

**Airport Advisory Board Minutes
February 9, 2017 5:30pm
Airport Administration Building
8807 Airport Boulevard
Leesburg, Florida**

Attendance: Steve Barber
Byron Oldham
Alan Reisman
Bo Wroten

Call to Order

Chairman Alan Reisman called the meeting to order at 5:32pm. Chairman Reisman led the pledge of allegiance and Commissioner Elise Dennison gave the invocation.

Approval of Minutes from January 12, 2017, 2016 Meeting

Bo Wroten made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 12, 2017 meeting as written. Byron Oldham seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Chairman Reisman introduced Steve Barber as the newest member of Airport Advisory Board. Steve Barber said he has been a pilot for 45 years. He soloed at age 16 and is a graduate of the Air Force Academy. He recently retired after working for American Airlines for 28 years. He built his own SeaRay and is currently building a hangar on Lake Idamere. He is also active in the EAA.

Project Update

Rob Hambrecht from AvCon provided the following project updates.

Master Plan Update: The forecast and inventory have been updated based on FAA comments. They are a couple weeks away from having working paper number two done.

Seaplane Ramp: They have received comments back from St. Johns on the permit application. They should be able to address the comments in a week or two. The schedule is to go out for bid in the middle to end of February. Construction is anticipated to take 6-9 months so it should be completed by Spring 2018.

Bo Wroten asked if there are plans for the project that the Board can look at. Rob Hambrecht said he brought a set of engineering drawings with him. If anyone wants to look at them after the meeting they are welcome to do so.

Commissioner Dennison asked if the questions from St. Johns are very involved. Rob Hambrecht said they are pretty involved but they do not anticipate any problems.

Steve Barber asked how many acres of wetlands are being crossed. Rob Hambrecht said it is about four acres of wetlands. It is a little over 800' from the end of the existing

taxiway to the edge of the lake. Steve Barber asked who has jurisdiction over the lake. Rob Hambrecht said Lake Harris is not a sovereign submerged land so it is under control of the City. That is a good thing but it still requires permitting through the Army Corps of Engineers, St. Johns River Water Management District and DEP.

Minimum Standards Review and Discussion

Chairman Reisman asked the Board members if they had time to review the information that has been sent to them on this issue.

Bo Wroten said he looked at our Standards and several of the others that Airport Manager (AM) Dean sent out that were comparable to our airport. Overall they are very similar. They all have a catch-all clause at the end that allows changes or variances. For the most part, the Minimum Standards we have are like the rest. He would like to know if the City wants the airport to grow or if they are trying to restrict growth.

Chairman Reisman said he feels we are not competitive enough to surrounding airports. The high thresholds of the land size requirements seem too restrictive. Many of the current tenants don't meet the requirements. He thinks that should be looked at.

Byron Oldham said the issue of land size came up in the discussion at the last meeting. He asked if the current tenants who do not meet the requirements have passed a waiver process. AM Dean said at the beginning of the document it states that current tenants are grandfathered in. If a lease is re-negotiated or changed, they must meet the current Standards in place at that time. For most of the tenants it is impossible to meet the Standards because of the space constraints and how close together the hangars are built. Bo Wroten asked for confirmation that they can request a variance. AM Dean said the document does not explain the procedure for giving a variance. She has contacted the City Attorney for guidance on how that should be done and is waiting to hear back from him. She thinks that may help with this revision process.

Brian Sapp of SunAir Aviation asked if there has been a specific complaint or problem with the current Minimum Standards. Bart Brainerd of Brainerd Helicopters said the problem they have is that the City has shown inflexibility to a variance or waiver. Since the Minimum Standards are published on the website it may be a deterrent to anyone inquiring about moving here. They may decide to not consider opening a business here just based on the document. There is a Minimum Standard that Brainerd Helicopter asked for a variance on and they were turned down.

Bo Wroten asked Bart Brainerd if he was trying to address the land requirement. Bart Brainerd said there are only two or three businesses that meet the Standards. The actual leases on the airport are very different from what the document says. The airport may lose a tenant just because the Minimum Standards says they have to lease two acres.

