

**Airport Advisory Board Minutes
August 13, 2014 5:30pm
Airport Administration Building
8807 Airport Boulevard
Leesburg, Florida**

Attendance: John Drury
Alun Jones
Jake Kertz
David Lewis
Jon VanderLey

Call to Order

Chairman David Lewis called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

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

Approval of Minutes from July 16, 2014 Meeting

Chairman Lewis asked if all members had read the minutes from the July 16, 2014 meeting. Jake Kertz made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Alun Jones seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Airport Restaurant Project Presentation

Chuck Brainerd presented the restaurant concept drawings that were previously shown at the July 16th Airport Advisory Board (AAB) meeting. He said the idea is to build the restaurant on the parcel at the corner of Wilco and US 441. The planned area for the lease is approximately 103,459 square feet. It will be a two story building with the restaurant on the second floor. The elevation of this site will allow a good view of the planes landing and taking off. He would like to put a small museum on the first floor. They are hoping to get a restaurant with airport themed décor.

One of the possible investors he spoke to said having a museum on the bottom floor might pose a problem because of all the plumbing and other equipment that will need to be below the restaurant. As a result, he has been considering other options for the museum location and thinks the old bunker hangar might be a good place. There is a lot of history at the airport from the WWII era. The bunker hangar was used to sight in guns during this period. A non-profit organization could be formed to run the museum and if that is done the government will probably be willing to donate some aircraft for display.

Chairman Lewis asked what the next step is in the process to open the restaurant. Chuck Brainerd said at first the plan was to get several tenants together to invest in the restaurant and find someone to run it. Then they felt that it would be good to find

someone already in the business willing to finance, build and operate the restaurant themselves. At this point he is not sure what the best route will be. He has spoken to some banks and found out that 90% of restaurants fail in the first year. Of the remaining 10%, 90% of those fail in the second year.

The restaurant needs to serve a full menu of breakfast, lunch and dinner. It should also have a room to accommodate meetings. They are not really looking for a big chain. But they do need someone who can make the investment which is estimated at \$2-3 million. It will take the right person to build and run it. Chairman Lewis asked anyone with ideas on the restaurant to get directly with Mr. Brainerd.

Lee Webb said they should get a business plan written. That is very important. Alun Jones agreed. He said that before anything is taken to the City Commission the business plan should be written and the lease outlined. The Commission needs to be provided with as much information up front as possible.

Project Update

Michael Moon of Hanson Professional Services provided the following project information:

Interim Airport Layout Plan Update: The update is still under FAA review.

Taxiway A Realignment: Construction is under way and is currently ahead of schedule. The original completion date was November 29th. It has been moved up to September 29th. The JPA with FDOT will expire on September 30th so an extension will be requested to allow time for the close-out process.

Seaplane Ramp: The FAA has requested a "focused environmental assessment" for this project. Hanson is currently developing a Scope of Work for this study. They have a meeting with Airport Manager (AM) Treggi next week and will meet with FAA after that to finalize the Scope.

Realignment of Taxiway A by R21 and 13 Approach Area: This is the final section that needs to be realigned. They are working on the Scope of Services so they can meet the FAA deadline for pre-application submission. Due to drainage requirements they may not be able to design it as a ramp edge taxiway.

Chairman Lewis asked how the transition in consultants from Hanson Professional Services to AvCon will take place. Michael Moon said the airport will have two consultants instead of one. Hanson will finish out all of the projects they have already started. As future projects come up, it will be up to the City to assign the project to one of the consultants based on the firm's experience and strengths. It cannot be assigned based on cost because that is a violation of CCNA. He noted that Hanson works in conjunction with AvCon in Lakeland.

Airport Manager Update

AM Treggi said the system to make badges is still down. He has the new computer but is waiting for the updated software. The contractor is scheduled to be here next week to finish the upgrade.

The airport is part of the statewide pavement management plan. The preliminary inspection of the airfield pavement has shown that the primary runway will have to be repaved in the near future. It will have priority on the FDOT list. The general aviation ramp also needs to be repaved and will be on the priority list as well.

He attended the Florida Airports Council (FAC) conference last week.

