

**Airport Advisory Board Minutes
January 17, 2013, 5:30pm
Airport Administration Building
8807 Airport Boulevard
Leesburg, Florida**

Attendance: Lester Coggins
Alun Jones
David Lewis
Jon VanderLey

Call to Order

Chairman David Lewis called the meeting to order at 5:41pm.

Chuck Brainerd gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Selection of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Alun Jones nominated David Lewis as Chairman for the coming year. Lester Coggins seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

David Lewis nominated Alun Jones as Vice-Chairman. Lester Coggins seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

David Lewis introduced Jon VanderLey, the newest member of the Airport Advisory Board. Mr. VanderLey said he has 42 years in the Orlando/Central Florida area. Since 1998 he has been very active in local government including serving as a mayor, Vice-President of the Tri-County League of Cities, member of Metro Plan Orlando, West Orange Aviation Authority Board and the Wekiva Basin Commission. He moved to Leesburg approximately eight years ago.

Approval of Minutes from December 12, 2012 Meeting

Chairman Lewis asked if all members had read the minutes from the December 12, 2012 meeting.

Lester Coggins made a motion to approve the minutes. Chairman Lewis seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Chairman Lewis introduced Commissioner Jay Hurley and Commissioner John Christian. He introduced Lee Webb, Vice-President of Aircraft Operations for Wipaire.

Meeting Dates for 2013

Chairman Lewis said the Board normally meets on the second Wednesday of each month. His idea is to meet on the third Wednesday, because in 2013 many of the second Wednesdays are early in the month.

Lester Coggins asked how that fits with the City Commission schedule. Deputy City Manager (DCM) Drymon said the City Commission meets the second and fourth Monday of each month. Chairman Lewis said moving to the third Wednesday should not really have any affect.

Chairman Lewis made a motion for the meetings to be held the third Wednesday of each month. Alun Jones seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Project Update

Michael Moon from Hanson Professional Services provided an update on four on-going projects.

Wildlife Hazard Assessment – This was a yearlong project. The final draft report was issued last week. It has been reviewed by FAA, FDOT and the City. The report was returned with no comments. It should be closed out soon.

Airfield Lighting – This project will replace some of the older lighting on the airport; add conduit, new wiring, a grounding system, etc. This was done as a design criteria package. The criterion has been turned over to the City. The only task remaining for Hanson on this project is to attend the pre-proposal meeting and answer any questions that may arise from that meeting. The next step is for the City to hire the design builder. The construction grant for this project expires 10/01/13.

Security Fence and Automated Gates – The bids for this project were opened January 10th. Three bids were received. All were below the construction estimate. Their recommendation for award has been submitted to the City.

Chairman Lewis asked if the gate changes can be worked into the project since the bids came in under the estimate. Michael Moon said that would have to be negotiated with FDOT. Their recommendation to the City had been that once the bidder is chosen and under contract, a price for that work could be obtained from that company and then discussed with FDOT. DCM Drymon said the initial indication from FDOT is that they are not in favor of the lift gate, but may possibly be willing to consider two smaller sliding gates in lieu of one long gate.

Airfield Signage – The plans have been completed and are on the shelf. This project will be discussed later in the meeting.

ILS Funding – The City is in discussion with FDOT regarding how to re-use that funding for other projects.

Rotating Beacon Relocation – The City has issued a Task Order for Hanson to perform the initial investigation to determine if the control tower is a suitable location for the beacon.

Runway Obstruction – Hanson has been assisting the City with developing exhibits needed to clear some runway obstructions that must be done for the licensing agreement. DCM Drymon said that will be off the east end of runway 13/31 and the sound end of runway 3/21.

Chairman Lewis asked what progress has been made by the Fire Chief on the building identification system. DCM Drymon said the Chief has assigned a staff member at the ARFF station to work on this project.

Open Discussion – Airport Planning 2013

Chairman Lewis asked for an update on Wipaire. DCM Drymon said along with Mr. Webb, who is attendance tonight, the owners of Wipaire were on the field earlier today and several people had the opportunity to meet them. Their temporary facility is almost ready to open in Corporate Block Hangar #1.

Lee Webb said the company is delighted to be on the airport. The location is ideal for them. He noted that Florida is second only to Alaska in the number of seaplane operations. The company currently has about 160-180 employees. They do business all over the world so the US Customs facility is an asset for them. They already have customers lined up for their opening on the 28th. They plan to base a Fire Boss airplane here as well. They want to be a good neighbor and will be directing business to the other operators on the field. He thanked everyone for being so welcoming. They will be having a reception on February 5th that will include a demonstration by the Fire Boss airplane,

Chairman Lewis asked for a timeline for the next couple of years. Lee Webb said his job is to get this facility opened and turned over to the head of maintenance. The next step is to determine the site for building their permanent facility. He believes that unless something totally goes awry they should have a full facility open in two years. Chairman Lewis asked where in their timeframe the ramp is needed. Lee Webb said they would like to have the ramp as soon as possible. They are working with the City to try and obtain funding.