Bo Wroten asked AM Dean about the lease that was discussed at the last meeting. AM Dean said the Minimum Standards apply to commercial leases for specific aeronautical activities. That individual was interested in a lease for a private hangar but said that in the future he might possibly want to open a commercial business. The lease negotiated now can only be based on the current circumstances so it had to be based on it being a private hangar.

Eric Weaver from Brainerd Helicopter asked if there are any known conflicts between the Minimum Standards and the FAA Grant Assurances. If there are, that should be addressed as part of this process. AM Dean said the FAA does not review Minimum Standards. They do not provide advice on them nor do they dictate the contents. Eric Weaver said he thought the grant assurances included very restrictive language. AM Dean said the FAA is mainly interested in making sure the airport provides uniform and fair treatment to everyone. They are not going to look at the Minimum Standards and say a square footage requirement is inappropriate. Eric Weaver said there may be broader language in there that would create guidance. AM Dean said they look at the overall airport to ensure that treatment is fair and reasonable. That is the information she has been given.

Bo Wroten asked how much money the airport receives in Federal funding each year. AM Dean said every year the airport receives \$150,000.00 in entitlement funds. We can apply for additional discretionary funding each year for specific projects. The projects are prioritized with things such as runway safety, or repair of existing taxiways scoring higher than new construction. There is no cap on discretionary funds.

Eric Weaver asked what grants the airport is applying for related to future growth. He asked if the airport relies on AvCon for that. AM Dean said the Master Plan helps to prioritize projects. It takes into consideration existing conditions and the forecasts to determine the needs of the airport. The airport can submit as many projects as desired into the funding database. However, it is up to the agency whether or not funds are awarded. An example is the realignment of taxiway A. There are "S-jogs" at both ends which are undesirable, but there was not enough justification when the project was originally requested to receive funding. It had to be moved out a few years. When the taxiway is older and in some disrepair, it will be easier to get funding to straighten it out.

Brian Sapp said that when he wanted a new lease he had to bring his business up to meet the current Minimum Standards. That was an investment of well in excess of \$1 million. He has invested a lot of money in the airport because of this document and if it is now gutted he would have a real issue with that.

Steve Barber said in his experience with government documents he tends to like to simplify them. He is sensitive to changing things, but simplifying is always a better way. He asked Brian Sapp if there are any areas of the Minimums Standards that he would simplify. Brian Sapp said he is fine with the Standards as they are written. Steve Barber asked if anyone else in the room had any ideas of how to change or simplify the document.

Bart Brainerd said he read some of the other Standards. He said the Leesburg Standards separate businesses out into many different categories. In the Ocala Standard they have two categories – one for the FBO and one for "other activities". He thinks that doing this would cut our Standards down by about ten pages. He thinks there is an opportunity for consolidation there. Steve Barber said that is what he is talking about addressing. He asked if anyone else has any comment about consolidating down to two or three general areas.

Arnold Holmes from AvMech said he both likes and dislikes the Standards as they are currently written. As they are written now they tend to quell competition. On the other

hand, when the businesses are facing the end of their leases it makes renegotiation difficult. Simplification is a good idea but there needs to be Standards in place to prevent operators from just showing up on the field without having a business here and going to work. It is important for established businesses to be able to continue to operate in a manner that is productive for them and the City.

Steve Barber said he noticed that on the samples of Standards that AM Dean sent to him there are both short and long ones. He noted that some of the Leesburg Standards seem to be redundant in things such as square footage requirements and ramp requirements. Maybe some of the areas can be consolidated to shorten the document and make it less intimidating to prospective tenants. He said consideration can be given to copying some of the information from other airport's Standards that fit this airport.

Chairman Reisman asked how the rest of the Board feels about simplifying the document. Steve Barber said he is in favor of cutting them apart and consolidating the areas that overlap into two or three. Chairman Reisman asked him what he would make those areas. Steve Barber said he has not had time to examine them and make that determination.

