

# TRIANGLE NORTH EXECUTIVE AIRPORT COMMISSION

**Tuesday, August 14, 2012**

## Minutes

The Triangle North Executive Airport Commission was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman John Allers on August 14, 2012 in the conference room of the Triangle North Executive Airport.

In attendance were Commissioners: John Allers, Herman Dickens, Phillip Stover, Taylor Bartholomew and Don Lancaster. Also, in attendance were Steve Merritt (Airport Manager), Pete Tomlinson (Attorney-Davis, Sturges & Tomlinson), Jim Farthing (Michael Baker Engineering), Roger Lytle (Candidate-County Commissioner), Gene Braswell (LHZ Pilots Association) and Carey Johnson (The Franklin Times). Absent from the meeting were Commissioners Guy Martin and Shane Mitchell.

The second item on the agenda was review and approval of the minutes from the June 12, 2012 meeting. Commissioner Dickens motioned that the minutes be approved as read, with Commissioner Bartholomew seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

The third agenda item 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 an update on airport operations by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said the south gate is working intermittently. Commissioner Stover commented that it hasn't worked properly in the last 10-12 years. Mr. Merritt said he thinks the duty cycle is too high, which is about 50-70 cycles a day. It reads the badge, but it's not getting the info from the controller to the operator. Mr. Merritt said he has gotten a quote on installing keypads, which you can change the code whenever you want to. He said that Sanford and Johnston counties use them. Mr. Merritt said to repair the gates would cost about \$15,000 per gate (2 gates) and we would not get any federal funds for this. However, if we replaced the entire gate and did not repair it, we could get 90% funding and the county would do a local match of 10%. Commissioner Dickens asked if Mr. Merritt had spoken with anyone from Johnson Controls because they do a good job on the gates at the airport in Wilmington. Mr. Merritt said he has talked with Albemarle Fence and Seegars Fence, but he would contact Johnson Controls, as well. Mr. Merritt said he estimates that to replace both gates, controllers, etc. would be about \$50,000 and we could get reimbursed for this, but not for maintenance and/or repairs. Chairman Allers asked that Mr. Merritt have some estimates prepared for next month's meeting.

Mr. Merritt said fuel prices have gone up and continue to rise. Av gas is \$4.99/gallon and Jet fuel is \$5.99/gallon. All the hangars are full and we have 11 people on the waiting list. Mr. Merritt said we are still working with Baker Engineering and the NCDOT-DOA to come up with a better solution for the GCO.

Commissioner Lancaster asked about Rampart Aviation. Mr. Merritt said they are buying about half as much fuel as they thought they would, so we are going to talk with them about raising the

price of the fuel and see if they still want to continue with purchasing fuel from the airport. They had thought they would purchase approximately 6,000 gallons per month, but it has only been about half of that. Mr. Merritt said they have a current balance of \$15,000, but are within the 30 days.

Commissioner Lancaster asked if there were any past due accounts. Mr. Merritt said Brett James Aviation hasn't paid his fuel bill (approx. \$450), but his rent is paid, and he is within the 30 days. Also, until he pays his fuel bill, he won't be pumped anymore fuel.

The fifth item on the agenda was the budget update by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said for the end of the year budget (6/30/12), we ended up being about \$3,000 in the negative. We were over in the professional services line item because of the Anne Gordon land acquisition. Mr. Merritt said when the new budget year starts on July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Finance office wants to get everything into June that they possibly can before they close the year out, and as a result, we have very few expenses for July.

Mr. Merritt mentioned that when there were any insurance claims for any damage at the airport, those bills were paid through the building and grounds maintenance line item, but when the reimbursement came in from the insurance company, it is deposited into the county's general fund. Commissioner Stover questioned why this was being done this way and that it would seem that the insurance reimbursement should go back into the airport's line item it was taken from. Commissioner Lancaster suggested that Chuck Murray, Finance Director, be asked to attend a future meeting to discuss the budget process.

The sixth item on the agenda was status of land acquisition by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said the County now owns the land, and we've requested reimbursement for the first half of the money, and we'll request the remaining \$400,000 at a later date.

The seventh item on the agenda was discussion of hangar development by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said that Paul and Nancy Fayard are very interested in building a 12,000 square foot hangar at the airport, which would serve as a renovation business. Pete Tomlinson said the Fayards would need to make a proposal and that proposal would need to be taken before the County Commissioners for their review and approval. We would have a land lease agreement, whereby the contractor or lessee would build the hangar, pay a monthly rent and at the end of the lease term, the County would own the hangar. Mr. Merritt said he would meet with the Fayards to discuss and put a proposal together.

The eighth item on the agenda was an update on "High Flight". Gene Braswell, President of the LHZ Pilots Association, said that we will be inviting area businesses to visit and tour the airport on September 7<sup>th</sup> from noon to 5:00 p.m. We'll give them a history of the airport, take them through Rick Pahnke's hangar and on to the skydiving facility. We would like as many pilots as possible to park planes out front. Hopefully, at the beginning of next year, we will be able to ask these businesses for their support for an air show next spring. Mr. Braswell said we've gotten a good response and we're anticipating about 200 people. We'll be sending out invitations next week to confirm who will be coming on 9/7. Mr. Merritt said he has given tours to the yearly leadership group, which is sponsored by the Greater Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, and a few of these people had never even visited the airport before. Mr. Merritt said we have the entire Chamber members list, so they can be called and/or emailed about the 9/7 event.

In other business:

- The next meeting will be September 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 pm.