DCM Drymon said the City understands that construction of the seaplane ramp is crucial to Wipaire's long term goals. This project has not been officially approved. Staff was given direction to see if the ramp project was feasible and fundable with grant funds from State and Federal Agencies. They have been working with FAA and FDOT and the State's economic development department. They believe that a sizable amount of grant funding will be available to help fund the project (basic ramp and facilities) which is estimated to cost between \$750,000 and \$1.25 million.

The funding process for this project is complex. There will be funding from the State and County that are tied to number of jobs created. Also, there is approximately \$900,000 in FDOT funding for the ILS system that staff is asking FDOT to reallocate for other purposes. FDOT has said that this funding would not qualify for the ramp itself, but it could possibly be used for the extension of Taxiway A that is needed to reach the ramp area. Staff is also asking FAA to consider flipping the signage project funding that is programmed in their current fiscal year with the Taxiway A re-alignment funding that is programmed for the following year. By working with all of these groups it may be possible to obtain a substantial amount of grant funding.

Dave Taisch said during previous meeting it was mentioned that the FAA might be more amenable to funding a ramp project if it could also be used by the Fire Department to launch craft for rescues on the lake. He asked if that was discussed with the grant agencies. DCM Drymon said it was part of the discussion but it will not enhance the ability to access funding for this project. The biggest challenge is that funding agencies have already programmed their funding out for several years. While they may be willing to flip a project, it is very unlikely that additional funding can be found for a new project.

Tim Shea asked if the City intends to advertise for a firm to design the seaplane ramp. DCM Drymon said that will be part of the process.

DCM Drymon said that before any of this can move forward the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) will have to be updated. He has spoken with Hanson and they are developing a timeline for this project. It is estimated it will take 12-18 months to complete. Based on recent conversations with FDOT it is believed the City will be allowed to use some of the ILS funding for an interim ALP update. Michael Moon noted that a scope for the update has to be developed and approved by FDOT before they will commit funding. DCM Drymon noted that the City is diligently trying to find projects that can be funded with the redirected ILS grant. If the City cannot find qualified projects that are approved by FDOT, the money will be given to another airport.

Chairman Lewis asked if funding is planned in the JACIP to update the Master Plan. DCM Drymon said there is \$250,000 programmed in the JACIP for the Master Plan but it is a couple years out. To get this project underway, the interim ALP update must be done.

Chuck Brainerd asked what areas are being considered for the Wipaire facility. DCM Drymon said there are several areas on the east side being considered. A lot of the area is wetland, but there is about 12 acres of upland owned by the City. The area shown as a location for the terminal building has been discussed as well as the area where the old tractor building is located. All of the areas have pros and cons. The areas on the east side are more attractive due to the proximity to the lake, but there are also positives to being centrally located on the field. Wipaire has been given a right of first refusal on five acres located just off the south end of College Drive. It will be up to Wipaire to make the selection.

Chuck Brainerd asked how they would access their facility if it is built at the first location he noted. DCM Drymon said it would be accessed from College Drive. Lester Coggins asked if the old railroad grade could be used to build a taxiway for airside access. DCM Drymon said staff has looked at that site and it could potentially be used. Lester Coggins said the good thing about utilizing the railroad grade is it would limit the time spent driving on an active taxiway when a straight-float airplane must be towed to their facility.

Commissioner Christian noted that he usually cannot attend these meetings because he has service at his church on Wednesdays. He is glad he was able to come tonight. He is happy with the progress of the airport. He wants this group to work with the Commission and develop a good plan and vision for the airport to grow and move forward. He noted that funding will be a critical part of this. His role and the City's role is to see the airport grow in the right direction. He is happy to see DCM Drymon and Hanson developing options for projects and funding.

Commissioner Hurley said he does not know a lot about the airport but is excited to be learning. There are many exciting things happening in the City. It will be a help to him to have detailed information on airport items that come before the Commission. It is great to have Wipaire coming here. He thanked Mr. VanderLey for serving as his appointee on the Airport Advisory Board,

Interim City Manager (ICM) Ray Sharp said he is looking forward to working with the Commission and all Boards in the City. He has been working with DCM Drymon the last few months and knows some of the projects and challenges at the airport.

Chairman Lewis personally thanked City Manager (CM) Evans for working with the Board for the past year. He wished him well in his new position. CM Evans said the transition from former manager Charlie Weller to now has gone well. DCM Drymon has done an

excellent job with the day to day operations and maintaining our relationships with FAA and FDOT. He is excited with the new vision developing under this Board. He reiterated that funding will continue to be an issue due to budgetary constraints.

Joel Hargis of EAA said they have been working with the Boy Scouts for several months to develop an activity for them at the airport. That is coming to fruition. The weekend of February 15-16 there will be 100 Boy Scouts camping at the airport. A movie will be shown in the EAA hangar on Friday. Saturday they will be working to help the Boy Scouts earn their aviation badge. They will tour the tower, FBO and flight school. The EAA also hopes to fly all 100 kids. It will be a busy weekend. He asked anyone who wants to help, to please contact him.

Adjournment

Chairman Lewis moved to adjourn the meeting. Alun Jones seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.

Chairman

Secretary