

**Airport Advisory Board Minutes
December 10, 2014 5:30pm
Airport Administration Building
8807 Airport Boulevard
Leesburg, Florida**

Attendance: Alun Jones
Jake Kertz
Jon VanderLey

Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Alun Jones called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

City Manager (CM) Al Minner gave the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes from September 10, 2014 Meeting

Vice-Chairman Jones asked if all members had read the minutes from the September 10, 2014 meeting. Jon VanderLey made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Jake Kertz seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes from August 28, 2014 Special Meeting

Vice-Chairman Jones asked if all members had read the minutes from the August 28, 2014 special meeting. Jon VanderLey made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Jake Kertz seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Lease Agreements with The Villages

Vice-Chairman Jones asked if anyone from The Villages was in attendance. There were no representatives from The Villages present. Vice-Chairman Jones asked if the other Board members had read the lease. Jon VanderLey and Jake Kertz both advised they have read the agreement. Vice-Chairman Jones said the lease seems to be straight forward, although it is too long.

Assistant City Manager (ACM) Michael Rankin asked Vice-Chairman Jones if he could provide an overview of the document. He stated it is basically a consolidation of the two lease agreements The Villages currently has with the City. It is for a term of 30 years and includes an extension of an additional 20 years. The rent is \$0.15 per square foot which equals to \$1,566.87 per month. Jake Kertz asked for confirmation that in the past there were two separate leases. ACM Rankin said that is correct. Jake Kertz said the lease seems straight forward to him as well. Vice-Chairman Jones asked for a motion to accept the lease as written. Jon VanderLey

made a motion to approve the lease. Jake Kertz seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Project Update / Airport Update

Vice-Chairman Jones asked for the status of relocating the beacon to the top of the tower. This has not been done and it is a safety issue.

CM Manager Minner said he would like to combine agenda items 4 and 5 to review projects and update everyone on some changes. He introduced ACM Rankin and noted that at the August 28th meeting he spoke about moving forward should the former airport manager leave. ACM Rankin's position has three major functions – overall City economic development, including the airport; redevelopment (CRA's, etc.); and Community Development and the airport. He noted that many parts of the airport are related to economic development. Within the airport there are two missions: transportation (the working functional aspect of the airport) and economic development engine (target businesses). The airport is a critical piece of the City and we want to make sure we have the right people here.

CM Minner said he has selected Tracey Dean as the new Airport Manager (AM). AM Dean has six years of experience with the City, primarily as the Budget Analyst for the Public Works Department. She has worked with grants and is familiar with JPA's and capital projects. She has a keen awareness of the City's financial structure and enterprise funds. It is important for the airport manager to understand all City functions, not just the airport. She is excellent in that regard and was highly recommended by two Public Works Directors.

CM Minner said that Ms. Dean is weak on some airport operational issues. However, she has shown a strong desire to study and learn the airport's technical side. He had three options when determining how to replace the former manager.

- 1 – Hire a manger with 5-10 years of experience and a degree for about \$70,000 per year.
- 2 – Hire a manager with no experience, but an aviation back ground and education. The problem with that is the individual has an understanding of airport operations, but no experience on the management side and no understanding of the processes.
- 3 – Hire a hybrid of those two options, which is someone with experience on the management side but who is weak on the aviation side.

AM Dean fits in option three. He believes her skill set will enable her to be up to speed on the aviation side in about three months. She has already met with FDOT and FAA as well as the airport consulting engineers. She will be making \$52,000 which is less that what the former manager was making when he left. He believes it is important for the City to invest in existing employees. He fully expects her to come back to him in three years and want to discuss a salary increase. That will be a sign of a good thing. The card he will continue to hold and play is her investment in the community.

Jake Kertz said that combining economic development and the airport was tried in the past and it was a total disaster. There was a conflict of interest. The airport had an opportunity to buy the property to the east where Lowe's is now located and the economic development director did not want the airport to have that land.

