Airport Solutions Group
Mike Dupont, Mike Bruzzi, Joe Sousa, Doug Cooper, Jerry Field,
Don Almeida, John Robello, Charlie Pickett, Bill Fraser, Dick
Griffith, Frank Nowak, Ron Mahan

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Fred Terra

Airport Engineers Projects Update – Jim addressed all in attendance and reported on the status of airport projects. (See attached ASG Report for specifics) Jim also talked about a request of the commission that he investigate options for the gates. Jim stated that he did some research and talked to the manufacturer and what it appears to be, is some interference. We can deactivate the inside control unit and make it an open access point so that basically you drive on top of the loop and the gate would open up. The challenge may be that the loops, as located, may be too close to the gate, causing some interference, so it might require additional work and install new loops to make that system work. Fred asked Dan if he got an estimate for the work on the gate. Dan responded, around \$2,000.00. Jim stated that if the commission wanted to wait a little while, we may be able to combine with the taxiway project, but that would put it off until construction season in the spring. After Jims' rundown on the projects, Fred asked if anyone had any questions. There being no questions, Fred thanked Jim for the update.

Secretary's Report for October 30, 2013. Jim: motions to accept as presented. Jan: seconds the motion. All in favor: unanimous. So voted.

Treasurers' Report for November 2013 – Joe reported on airport finances noting **INCOME** of \$17,797.27 and **EXPENSES** of \$36,143.61 for a **Negative Cash Flow** of -\$18,346.34. **Jan: motions to accept the report subject to audit and authorize the processing of the bills for payment. Bob: seconds the motion. All in favor: unanimous. So voted.**

Airport Managers Report – Dan reported on the following:

1. **Fuel Survey** – Our current price is \$5.72 for cash sales and \$5.90 for credit card and house accounts. Our fuel prices are one of the lower prices around.
2. **Airside Inspections** – *Tie downs, fuel farm and lights* are in good shape and doing quite well. We're keeping up with the lights. We have to change them once in a while. We had a light knocked down and some bulbs to change and they're almost at 100% operational. There may be 1 or 2 lights that we're having trouble with in the ground. The fuel farm is still working quite well. We are keeping up with the daily maintenance of the airport. Rope is available for anyone in need of rope for their tie down.
3. 10/31/2013 Dan met with Paul Arikian, the city's Director of Technology. The city is trying coordinate with all departments so that purchase orders, payments and other business can be done via the computer. His visit was to gather information to include us into the scheme of what is to come.
4. 11/6/2013 Dan met with ASG for site work for the proposed taxiway extension. There two different companies out here and some test borings were done.
5. **We have seven Obstruction Lights** on South Precinct Street and Caswell Street and one inside the airport. The lights on South Precinct Street and Caswell Street are out and Dan has contacted the FAA, and placed a NOTAM on them. Dan also contacted TMLP for assistance. There is no guarantee that they will help us because those are our lights on our poles. It could be a costly item to get the lights back up and running.
6. We are working on some of the recommendations suggested from the Quality Control inspection during the summer. Dan is researching some of the recommendations and there may be some cost associated with the stainless steel piping and a couple of small bilge pumps that was suggested.

Charlie asks for a ballpark figure for the taxiway extension. Dan stated he has an approximate amount of \$325,000.00. Charlie proposes that we ask the person who eventually leases the land to fund the \$15,000.00 which would be the airports share of the project. Fred stated that he was thinking the same thing but the problem is that there may be more than one hangar in this area. We will move ahead with what we need to do and the pre-design meeting will be coming up.

Old Business

1. **Frenette/Airport Property Update** – Bill has nothing to report other than he has referred the matter to the City Solicitor and asked them to take it over because he is getting nowhere with Atty. Strojny.
2. Fred asked about the water line left off the plan approved by the Planning Board and status of appealing the Planning Board decision. Bill responded, same status, nothing new to report from last meeting. Bob asked if the city solicitor has received a response from Atty. Strojny on the fence. Bill stated that the city solicitor was supposed to send another demand letter on the fence and amended documents but he's not sure if he's done that yet. Fred stated he will follow up with the city solicitor.
3. **Security Gate Discussions** – Fred addressed those in attendance and stated that he knows everyone is concerned that the gates will be closed during the day and the businesses on the field have concerns with deliveries. Fred informed everyone that Jan has come up with a solution he feels will work for everyone. What we propose is to give the 3 FBO's codes that they can give to their vendors so that from 8: a.m to 5: p.m. Monday through Friday the vendors can put in the code and the gates will open, but the gates will be closed to keep the general public out. A sign will be put on the fence with telephone numbers for vendors who are not regulars. They can call the number for the code for entry and exit. Fred asked that the 3 FBO's call Dan and give him the information.