AM Dean said a smaller document may not resolve the issues. There are certain tenants that have stepped up to the plate and leased enough land to meet the requirements of this document and if another similar business wants to come in under a much lower Standard they can open and operate with much less overhead. That gives the new business an unfair advantage over the existing business that made the investment to meet these Standards. Steve Barber said he would not be in favor of that.

AM Dean said a couple of months ago she took issue with the document as well. Since then she has considered that there is the grandfather clause at the beginning and the waiver at the end of the document. She believes that once the waiver process is resolved it may be all right for the document is stay as is.

She gave the example of Arnold Holmes's lease which is up in four years. If no waiver is granted to him, he cannot operate his business as it is now in his current location. She would be in favor of him receiving a waiver because he has been a good tenant and is good for the airport. If he leaves the hangar, a new tenant cannot operate a mechanic business in that location. Arnold Holmes said it is impossible for him to meet the Standards as written now unless he leases land somewhere else on the airport which he would not develop. AM Dean said the FAA would frown on that. She is not sure why the Standards were written so that a tenant had to comply with them when a lease is renegotiated. Bo Wroten said that seems to be Standard language in the documents he reviewed. He said every issue has two sides and Arnold Holmes said it very well when he mentioned that on one hand he loves it but on the other he hates it. He thinks that anything they write or try to change will be that way.

Bo Wroten said at the last meeting there was a discussion about a workshop that was held the last time the Standards were updated and that the document that was developed in the workshop was not what was presented to the City Commission. He asked if anything was found out about that complaint and if any documents were found. AM Dean said staff cannot find any records of a workshop being held. The manager at the time may have met with tenants on his own. The only records that can be found are from the September 18, 2013 Airport Advisory meeting where the Standards were

discussed and approved. There are minutes, the draft document and the attendance sign-in sheet from that meeting.

Paul Harris said there may be a way to resolve some of this issue by using language that says anyone who is a new entity to the airport must comply with the Standards and a current occupant who wants to continue the same business in the same location may renew their lease without meeting the Standards. Eric Weaver asked what would happen if a tenant wanted to sell their business. Arnold Holmes said the buyer would assume the lease already in place. There would be diminished value towards the end of the lease. Steve Barber said he likes that idea. There could be a grandfather clause to apply to current residents. Arnold Holmes said it seems like a generally good idea.

Bart Brainerd asked Brian Sapp who told him he had to meet the Standards. Brian Sapp said when he asked to renegotiate his lease it triggered the requirement and he needed to build the new hangar. Steve Barber asked if he would not have spent that money without the Standard. Brian Sapp said in the end it was a win for all, but the Minimum Standards did make him spend the money. Steve Barber said he is okay with the idea that a current resident would not require a variance. He asked if Brian Sapp would agree with that. Brian Sapp said it would be okay.

Steve Barber said he is used to dealing with larger airports. He asked AM Dean how much land is available on the airport. AM Dean said there is not much. There are huge challenges with most of the remaining property. There may be two pieces with two acres available but they are highway 441 and will most likely be commercial. Arnold Holmes asked if the Minimum Standards can be met by anyone. AM Dean said there is a lot of land, but it requires infrastructure and mitigation. Arnold Holmes said it is not economically feasible for someone to build on that land. Steve Barber said that in effect the two acre limit bars anyone from coming into the airport.

Byron Oldham said the airport has a paradox because we have a duty to protect our tenants who have met the Minimum Standards and invested in the airport, and yet we want to encourage new people to come to the airport. Byron Oldham asked if the Standards can include different categories or if they have to be overreaching and include everyone. They need to find the balance. Arnold Holmes said it is partially solved by the fact that there is barely anywhere to build.

Jake Kertz said the most important thing to remember is that is an airport. We can't use the little bit of land available for businesses and leave no room for airplanes. Arnold Holmes asked why the City has not invested in more hangars. More airplanes equals more money and there is room to build hangars. Bo Wroten agreed with that. He was on the hangar waiting list for three years. If there is space for t-hangars, they would be occupied immediately.