CM Minner said that is not a conflict of interest; it is bad management. It is obvious that it is in the interest of the airport to get as much land as possible. He cannot speak to the past and why that decision was made. He noted that the City just recently moved forward with purchasing the property on the east side by the lake. The airport needs land and the City will do everything it can to expand the airport within the budget.

CM Minner said the seaplane ramp is a classic example of why the airport and economic development are not in conflict. He has heard rumors that the City is not going to build the ramp. That is not true. The City is dedicated to building the seaplane ramp. It is critical to build it so the planes that are going to Tavares for their \$100 hamburger will come to Leesburg for things like maintenance. There is more to the airport than lights, fuel and runways. That is the transportation side. The other side is the economic development engine.

Jake Kertz said that during his tenure as airport manager, the properties on 441 were acquired. The original intent of the purchases was to develop an income stream from the leases. At some point they may need to be torn down to allow the airport to expand.

CM Minner returned the discussion to Vice-Chairman Jones's inquiry about the relocation of the beacon. Vice-Chairman Jones said it is a safety issue. The beacon is not visible from the south due to the barrier that was installed to shield the air traffic controllers from the light. Jake Kertz said if someone coming from the south has a mechanical issue, they will not be able to find the airport. CM Minner said he will have AM Dean check with Hanson and bring a report back to the next meeting.

Vice-Chairman Jones said that a motion was made at the September Board meeting to decommission the NDB unless it is required to obtain a pilot's license. Someone was supposed to check on the license requirements and then report back to the Board. Jon VanderLey noted that many NDB's have been decommissioned. Vice-Chairman Jones said former Airport Manager Treggi had advised the NDB seems to be down more than it is working and it is expensive to repair. He said that many students come here to do their NDB landings. Their landings and take-offs add to the traffic count for the tower. Before a decision is made to decommission, we need to know if this is required for a pilot's license.

Jake Kertz said that there was intent at one point for the airport to install an ILS. We are no longer going in that direction. The City purchased some land for the outer marker for this project. Since that is no longer needed, it could possibly be sold.

AM Dean thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. She is excited to be starting this position. She has been studying for several weeks and has reviewed about a year of meeting minutes. She is focusing on FY 15 projects. The current projects

are being maintained by competent staff. She said her door is always open and she is looking forward to working with everyone. Jake Kertz offered to meet with her to discuss his experience and history with the airport.

CM Minner said AvCon has completed the Focused Environmental Study on the seaplane ramp. Rob Hambrecht from AvCon advised the study is done and they will be submitting it to FAA. There is some pristine wetland in the area and mitigation will be required. The closing of the runway intersection for the lighting project went well. That project should be completed in March. The scope of work for the taxiway A realignment from 3/21 to the west has been submitted. Construction will not begin for a year or more.

Vice-Chairman Jones said a large part of the land parcel that was just purchased is wetlands. He asked if that could be used for some of the mitigation on the seaplane ramp project. Rob Hambrecht said the first step is to determine exactly how much must be mitigated. The second step will be to determine how it will be mitigated and there are many options to explore for that. Vice-Chairman Jones noted there is also land on the south side near the lake that could possibly be used. Rob Hambrecht noted that the Master Plan is due for an update and this is something that will address these concerns and issues.

Vice-Chairman Jones asked if the airport funds have been separated in the City budget. AM Minner said that as of October 1st, the airport is a separate enterprise fund.

Arnold Holmes asked if property leases for an existing building are the same rate as discussed earlier. CM Minner said most new leases are \$0.15 per square foot. Jon VanderLey noted that the airport has leasing guidelines as part of the Code. Vice-Chairman Jones noted that this Board can only make recommendations. It is up to the City Commission if a lease is approved. Negotiations are conducted between the City and the tenant. The airport manager handles that part of the process.

New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

Adjournment

Jon VanderLey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jake Kertz seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:23pm.

Chairman

Secretary