New Business

1. **Atlantic Aviation Notice of Discontinuance of Operations** – Fred informed the commission that Atlantic Aviation has closed up and asked Dan if they have cleaned out their area in the terminal building. Dan stated that they have notified him that there are a few remaining items that they would like to remove and that there are items they would like to leave for the next tenant to use. There are a few outstanding issues remaining to resolve.
2. **Review Annual Fee Structure** – Fred addressed attendees and stated that as a commission, we have a hard decision to make tonight. The decision would affect most of us on the commission. Of any single individual on the field, an increase in land fees will affect Fred the most, but it is not what's best for any individual, it's what's best for the airport. The airport is a business and we must run it as a business. Over the last 5 or 6 years because of tough economic times, the commission has chosen only to raise land fees by \$0.01/s.f. It has been 5 to 8 years since the other rates were raised, and most have remained the same during that same period. The cost to maintain the airport has not remained constant. Electricity, propane and fuel to run the equipment and other costs have continued to rise. The airport equipment is getting older and in need of more repairs. Recent expenditures include gate repair of \$1,800.00, ramp repair for \$15,000.00. Our engineers were helpful in recovering \$12,000.00 from MassDOT for the ramp repair. We now have to pay \$1,750.00 for underground tank inspection. The city used to pick this up, but they no longer have underground tanks, so we must provide this inspection and absorb the cost ourselves. In addition, we were recently mandated by the city to hire our management company. All these extra fees without increases have eaten away our reserves. We also have 2 projects in the process, a new master plan, and development of the east end. If we were to maintain the rates as they are now, within 9 to 12

months, we will not be able to buy a full load of fuel.

Joe explained the spreadsheet he compiled showing the airports' annual profit/loss for the past 5 years. After explaining the figures on his report, Joe stated that the bottom line is that if we continue this trend and not increase fees, we will expend any surplus by February 2016. Joe also submitted Schedule A, Fee Structure showing current and proposed fees and recommends the increases. We're losing money each month and don't see a very bright future for us. In Joe's opinion, the commission needs to take action.

Bob stated, for 4 years he's voted for no increases and feels he's screwed the airport and motions to accept Joe's recommendations on the increases and cannot see any way around it. Jim: second. On discussion, Jan stated we need to find new ways to increase revenue. Fred read a letter from Burton who is not here tonight. Burton is in favor of across the board increases and noted that increases are warranted and necessary for the survival of the airport. Jim agrees that nobody likes increases, and it's not something we take pride in doing, but is necessary. Charlie agrees with Burton's letter and agrees that we need to generate revenue and also cut costs but is adamant about not increasing tie down fees. Bill stated that he concurs with Charlie but the big problem is that we're losing revenue sources, for example a decrease in tie downs. As a result we'll see a decrease in fuel sales. We've just lost the flight school which means we've lost the lease plus fuel sales. We need to take a look at this and find incentives to get people into the airport and certain fess should not be raised for this particular reason. Bill is also adamantly opposed to an increase in tie down fees. If we raise the tie down fee we will lose more people and go in the opposite direction. We need input from our airport users. Discussions continued with comparison of rates at other airports.

After discussions, Fred asks for a vote on the motion above made by Bob. In favor: Jan, Jim and Bob. Opposed: Charlie and Bill. So voted. Increases passed. Charlie stated that the vote can't pass because we do not have a quorum to pass. Bill asked how many voted were in favor. Charlie stated 3 votes in favor. Bill stated 4 votes are needed to pass and stated a quorum under 7 members.....Fred interjected and said he votes.....Bill also interject and said no, Fred can vote to break a tie, but the minimum from a majority is 4. Fred said he can vote at any time. Bill disagrees. Dan interrupted the disagreement and stated he believes that if you have a quorum to start a meeting, you need the majority of those in attendance for a vote. Bill disagrees and would like a ruling from the city solicitor. Fred will get a ruling from the solicitor next week.

Charlie asks what defines a business at the airport. While waiting for Joe to review the SOPP's for the definition of a business, **Charlie motions: to reconsider the rate increases and vote on each individual item. Bill: second. All in favor: Jan, Bill, Charlie. Opposed: Bob and Jim.**

[1] *Tie Down Lease.* Charlie: motions to retain current rate of \$70.00/month and \$80.00/month electrified. **Bill: second. In favor: Charlie and Bill. Opposed: Jan, Jim and Bob. Motion: defeated. Increase to \$85.00 and \$96.00 passes.**

[2] *Building Lease (Terminal Building Floor Space)* **Charlie: motions to allow the increase to \$8.75/s.f. Bill: second. All in favor: unanimous. So voted.**

[3] *Property Lease (All Ground Leases)* Charlie proposes and motions for the increase of \$0.18/s.f. and not the \$0.20 as proposed. Bill: second. After discussions, All in favor: Charlie and Bill. Opposed: Jim, Jan and Bob. Motion defeated. Increase to \$0.20/s.f. passes, so voted.