The Notice to Proceed for the airfield lighting project should be issued soon. The City has signed the JPA and he is waiting for FDOT to execute it. They are hoping to begin work as soon as the taxiway A project is done.

The closing for the property behind Lowe's is scheduled for September. This land will be needed for the approach zone clearance requirements for the taxiway A extension and seaplane ramp. The purchase price was \$130,000.

Chairman Lewis asked AM Treggi to discuss the companies who have contacted him regarding coming to the airport. AM Treggi provided the following information:

- Blackbird Aviation wants to lease a site to build t-hangars. They are waiting for the property sketch so they can determine how many hangars will fit on the site.
- Lee Webb is working with Lake Aircraft to try and relocate that business to the airport. Mr. Webb made a presentation to the City Commission on this project.
- He has been approached by a company who may want to relocate their light sport aircraft (LSA) manufacturing plant here. They make seven different types of LSA.
- A helicopter component manufacturer contacted him. They have only provided very limited information.
- Jenkins Hyundai may lease the 5 acres on the southwest corner of the clear zone to use as a parking lot. That will allow the cars to be moved from the old tractor building site.
- He had preliminary discussions with another car dealer regarding leasing some property.

Chairman Lewis asked for the status of the Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ). AM Treggi said a few companies have contacted him to express interest in the FTZ. He spoke to the FTZ staff recently regarding the status of the application. They advised there are several cases ahead of Leesburg. He is hoping to have final approval in December or January.

John Drury asked where the FTZ will be located. AM Treggi said it is the entire airport and the City's CR 470 property, so it consists of two sites. The airport is site 1 and CR 470 is site 2. It is possible subzones could be added in the future.

Alun Jones asked for the status of the through the fence agreement with the Condo hangars. AM Treggi said there is a meeting scheduled for August 20th with the City Manager, Charlie Taylor, Aimee Fried and himself to discuss this issue. Chuck Brainerd asked if there is written correspondence on this matter from the FAA. AM Treggi said the FAA has advised that unless an agreement is reached the airport will be out of compliance on October 1, 2014. Aimee Fried said the Condo hangars currently have an easement that includes terms. The FAA recognizes that this is a unique situation and it needs to be dealt with on an individual basis. John Drury asked if the access from the condo hangars to the taxiway is paved for ingress and egress. AM Treggi said it is paved. John Drury said the concern then is non-compliance with grant assurances. Alun Jones asked how the property is classified. AM Treggi said it is zoned commercial. Alun Jones said it cannot be a residential property if it is zoned commercial. AM Treggi said the FAA has always been against through the fence operations. It accepted commercial sites if there was an access agreement in place, but they were totally against residential operations. In 2012 the FAA changed the law to allow residential through the fence operations as long as an access agreement was in place. Chairman Lewis said the bottom line is that an agreement must be reached between the Condo hangars and the airport that satisfies the FAA.

Lee Webb said he is working to bring Lake Aircraft's operations to Lake County. It is a \$23 million project. So far \$11 million has been secured in financing and they are working on the rest. The owner has been offered a higher amount from a company in China, but he is willing to accept this offer to keep the business in the United States. It will employ 150-180 people. About 80% of the aircraft built will be exported. He noted that American jobs and technology should not leave this country. He is doing everything he can to make this project happen.

Chairman Lewis asked Paul Harris for an update on their hangar construction. Paul Harris said he expects to be done the first week in October. He noted that one unexpected thing they encountered in this process is having to install all the utility infrastructure including the sewer line and fire hydrant. This was a large expense that was a surprise to him and his partner. They are leasing City land, paying to install the infrastructure and will then be paying utility bills to use the infrastructure they paid to install. They did not anticipate this when all they are building is a simple private hangar.

Lee Webb said he does not know what the City is paying AM Treggi but it is probably not enough. A lot of people are committing a lot of money to the airport and AM Treggi is a big reason for that. There are a many larger airports that would provide an opportunity for him. AM Treggi is proactive and that is what this airport needs to continue to develop. He would hate to lose him and see the airport slide backward. He asked the Board members to speak to their commissioners about his salary.

