

**Airport Advisory Board Minutes
August 13, 2020 5:30pm
Airport Administration Building
8807 Airport Boulevard
Leesburg, Florida**

Attendance: Mark Crawford
Byron Oldham
Alan Reisman
Bo Wroten

Call to Order

Chairman Alan Reisman called the meeting to order at 5:30pm. Bo Wroten gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes from June 18, 2020 Meeting

Bo Wroten noted there is a footnote on page 3 of the minutes related to clearance statistics from US Customs. He asked for an explanation.

Airport Manager (AM) Dean said she asked for that to be included in the minutes for two reasons. First, she realized after the meeting that the numbers she had provided were missing some data from the Customs agent. Second, those numbers were based on calendar year and she felt it would be more appropriate to have them based on fiscal year since that is how US Customs bills the city.

She noted that usage by The Villages and Rene Morse is very close. She spoke to Ms. Morse and she agreed to begin paying for part of the cost. An agreement for her to pay up to \$55,000 per fiscal year was approved by the City Commission this past Monday. The Villages will continue to pay at the level they have in the past. The \$55,000 number is our best guess on how much the rate will increase based on US Customs' new fee structure. The current officer helped us arrive at that number. There are still some variables that could affect it. They are confident that Ms. Morse's contribution will get us where we need to be. She has officially told US Customs that we will be back open for fiscal year 21, which starts on October 10th.

Bo Wroten made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 18, 2020 meeting. Byron Oldham seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Airport Project Update

RW 13/31 Rehab: Wilbur Mathurin from Hoyle, Tanner & Associates said this project is has been bid. We are waiting for the grant from FAA. It is anticipated that will be received around the end of the month. After it is received, AM Dean will take the grant to the City Commission for approval. He believes construction will be able to start in mid-October.

Chairman Reisman asked if the runway will be shut down during construction. Wilbur Mathurin said the plans call for it to be shut down. Chairman Reisman noted this is the main runway and asked if there is a way to change that. He knows the smaller runway can be used, but personally he would like to see the main runway operational. Wilbur Mathurin said they discussed this issue with FAA and the tower, including the capability of the smaller runway to handle the mix of aircraft we serve. They are confident the smaller runway can handle it. For the speed of the project, it is better to shut down. AM Dean noted they met with Lester Coggins at The Villages because of the concern for the Falcons, and they are understanding. Chairman Reisman said he does not like the idea of the main runway being shut down for six months. AM Dean they had several very in-depth discussions on this matter with the FAA. The impact of shutting down the runway was specifically covered and a lot of research went into this decision to make sure the project was acceptable.

Mark Crawford asked if only working at night would double the time of the project. Wilbur Mathurin said the project was bid with daytime work. The cost will increase if the work is done at night. The cost for the daytime work is what they took to the FAA and it is what the grant is based on. AM Dean said they can ask the contractor what the cost would be to do it at night. She said Charlie Taylor from CW Roberts, the contractor for the project, is also based here and knows this airport as well as anyone. The fact that he is confident with doing this project during the day gives her a comfort level. She is sure he will try to get the job done as quickly as possible. Wilbur Mathurin noted that even if the work is done at night, it would be very hard to keep the runway open during the day. This is a mill and pave operation. To work at night and try to reopen the runway during the day would make it a much more tedious operation and add to the cost.

Byron Oldham said he imagines there will be a significant premium to do this project at night. Wilbur Mathurin noted that a runway rehab is much more involved than doing something like a highway. Any areas that are milled have to be immediately repaved in order to open because you cannot have a drop off like you can on a road. Brian Sapp from SunAir Aviation asked if six months is the worse case scenario. Wilbur Mathurin said the contract calls for penalties if the work is not completed in the specified timeframe.

Box Storage Hangar Construction: Dan Nichols from GAI said the first concrete slab was poured last week. It is cured and they started on the steel this week. The slab for the south hangar is scheduled to be poured on Tuesday.

Chairman Reisman asked if the plan for the hangars includes landscaping and irrigation. Dan Nichols said it only calls for sod. Chairman Reisman asked why there is not irrigation. He said we're spending a lot of money on these buildings and it looks bad if they are not maintained.

Apron Rehab Design: Dan Nichols from GAI said the schematic design is being wrapped up. They are scheduled to meet with AM Dean in a couple weeks to go over it.