[4] *Business Registration Fee.* Charlie: motions to retain current rate. Bill: second. All in favor: Charlie and Bill. Opposed: Bob, Jim and Jan. Motion: does not pass. BRF increases to \$97.00. So voted.

[5] *Airport Identification Card* – Charlie: motions to increase to \$35.00/card. Bill: second. All in favor: unanimous. So voted.

[6] *Self-Fueler – Fuel Flowage Fee* - Charlie: motions to increase to \$0.30/gallon. Jim: second. All in favor: unanimous. So voted.

Charlie motions: that any person or entity on the airport is generating revenue from renting hangars or a business that they are subject to the Business Registration Fee. Bill: seconded. (Upon listening to the recording of the minutes, the secretary would like to report that there is so much chattering and whispering among the people in attendance, that it is difficult to decipher who is speaking and what they are saying). Joe asked Charlie if he is re-defining what is in the SOPP's? Charlie stated he would like to make a motion to amend it. Fred stated that what Charlie is trying to do is to change the SOPP's and to do this we need to establish a committee and discuss proposed change of language. Bill stated, if we are going to revise the SOPP's we need to post the proposed changes and open it up for public comment, publish the SOPP's with the proposed language change, hold a public hearing and allow public input before we can vote on changes. Dan stated that the SOPP's are formed and made by the commission for the rules of the airport and approved by MassDOT. The meetings are open to all and there is a public input section on the agenda. Fred stated that if there is to be changes made to the SOPP's, we need to form a committee and meet to discuss the changes that the commissioners would like to propose. Bill said he would like the airport users to participate by way of their input. Jan expressed that increases are necessary, but we need to find a way to help our airport users and we need to act soon. By delaying action, it's not by a week or two, it's by a month at a time. After further discussions Charlie said we could table this item for now.

Charlie motions: to re-visit the increases voted on tonight in 2 months. Bill: seconded. On discussion, Jan is in favor of re-visiting but doesn't feel we need to put a timeline on it. **All in favor: Charlie, Bill and Jan. Opposed: Bob and Jim. So voted.** Discussion followed on how difficult it would be on the billing system in place, with regard to anniversary dates of leases and how leases run for certain terms. For changes in fees to take place out of the normal billing system, Fred and Dan are of the opinion this could not work.

Next meeting scheduled for December 25 is being changed to December 18th. **Jan: motions for the change of meeting date. Jim: seconds. All in favor: unanimous. So voted.**

Public Input

Joe Sousa addressed the commission and stated this is the 3rd of 4th consecutive meeting he's attended and it seems like all the votes are taken before listening to public input. Maybe someone has a better idea of how to get more aircraft here. The time to get fuel is too short. Maybe the commission should re-visit the credit card program, or have an account system where \$500.00 could be put up front and receive another \$0.10 discount and fuel purchases deducted from the account. It doesn't seem like the commission doesn't want to help us. If you want to sell more fuel, the hours need to be extended. Before you started voting for increases, you should have gotten some public input.

Doug Cooper stated he has 3 things to say. (1) The non-aviation businesses operating on the field for a long time, the free ride is over. It is time for them to pay the BRF and we all know they are here. (2) You build hangars and rent them out to the public, you're a business. (3) You set yourself up here to build hangars, you're a business.

Ron Mahan of Aerial Skyvertising has no problem paying the BRF for using the airport 3 or 4 months of the year and has a successful business here. The airport has a good fuel program going with the discount and doesn't feel that raising the fuel is going to drive people away. He supports the airport by way of buying fuel but the fuel discount programs should be advertised.

Mike Dupont, Joe Sousa, Jerry Field and others expressed many concerns and suggestions to bringing new people and revenue to the airport. Charlie stated he would like to have a sit down meeting with any and all airport users to discuss ideas and ways to improve all airport programs and operations.

Bob: motions to adjourn at 9:00. Jim: seconds. All in favor, unanimous. So voted.

Next meeting December 18, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Leonard F. Rose SRE Building.

Individuals with disabilities, who require assistance or special arrangements to attend, please contact the Airport Manager at 508-821-2973. We request that you provide a 48 hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.