

AIRPORT COMMISSION MINUTES

March 10, 2020

4:00 P.M.

Eastern Conference Room

The following were present at the Danville Regional Airport Commission Meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2020.

Attendees:

Marc Adelman, Director	Phil Hall	Earl Reynolds, Deputy City Manager
Sid Allgood	Joe Miller, Vice Chairman	Libby Rembold, General Aviation
Jessie Barksdale, Chairman	Buddy Rawley, VP of Institutional Advancement, Averett University	Alan Spencer, Asst. City Attorney
Ken Carlson	Don Aungst, Averett University CFO	Todd Pinekenstein, Bld. & Grounds Supt.
Stephen Daniel	Travis Williams, Averett Univ. Chief Flight Instructor	Lisa Bivens, Administrative Assistant

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Joe Miller and seconded by Sid Allgood to approve the March 10, 2020 agenda. All members in attendance were in favor and the motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Sid Allgood moved that the minutes of the February 11, 2020 meeting be accepted as presented and Joe Miller seconded the motion. All members in attendance were in favor and the motion passed.

Communications from Visitors

Buddy Rawley, Averett University Vice President of Institutional Advancement, introduced Don Aungst the new Chief Financial Officer for Averett University. Libby Rembold commented that new lights were recently installed and damaged ceiling tiles were replaced in the FBO area. She said that the replacements look very nice. Libby Rembold also said that the video that plays in the lobby is beautiful but needs to include something regarding the airport.

General Aviation Inc. Fuel Report Update

Libby Rembold circulated copies of the most recent fuel price information for the Commission's review. The report indicated that General Aviation Inc.'s jet fuel prices decreased from last month and are currently one of the lowest prices identified. The report also indicated that the Avgas prices remained the same in comparison to the last report.

Topic: Terminal Building Pet Access

Action: Marc Adelman updated the Commission on the terminal building pet access room improvements recently completed.

Disposition: The Assistance City Attorney will consider whether a waiver form is needed.

Marc Adelman updated the Commission on the terminal building pet access room improvements that were recently completed. The room is adjacent to the Public Viewing Area and is currently ready for use. The intention of the room is to increase flexibility for pilots travelling with pets.

Topic: Terminal Building Pet Access (Continued)

Marc Adelman added that if a transient aircraft pilot comes to the airport with a dog they will now have the ability to take a break in Danville and leave their pet inside the Pet Lounge. Travis Williams asked if a waiver would be necessary and if the FBO was responsible for the pet area Alan Spencer said he would have look into it to see if a waiver is necessary. Marc Adelman said the FBO is not responsible for the pet area and added that a camera will be installed in the area so it can be monitored at any time. Discussion continued.

Topic: Strategic Planning Activity

Action: Possible facility improvements were identified relative to demand issues

Disposition: Commission members recommended to proceed with planning activities

Marc Adelman indicated that due to the possible development of a casino in Danville, Averett’s planned expansion and existing demand for hangar space that this is a good time to initiate a strategic planning effort. He mentioned passenger load activity could increase significantly based on input he received from a Nevada airport relative to casino traffic, which supports assessing the need and options for possible facility expansion.

To secure state funding for design activity to develop, renovate or replace a terminal building it is a requirement that a strategic planning document be developed. Discussion continued. Marc Adelman said he feels there is very limited terminal area space presently available to support Averett’s growth and casino activity. He clarified that it that it was his goal to identify a potential need for a planning study and some of the factors that may need to be considered but not to make any specific recommendations of what should be done at this time. Discussion continued regarding the exhibit identified below.

Strategic Planning Activity Overview		
ACTIVITY	DEMAND ISSUE	POSSIBLE IMPROVMENTS NEEDED
Casino Development	Possible regular flight activity with large numbers of passengers (50+)	Sufficient terminal space needed to board and disembark passengers, facility upgrades for pilots, automobile parking
Planned Expansion of Averett’s Flight Program	Significant increase in student enrollment and aircraft fleet	Additional classroom space, additional hangar space, possible construction of a new building
Business Development	Increased number of employees working at the airport	Large hangar required, automobile parking needed
Hangar space for small aircraft	Waiting list exists for t-hangars	Additional T-hangar space
Potential demand for corporate hangar space	Two 65’x 60’ hangars are used for multiple small aircraft – Averett’s fleet	Additional corporate hangar space
FBO facility Upgrades/Expansion	Current FBO space limited	Expansion needed to support lager passenger flight activity and pilot amenities
State funding available for construction of public use space for terminal building renovations or expansion.		
Limited Terminal Area Space and infrastructure requirements for closed Runway 24 area and South Ramp – Impacts development cost and building improvement options and ground transportation parking options.		

Topic: Updated FY21 Capital Improvement Plan

Action: Status of capital projects were identified for next fiscal year

Disposition: Bid specifications for taxi-lane and site prep construction for a new t-hangar building will be prepared and a cost estimate for large box hangar was identified.

Marc Adelman provided an update on the capital improvement plan for next fiscal year. He indicated the airport's engineering firm is currently developing bid specifications to complete site prep activities to develop taxi-lane access to support the construction of a new, six-unit t-hangar building. This project would also develop an aircraft parking area adjacent to the hangar building. The taxi-lane and site prep construction project will be bid in June. If state funding is approved during FY21, it is possible the new t-hangar building could be completed the following fiscal year. The t-hangar units must be leased for public use to receive state funding for site prep work and the construction of the t-hangar building will be financed using all local funds.