US Customs & Border Protection Remodel: AM Dean said they gave US Customs the 100% plans for review and comment a few weeks ago. A Zoom meeting was held with

them yesterday to confirm the changes they requested. The plans will be revised and sent back to US Customs next week. Once they sign off on them, GAI will develop a cost estimate and then the City's Purchasing Department will prepare the bid package.

Air Traffic Control Tower Equipment: AM Dean said there is nothing new on this project. They are expecting the radio equipment for the upgrade to be delivered to the tower any day now. RVA will schedule the installation around the end of August or beginning of September.

Airport Manager Update

Pond Cleaning Update: AM Dean said the work on the pond is almost done. They sprayed the hydrilla and invasive grass and they will be coming back to remove that along with one stump. They will also schedule two spray treatments in the future to retard growth.

Chairman Reisman asked why the golden rain trees were not removed. He also said that the oaks that are in the cluster should be cleaned out and the palmettos should be removed.

AM Dean said the palmettos are a native species. The scope of work called for leaving any tree that is 4" or greater in diameter, regardless of the type of tree. Considering that the pond and surrounding area probably has not been touched in about fifty years, it may need a second round of work. The contractor has completed the scope of work as it was stated in the bid documents. We are going to try to manage the rest with City staff. The cost of the project as bid was \$86,500. The airport paid \$26,500 and the stormwater division paid the balance of \$60,000. The airport covered the portion on land and stormwater paid for the work in the water.

Chairman Reisman said in his opinion, opening it up just brought attention to how ugly it is. He thinks it needs to be refined.

New Business

Chairman Reisman asked where the City is with Wipaire. AM Dean said they have paid the \$105,000 penalty per their contract. They are currently only occupying the main hangar at 32725 Echo Dr. They have vacated all other properties. They are current on the rent for the main hangar. Chairman Reisman asked who made those decisions and why was it not brought to this Board. AM Dean said the terms were in their lease agreement. They agreed to pay the penalty per those terms. The City did stretch the time out to allow them to try and develop partnerships, but that did not happen so they chose to pay the penalty. Chairman Reisman asked if there is a clause in the lease that requires them to have an open business. If they have not met those original requirements, that should terminate the lease.

Chairman Reisman noted that the odor from the lift station at Wilco Drive is atrocious. AM Dean said she talks to Public Works on a regular basis about this issue. Public Works is currently in the process of expanding this facility. She is not sure if that will

help the smell. It will have a little bit bigger footprint toward the south and she is hoping the newer equipment will have a better odor control system.

Byron Oldham asked what the usage numbers are for the seaplane ramp. AM Dean said the tower reports about 25 operations per month. That could possibly be a little higher because there could be some operations that are not covered by the tower.

Byron Oldham said he has been thinking about the economic impact of the airport and the free trade zone. This airport might be in a unique situation with the water so close. He thinks there is an opportunity to draw tech companies here to test VTOL (vertical take-off and landing) aircraft. He knows Google and Uber are working on this. This is the next wave of aviation and it may be a way to entice companies to come here. He thinks this is something that should be explored to determine the viability.

AM Dean said the Master Plan includes proposed development near the seaplane ramp. The opportunities are good in that area and utilities can easily be extended. The railroad bed portion is high and dry but there are also wetlands that would require mitigation. The other place to build is the south side of 13 where there is currently no access or utilities. Those would be the best places for someone to come in and lease land to build.

Bo Wroten asked for an update on the wait list. AM Dean said it is much more manageable but there are still a lot of moving parts. She currently has 42 on the list with paid deposits. It started at 120. She made verbal contact with everyone on the original list. Of those, about 45 asked to be taken off and about 30 did not respond either way to her repeated contacts. There are three hangar options for the 42 on the current list – the city-built t-hangars north of Airport Boulevard, the 12 units on Taxiway B that the city acquired in 2015 and the new box hangars that are under construction. Some people chose a specific hangar location and others just requested first available.

Mayor Elise Dennison thanked Byron Oldham for thinking outside the box with the idea for VTOL aircraft. She would appreciate any information he can share with City staff about companies that we could send information to. Byron Oldham said he will look into it further and it would be prudent for us to contact some of these companies.

Adjournment

Bo Wroten made a motion to adjourn. Mark Crawford seconded and the meeting adjourned at 5:59pm.

Chairman

Recorder