

# TRIANGLE NORTH EXECUTIVE AIRPORT COMMISSION

**Tuesday, February 9, 2016**

## Minutes

The Triangle North Executive Airport Commission was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman John Allers on February 9, 2016 in the conference room of the Triangle North Executive Airport.

In attendance were Commissioners: John Allers, Herman Dickens, David Bunn, Taylor Bartholomew, Guy Martin and Phillip Stover. Also, in attendance were Steve Merritt (Airport Manager), Greg Upper (Triangle Skydiving Center), Dawn Larsen (Triangle Skydiving Center), ShawnaRae Miliano (Triangle Skydiving Center), Carey Johnson (Franklin Times), Pete Tomlinson (Davis, Sturges & Tomlinson) and Ken Burger (Michael Baker Engineering). Absent from the meeting: Commissioner Don Lancaster

The second agenda item was review and approval of minutes from the December 15, 2015 meeting. Commissioner Stover motioned that the minutes be approved as read, with Commissioner Bartholomew seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

The third item on the agenda was public comments. Chairman Allers called for comments from the public. There were no public comments at this time.

The fourth item on the agenda was discussion of skydiving accident on January 16, 2016 by Greg Upper, Triangle Skydiving Center. Chairman Allers said this was a tragic accident and our thoughts and prayers go out to the family. Although aviation can be dangerous, we know TSC runs a safe operation. Greg Upper thanked Chairman Allers and said he had received messages from Angela Harris, Sidney Dunston and heartfelt messages and support from others, as well. Mr. Upper said Dawn Larsen is our rigger, and he will ask her to explain to you what happened and how it can be prevented. Mr. Upper said the parachute manufacturer has completed its investigation, but the FAA hasn't turned in their findings yet. Mr. Upper said James Stremmel was an experienced skydiver, with over 1,800 jumps. James had had a non-eventful skydive earlier that day and had gone up for another jump. When he began to set up for his landing, the left side of the parachute released, causing him to spin around. He attempted to execute emergency procedures, but he was way too low and never got a chance to pull the reserve chute. Mr. Upper said he estimated that Mr. Stremmel landed at between 80-100 mph. Mr. Stremmel had hooked up his parachute prior to the jump, and we think he hooked it up improperly. Dawn Larsen said she looked at the gear with the FAA at the Sheriff's office, and there was no visible damage to the parachute. Mr. Upper said he feels that Mr. Stremmel was going too fast and clearly didn't perform a proper gear check. James was an experienced jumper and it shouldn't have happened and we are sure we can prevent this from happening in the future. Mr. Upper said we will be adding an extra gear check into the equipment check from now on. We are 99.9% sure we know what happened, and we are 99.9% sure we can prevent it from happening in the future. Mr. Upper said we held a memorial jump in honor of James last Saturday, and we plan to erect a memorial at the center, as well.

The fifth item on the agenda was the airport operations update by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said we've been very busy since the last meeting, with most of the emphasis being on development of

the former Anne Gordon property. We have just finished Phase 2 of the design process, and we have applied for discretionary funding to complete the project. We are waiting for a positive response. We have reports that the funds have been allocated and will be announced any day now. We don't have a letter saying we are pleased to inform you that you have been awarded these funds, and that's what we are waiting for. We have received bids for the base bid for construction of the industrial area development. The lowest bid was from Rifenburg Construction at \$1,079,000.

We held the public hearing for the abandonment of Bryant Road. We are now waiting for letters from Triangle North Franklin and the tobacco warehouse saying they don't have any objections.

Mr. Merritt said we have a commitment from Total Flight Solutions to build a 100 x 120 hangar. They want to expand and it will be the same deal as the Fayard's hangar was.

Mr. Merritt said we are discussing with EMS to build a joint use ARFF-EMS building. This would house their rescue vehicle and potential fire truck for the airport. They want somewhere to put their truck in out of the weather.

Mr. Merritt said 911 is looking for a place to put their backup center. They have about a 300-foot tower to put up, so we are not sure if that will be an obstacle for the airport or not.

Wholesale fuel prices are still down, so we lowered our base price. All of our buildings are in good shape. The corporate hangars are a full, t-hangars are full and we have 15 on the waiting list for t-hangars. Also, tie downs are nearly full.

The sixth on the agenda was the budget update by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said we didn't buy any fuel last month, but we will this month. The volume for fuel sales is about the same and we are still making more than the margin. He said he feels our pricing strategy is still right.

We are estimating \$132,000 from property tax this year.

The seventh item on the agenda was application for discretionary funds to support industrial area development by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said he previously discussed this under agenda item 5.

The eighth item on the agenda was update on taxiway construction for former Anne Gordon property by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said he previously discussed this under agenda item 5.

In other business:

- The next meeting will be on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.