

TRIANGLE NORTH EXECUTIVE AIRPORT COMMISSION

Tuesday, October 10, 2017

Minutes

The Triangle North Executive Airport Commission was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman John Allers on October 10, 2017 in the conference room of the Triangle North Executive Airport.

In attendance were Commissioners: John Allers, Phillip Stover, Tom Bregger, Shelley Dickerson and Herman Dickens. Also, in attendance were Steve Merritt (Airport Manager), Pete Tomlinson (Davis, Sturges & Tomlinson), Jim Farthing (Michael Baker Engineering), Al Mattress (Total Flight Solutions), Phil Greene (Total Flight Solutions), Todd Huvad (Aircraft Merchants) and Carey Johnson (Franklin Times). Absent from the meeting: Commissioners David Bunn and Taylor Bartholomew. (NOTE: Steve Merritt was not in attendance at the beginning of the meeting because he was speaking with authorities concerning an incident on the runway earlier today.)

The second agenda item was review and approval of minutes from the August 8, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Stover motioned that the minutes be approved as read, with Commissioner Bregger 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.

Chairman Allers asked that we move to agenda item ten until Mr. Merritt was in attendance.

The tenth item on the agenda was discussion of how to market/inform county residents about Triangle North Executive Airport by Commissioner Phillip Stover. Commissioner Stover said anything he says is not meant to be a negative reflection on Mr. Merritt and his staff because they do a great job. Commissioner Stover said the terminal building dedication for Billy Lumpkin was held last month and it was a wonderful event. What really stood out to him was that afterwards, several people came up to him and said they had no idea we had such a facility here in this county, yet the airport has been here for almost 25 years. Commissioner Stover said he feels as a board, we need to publicize this airport more, and he asked how can we help Mr. Merritt and his staff do this. Commissioner Stover said we need more public events here, but how do we accomplish this.

Chairman Allers said we used to have open houses here and they were successful, but we couldn't get enough volunteers. He asked if Commissioner Stover would be willing to chair a committee to discuss this. Commissioner Bregger said he would be happy to serve on the committee, as well. Commissioner Stover said the CAP (Civil Air Patrol) has one of the most active units in the state at this airport, and he may look into a joint venture with them. We would like to have at least one event here each year, if possible. Commissioner Bregger said aviation is fun and exciting, and he feels there are many things that can be done here. Commissioner Stover said he also feels there needs to be better signage on US 401 because many people have no idea where the airport is, and many of them think it's on NC 56 in Franklinton.

At 5:40 p.m., Chairman Allers recessed the meeting until Mr. Merritt was in attendance. Meeting was reconvened at 5:48 p.m.

With Steve Merritt now in attendance, Chairman Allers said we will go back to agenda item four – discussion of two corporate hangar leases (Overton & Oakley) by Steve Merritt.

Mr. Merritt said at our last meeting, he was asked to go before the County Commissioners to ask that the requirement for a default minimum payment be removed from the Fayard lease, as well as any future hangar leases. He is pleased to say that at the September 5th County Commissioners meeting, this amendment was approved. Mr. Merritt said with this being approved, we can now draw up the leases for Lin Oakley and Michael Overton. Both have the same terms and conditions – 40-year lease, 17 cents per square foot – and they are required to keep their planes based and taxed in Franklin County. The leases are the same basic lease that Pete Tomlinson drew up for the Fayards, only a smaller footprint and number. Mr. Merritt said the leases will be drafted and taken before the County Commissioners for their review and approval.

The fifth item on the agenda was the airport operations update by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said that the lock on the gate by Total Flight Solutions' hangar has now been fixed, and has a padlock installed on it. Mr. Merritt said septic service has been completed for the industrial area. The UNC medical helicopter service is still committed to locating here. They will be taking their helicopter out of Rocky Mount and bringing it here. Currently, we have a temporary agreement with them, but we hope to soon have a permanent agreement drawn up. Mr. Merritt said the shell building at Triangle North Franklin has been sold to Cedar Peak Enterprises. The company's main focus is airport related asphalt paving and airfield lighting/electrical projects.