Marc Adelman said he is working with staff from Public Works to obtain cost estimates for architectural, design fees and construction costs to build a 13,000 square foot hangar on the northwest side of the airfield adjacent to Airport Drive. Since this project involves use of hangar space for exclusive business development state funding is not eligible to complete site prep construction. Danville's Economic Development office is currently negotiating a lease arrangement for use of the hangar. The total construction cost estimate for the large hangar currently is \$2,000,000. Due to the proximity of the location for the planned hangar to existing adjacent hangars on Airport Drive the fire code requires the walls to maintain a 3 hour rating, which increases construction costs significantly. The city will require an agreement to be in place with the prospect in advance of this project moving forward. Discussion continued.

A pre-start up meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2020 with contractors involved with completing the apron rehabilitation and expansion project. Marc Adelman reviewed the phasing schedule with the Commission. He indicated the entire project should be completed in advance of the Airport Open House and Young Eagle's Day event scheduled for August 29.

Topic: Update on 2020 Airport Open House and Young Eagles Rally

Action: Marc Adelman updated the Commission on the event.

Disposition: A meeting will be scheduled this summer to discuss aircraft parking arrangements.

Danville City Council will consider a first reading to appropriate funds for the Aviation Promotion grant on March 17, 2020. The final reading is expected to occur on April 7, 2020 and then the grant agreements will be executed for this project. The local match for this grant is \$7,500. Marc Adelman said that the Virginia Military Aviation Museum indicated this week that the German aircraft are committed to another event the same weekend of Danville's event. They also said that the appearance fees did not include fuel cost and accommodations. These fees ranged from \$3,500 - \$15,000 per aircraft as discussed at the last Commission meeting. The Young Eagle's event coordinator indicated that the online registration for the event would begin in June. In addition, a meeting will be scheduled this summer with the group to discuss aircraft parking arrangements.

Additional Communications

Marc Adelman indicated there are some significant issues that may need to be considered regarding the timing with completing a planning study for terminal building improvements such as the local referendum that must be completed concerning approving casino development. In addition, he mentioned that casino activity may also be impacted by the COVID-19 virus.

Joe Miller recommended that each Commissioner be given the opportunity to share their thoughts and views on a strategic plan. Jessie Barksdale asked Marc Adelman to share more information about the conceptual plan.

Marc Adelman stated the scope of work should match up with what is identified in the State's program manual to be included as eligible work activities. The engineering firm would develop a plan, which would be included in the Airport Layout Plan and the study needs to be consistent with the State's interests.

Sid Allgood commented that as far as the strategic planning goes we need to be on it now, not next year. With the anticipation of a casino coming we need to take that in consideration but that is not the only reason. We need to look at what we have and look to the future. We have some industries that want to come here and grow here and we are not ready for them. We need to look at it and make plans. As I have suggested in the past we need to have a work session and brainstorm. We need to create an atmosphere that attracts, be proactive not reactive.

Phil Hall commented that he agrees with Sid Allgood. He asked when was the last strategic plan completed. Marc Adelman responded that the airport made application to complete a terminal conceptual plan a few years ago however funding was rejected by the state. Prior to that a Master Plan Update was completed in 2013. This document identifies areas throughout the airfield that facilities can be developed. Phil Hall said we have two customers that need attention now before we can get to a casino; one is Averett University and the other one are those on the t-hangar waiting list. He indicated that we need a good short term and long-term plan for those first. The airport seems to have some problems with its footprint the way it is today and this may be the time to consider changing that footprint but how and where are significantly important.

Marc Adelman commented that the demand for hangar space for those on the t-hangar waiting list will hopefully be addressed through the development of the new t-hangar building. However, he added the new building might not accommodate all of Averett's needs for hangar space for the next five years. Also in FY2021, the airport is planning to erect an aircraft shelter. Again, this facility will not comprehensively address possible storage space needs over the next five years. Discussion continued.

Stephen Daniel and Ken Carlson both commented that they are in agreement that it is time to move forward with a strategic planning effort. After discussion, it was decided to visit other FBO's and then complete a special work session to discuss the findings. Dates to visit other FBO's will be sent out to the Commission within the next two weeks. Phil Hall also asked Marc Adelman to pull some information together to give the Commission some advice on what a strategic plan should entail and a list of the needs in terms of importance or significance and how they play into the strategic plan to use as an outline.

Additional Communications (Continued)

Buddy Rawley said he will be glad to write up something with the help of Travis Williams regarding Averett's plans for the next five years and get it back to the Commission. Discussion continued. Travis Williams commented that their goal is to go from 10 aircraft to 16, which will accommodate 200 aviation students. He also said that he estimates that to support planned expansion goals a 40,000 square foot facility is needed to store aircraft, construct two classrooms and a conference room. Travis Williams said he would like to be a part of the special meeting to brainstorm and feels the FBO should be included as well.

Earl Reynolds, Deputy City Manager was in attendance for the meeting and commented that now is the time to have these types of guided conversations, lay the ground work and take a look at the entire area to see what can be done.

Public Comment Period

Libby Rembold commented that they do not have many Pilots for Paws animals come through the FBO. Most of the animals they see are treated like members of the family and the owners will not put them in the cages. She expressed interest to bring her dog to the airport during working hours since the airport was going to allow pets to access the terminal. Marc Adelman indicated that the current lease does not support the FBO's interest to keep their dog inside the terminal.

Richard Bailey commented the Averett program has grown significantly and they have had to make do with existing facilities even though the city has made some upgrades. He encouraged the Commission and the city to make it a high priority to complete improvements for Averett's flight program.

Adjournment

The Commission meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 12, 2020 at 4:00 pm. Members will participate electronically via Zoom.**