Bo Wroten said there are eight or nine different definitions in the Standards. It is probably okay to consolidate some of them. He thinks the category for the FBO's should be left as is because it is line with the Standards for other similar airports.

Steve Barber said this airport is unique due to the space restrictions. It is a good idea to consolidate some and make the document easier to comply with. There should be a statement that current tenants who want to renew should be able to renew an existing lease without needing a variance. AM Dean said if the process for requesting a variance

is made clean and simple the Standards may not need to be rewritten. Arnold Holmes said there could be cases where an existing business is not operating responsibly and the City may not want to renew their lease.

Byron Oldham asked Bart Brainerd if they applied for a waiver. Bart Brainerd said they consolidated their leases and asked for an extension. The new Standards does not allow names on their fuel trucks. They asked for a variance and it was denied. They now have to cover the fuel trucks with tarps when they are on the airport. They were not told why they were denied. He thinks the Standards just need to be modified, not gutted. He specifically noted Section 4-21 H paragraph k that says, "... No signs or other verbiage, and no corporate colors or other recognizable logo of any kind, which would constitute advertising, shall be painted on or in any other manner affixed to or displayed on, any of the equipment or facilities utilized for Fuel Storage and Dispensing."

Brian Sapp said this is probably in the Standards because usually the only fuel truck labeled at an airport is the FBO. The previous Standards specifically exempted the FBO from this requirement. Alan Reisman said having the name on the fuel tanks does not matter. When he work at The Villages hangar there were many times that airplanes came to their site in error looking for fuel.

Paul Harris said this is a common sense issue. The government requires the Brainerd fuel trucks to have certain signs, but the City says they must be covered up on the airport. Steve Barber said the aviation fuel section is four pages long. They need controls over who sells fuel but this can be shortened. It is good to have the names on the trucks.

Bo Wroten asked Bart Brainerd if he had concerns with anything else in that section. Bart Brainerd said there are a lot of superfluous requirements.

Steve Barber said he would suggest that people who have problems with certain parts of the document should come up with simpler solutions and present them to the Board. Vidar Einarsson noted that the FAA has an advisory circular (150/5190.6) that details fair rights and actions. He said that by making Brian Sapp jump through hoops the City has generated a monopoly. Steve Barber said he believes that the size of the airport is an issue and it prevents a lot of other people from coming to the airport. As a result, the businesses that are already here do have, to a certain degree, a monopoly.

Paul Harris said it is not true to say we do not have the space. The space exists. Someone has to invest millions of dollars to make it usable. There is a lot of room for development on the south side, but there is no infrastructure. Steve Barber said the airport has uplands and wetlands. Paul Harris said there is plenty of uplands on that side but someone has to invest to make it viable.

Chairman Reisman asked if the City has expressed interest in putting infrastructure on the south side. AM Dean said she does not know if it has been discussed in the past. Steve Barber asked if there is a map that depicts the uplands and wetlands on the airport property. AM Dean said there is 17-18 buildable acres. However, on the south side it will require a curb cut from US 441, a new taxiway, possibly the acquisition of one or two more properties to accommodate safety zone requirements and there is also no water or wastewater there. Steve Barber said the City's GIS department should be able to print up a map with the wetland and upland delineation. AM Dean said the City can

do that. She noted that just because property is considered a wetland does not mean it is not developable. Steve Barber said that for planning wetlands are off the table because it includes millions of dollars in expense.

AM Dean asked Steve Barber why there is a need to dumb down the Standards if he is identifying that there is nowhere left to build on the airport. She noted that earlier in the meeting Bart Brainerd said he felt the Standards should be changed because he feels the airport is not competitive which leads to the thought that there is plenty of land to build on. Bart Brainerd said he does not believe there is plenty of land to build on. He said the letter from Trackey noted that with the Minimum Standards as written he did not have the option to build a hangar now for personal use and then change its use in the future to accommodate the flight training business he eventually wants to open because he only needs ¼ acre now but the Standards require two acres for a flight school. Brian Sapp noted that two acres of land is not a lot for a flight school because you must accommodate the hangar, parking, drainage, etc.