Mr. Merritt said fuel prices increased 45 cents because of the hurricanes, but he said there was no way he could raise the airport's price by that much. He said there is no aviation gas in the pipeline that was closed, because it can't go through the pipeline because it has lead in it.

The sixth item on the agenda was the budget update by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said we had our biggest sales month ever last month – approximately \$91,000. Two helicopters flew in and bought \$12,000 in jet fuel. Mr. Merritt said the cost for the septic service to the industrial area was taken from the building and grounds maintenance account. We couldn't get a grant opened fast enough, but we will apply to get that reimbursed to us.

Commissioner Bregger asked Mr. Merritt if he had an estimate on the fiscal year-end profit. Mr. Merritt said he estimated approximately \$25,000-\$30,000.

The seventh item on the agenda was master agreement with Michael Baker Engineering. Steve Merritt said every five years, the NCDOT-Division of Aviation requires that we go through the process of requesting proposals for an engineer. We placed an ad in the Franklin Times for RFPs for engineering services, and Michael Baker Engineering is the only one that responded. The documents have been prepared for the County Commissioners to review and sign off on. Per Mr. Merritt, there is no money attached to this. Commissioner Stover made the motion that the master agreement be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for review and approval, with Commissioner Bregger seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

The eighth item on the agenda was industrial development update by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said we've completed and paid for the septic, and we are waiting on the fiber optic.

The ninth item on the agenda was the runway extension project update by Steve Merritt. Mr. Merritt said he is excited to announce that we will not be required to make a 10% match on the \$11 million from CAMPO.

Commissioner Stover said he has asked about this in the past, but he'd like to talk about the possibility of having self-service fuel at the airport. Mr. Merritt said we can use the 100LL replacement and put it in a containment drum, but it's more expensive – about 50 cents more. Jim Farthing said he's seen many airports install self-serve, but once they had it in place, they aren't all that satisfied with it. Mr. Farthing said the biggest cost is the power to it and the credit card machine you have to install.

Commissioner Bregger said he'd like to know the timeline for the runway extension – from start to end. Steve Merritt said this time next year, the money will start moving. We hope to extend the road first. We may end up getting an overlay and then the extension, but we hope to get it paved first. Jim Farthing said ideally they would be done at the same time, but that is unknown right now. Commissioner Bregger asked if the airport would be closed for an extended period while the work was being done. Mr. Merritt said it would take a maximum of 30 days, and most of the work would be done at night.

In other business:

- Steve Merritt said Al Mattress and Phil Greene, with Total Flight Solutions, are here to talk to us about their company's growth at the airport and their plans for the future. Mr. Mattress said with the amount of growth they've had, they have outgrown their hangar, and are trying to find a solution. They really need additional hangar space (about 10,000-12,000 square feet), and have explored the idea of building another hangar, but it would be at the other end of the airport, and would not be a viable option because they need to be close to where they are located now. Mr. Mattress said they don't want to step on any toes, but if there is the possibility of moving another tenant(s) around, then that would be an option. Todd Huvad (Aircraft Merchants) said he'd be willing to relocate if he can have somewhere with adequate storage because they are really full right now. He said they are having to move planes in and out of their hangar every day. Mr. Merritt said moving some of the tenants around is a possibility – if they are amicable to it – but it would take time. Phil Greene said his concern was timing, because they are trying to pack too many aircraft in now, and can't perform maintenance as they need to. He said he wonders if there is a short-term solution. Commissioner Stover said is it possible that we could go before the County Commissioners and ask for funds to build a hangar, and Total Flight could present their business proposal. Mr. Merritt said he would find out what it would cost to build a 100x100 hangar, and get with Total Flight to discuss. Pete Tomlinson said Chuck Murray has put some numbers together in the past, and he's recommended before that it would be cheaper to finance a hangar. Mr. Tomlinson said be sure you have a business plan together before you go to the County Commissioners.
- The next meeting is December 12, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.