Chairman Lewis said he has already spoken to his commissioner. He noted that the airport operated 71 years without Rules and Regulations and AM Treggi has them in place. AM Treggi has moved the airport in the right direction. He thinks the Board should make a recommendation for the airport manager's salary to be reviewed. Secretary Pam Hester noted that two meetings ago a motion was made asking that a survey be done and the salary be increased as appropriate based on the survey. Chuck Brainerd agreed that AM Treggi should be better compensated and suggested that this Board make a recommendation for the salary. John Drury suggested that the Board make a recommendation that the salary should be at market which is about \$100,000. He suggested that at the next AAB meeting AM Treggi should bring back five comparables of similar airports. The Board could then make a recommendation of a specific salary to encourage AM Treggi to stay. Many airports are recruiting heavily right now. If the Board makes a specific recommendation based on a survey, the City Commission might listen to that.

Chairman Lewis said he agrees that the Board should recommend something. He is concerned that asking AM Treggi to do the survey places him in an awkward position. He thinks the best thing is for each Board member to contact their commissioner.

Paul Harris said this is an immediate issue. In 60-90 days we could be without an airport manager. He came here because of AM Treggi's can-do attitude. Many other businesses will come here for the same reason. AM Treggi is generating revenue for the airport that the City is taking out. The chances are 50% that a new manager will be a nay-sayer. AM Treggi should be compensated appropriately. The City Manager and the City Commission should all be contacted. Chairman Lewis said the airport has made \$1.1 million in profit over the last three years and knowing that, it bothered him to hear that the City could not afford to pay AM Treggi more. John Drury said the Code of Ordinances says this Board shall advise the city manager on all matters affecting the airport. He agrees that each member should contact the City Manager and City Commission to make this issue clear.

Chairman Lewis made a motion to again move that the City consider an appropriate compensation package for the airport manager prior to the budget for fiscal year 2014/15. Jon VanderLey seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Lee Webb said the tenants should also call the City Commission and City Manager on this matter.

New Business

Chairman Lewis said he enjoys cooking for these meetings and thanked the anonymous donors who contribute to the cost of the food. He asked Lee Webb to talk about the weekly event Wipaire has in Minnesota. Lee Webb said every Tuesday at their facility in Minnesota they have a get together. It has been happening for 34 years. It is a time for airport/aviation people to get together and socialize. There is no shop talk. They have a group of 26 people who volunteer to put the meal together, with each one cooking twice a year. The other 50 weeks of the year those people eat free. The people who attend that do not cook are asked to

pay \$10. That money is put into a kitty and given to the cooks to help offset their expenses. Many fellowships and friendships have developed at these gatherings. They tried it here in February and had a good turnout. At this airport the tenants do not know each other. This needs to change. To get it going someone needs to step up and organize it. There needs to be 26 people willing to cook. Wipaire will offer their hangar as the location. Paul Harris said this is a great idea. There probably needs to be a group of four as the main organizers. He will be glad to help get the program going. John Drury asked Lee Webb if they need anything from the Board. Lee Webb said he did not think so. The main thing is to get the cooking team together. Once that is done the rest is a snap.

John Drury said he is very pleased to be on this Board. The reason he is here is to help Leesburg International be all that it can be. There are opportunities for it to be a lot more than it is right now. He is looking forward to helping this Board and the Commission help the airport reach its full potential. He said that anyone who wants to talk to him is welcome to call any time. Alun Jones asked him if the Tavares seaplane base has reached its full potential. John Drury said it is almost there. A big part of Tavares's growth will depend on the growth of this airport. Tavares wants to be able to send their customers to Leesburg for the services they cannot provide. Once Leesburg has a seaplane ramp in place that can happen.

Jake Kertz asked AM Treggi when Dr. Sherman will be moving in to the Administration Building. AM Treggi said the lease was scheduled to go before the City Commission at their last meeting, but Dr. Sherman requested that he hold off on it for now. He believes Dr. Sherman will be ready to proceed in the next few weeks.

Adjournment

John Drury made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alun Jones seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:04pm.

Chairman

Secretary