Bo Wroten said to increase commerce at the airport there is a need for more hangars. He is more concerned with that than he is with changing the Standards. He understands the issue with signs on the fuel trucks, but does not think we need to rewrite the Standards. He said this Board works at the pleasure of the Commission. If they do not want to grow the airport, then the hangars should not be built. He needs to understand if the intent is to grow the airport or maintain the status quo.

AM Dean said the Master Plan will help justify and prioritize the need for more hangars. You cannot request a grant for anything if it is not on the database. The Master Plan will help with that. She said she is still trying to get the N numbers of many of the aircraft based at the airport to enter into the FAA database to help justify this need. That helps drive the justification for any of their funding. The FAA does their own forecast and looks at past data when making their decisions.

Steve Barber asked how often the t-hangar leases are redone. AM Dean said they are set with an initial one-year term and then they change to month-to-month. Steve Barber asked if she controls the waiting list. AM Dean said there are currently 67 names on the list. Steve Barber asked if the current plan is to build more hangars to make that list shorter. AM Dean said the Master Plan will justify the need for more hangars. We must justify the need and then request grant funding which must then be prioritized by FDOT. Steve Barber said the airport would be looking to build the hangars at government grant expense. Chairman Reisman said that is how most of the airport projects are done. Steve Barber said supply and demand would show that if there is a list of 50 people and we build 15 hangars, there would be a fast pay back.

Bo Wroten asked AM Dean if she knows how many people on the waiting list are actually current aircraft owners versus those who may be planning to buy one in the future. AM Dean said she has no way to know that. Jake Kertz said that does not matter. If you build the hangars the people will come. Bo Wroten said he agrees with that statement but at the same time we do not know if the waiting list has 60 actual owners or six. AM Dean said some airports charge a deposit to be placed on the waiting list.

Arnold Holmes said Leesburg is a great airport to base at. There are great facilities, a tower, a great FBO, paint and upholstery and everything you need. But currently there is

unused land that could be used for hangars to base more people here to buy more fuel, need more maintenance, etc. If you want to create a quick economic boost, build some hangars. He knows that's easier said than done, but he thinks that is a quicker way to boost the economy than trying to develop land.

Steve Barber said he thinks the target is to build hangars. We need to research the hangars and get with the FAA to get grant money to build them. Chairman Reisman said there is a specific process and timeframe for getting grants. Part of that process is the update to the Master Plan which will show the need for t-hangars and at that time the airport can try to get grant funding. Steve Barber asked if the Master Plan currently has t-hangars on it. Bo Wroten said the Plan is being updated now.

AM Dean said t-hangars are on the current plan, but they are trying to get them moved to a higher priority. The Master Plan is important because it helps prioritize your wish list. A good rule of thumb is to update a Master Plan every ten years, and our current plan was done in 2002. Chairman Reisman said AvCon will have meetings with the Board about what is in the Plan. AM Dean noted that all grants require a level of matching funds from the City. She said that new construction is always a lower priority for funding and usually is only funded at 50%.

Byron Oldham said the discussion has gotten off track. We need to continue to pursue hangars through the Master Plan process. But that is separate from the Minimum Standards.

Steve Barber said the Standards as they are written are okay but they can probably be simplified. They have asked the audience for suggestions on what to change. AM Dean said the Board will make recommendations on what to change to the City Commission. She noted that she reached out to all the airport tenants twice regarding changes to the Standards and only received one response. She would like to see specific ideas from the tenants.

Chairman Reisman said Brainerd asked for a variance and did not get it. He wondered what happens if Arnold Holmes requests a variance and it is denied because it doesn't meet the Minimum Standards. He asked if she believes his lease should be matched to what he actually has so he can meet the Standards. AM Dean said anyone can go to a City Commission meeting at any time and address them. If the Commission then provides her direction she will move forward from there.

Chairman Reisman asked if they should address the signage issue now. Secretary Hester suggested it would be better to address all changes at the same time. Byron Oldham recommended if tenants have changes they want to see made they should send their concerns to the Board or AM Dean so they can be addressed. He noted that if AM Dean only received one response to her e-mails that does not lend to the validity that this document needs a lot of changing. He said the tenants need to express their concerns so the Board knows what the issues are and they can all be addressed. Arnold Holmes said the Standards do not affect most of the tenants. It is primarily important to the tenants who are operators such as SunAir, Brainerd and himself.

Steve Barber asked if there is a copy of the Master Plan available. Chairman Reisman said they are in the process of updating the Plan. The funding was just recently awarded for this. Bo Wroten asked how long it will take to complete. Rob Hambrecht

said it is a long process because as each chapter is written it must be reviewed by the FAA. They are currently on Chapter 2. It can take upwards of one year before all final approvals are received.

Steve Barber asked if there is an outline of the Master Plan. Rob Hambrecht asked if he is looking for the scope which explains the key points of the Master Plan. Steve Barber said he wants to know what the targets are. AM Dean said the Board and tenants will help define those. Right now they are only on the first stages of the process. Steve Barber repeated that we need targets. Arnold Holmes said the process is a way out from defining the targets. Rob Hambrecht said there is much to do yet. Specific projects are one of the last chapters. They will bring it to this Board for input as part of the process. Right now they are in the early stages establishing the inventory and forecast.

Steve Barber asked Rob Hambrecht what he does. Rob Hambrecht said he is a civil engineer. Mary Soderstrum is a planner. They do the planning and engineering for projects at the airport. He said that AvCon does all different types of projects.

Steve Barber said that to him the Leesburg politicians are looking to this Board to present ideas for the airport. Politicians are all about money. The Board needs to decide what to do to make the airport more sellable to the people. This could include updating the Standards and building more hangars. The lack of available land has been discussed so we need to take what we have and make it better. We need to elevate the speed at which we go after the money for hangars. He wants to see hangars started in less than one year. We need to attack that and do whatever needs to be done to get the hangars done.

Chairman Reisman said there is a specific process that has to be followed for FDOT. AM Dean said that is the plan, but it will take longer than Steve Barber wants. They are fulfilling the requirements needed to move in the direction he wants to go. Arnold Holmes said there is a well-defined process that the airport has to go through and the airport does not control the timeline. Bo Wroten said the only thing that can change that is if a private entity wants to come in and build the hangars at their expense. AM Dean said the Minimum Standards are for aeronautical activities so building hangars does not fall under that.

Paul Harris said they did an extensive study on the south side that includes numbers of hangars and other issues. The problem is the lack of infrastructure – taxiways, lighting, etc. If the accessibility to where the structures can be built was funded by a grant, the rest could be done by the private sector and it would make economic sense. The airport must go through the process and it may be possible to get money from FDOT for the infrastructure.

Eric Weaver asked if the area on the south side will be included in the new Master Plan. Rob Hambrecht said it will be included. Paul Harris said they did a study and the buildable areas have been identified. The problem is the cost of infrastructure. There will probably need to be a public/private partnership to develop this area because it is not economically feasible for a private developer to build all of the infrastructure.

There was no further discussion on this topic. It will be continued at the next meeting.

*Addendum to the minutes per a unanimous motion at the March 16, 2017 Airport Advisory Board meeting:

Bart Brainerd asked Brian Sapp if he had requested a variance of the Minimum Standards. Brian Sapp said he did not ask for a variance.

New Business

Secretary Hester said AM Dean had been in contact with the Board members regarding changing the date of the March meeting from March 9th to March 16th. She asked for confirmation that the Board members were OK with that change. The members present agreed to meet on March 16th. Secretary Hester said she would update the Airport webpage to reflect this change.

Chairman Reisman thanked AM Dean for having the street sweeper come to the airport and sweep the ramps. AM Dean noted that unfortunately the sweeper had a mechanical issue and wasn't able to get everything done.

Bill Pike from Wipaire said they are having their annual open house and pilot seminar on Saturday, March 4th. He invited everyone to attend. More information can be found on their website.

Adjournment

Byron Oldham made a motion to adjourn. Bo Wroten seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 7:06pm

Chairman

Secretary