

Airport Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

August 25, 2009 – 3:30 PM

Lakeland Linder Regional Airport
Conference Room A

Members in Attendance:

Mayor Ralph “Buddy” Fletcher, Chairman
John Burton, Vice Chairman
Robert Knight
Tom Dunn
Jeff Kincart
Joel Adams
Ken Willaford

Also in Attendance:

Tony Delgado, Deputy City Manager
John DuBose, Airport Director
Doug Thomas, City Manager
Jim Verplanck, City Commissioner
Gow Fields, City Commissioner
Justin Troller, City Commissioner
Howard Wiggs, City Commissioner
Samantha Blaschke, Airport Admin Assistant
Nan Walsh, Assistant Airport Director
Teresa Cornett, Property Manager
John Von Preysing, Accountant

I. Introduction:

At 3:30 PM, Mayor Fletcher (Chairman), noting a quorum was present, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

II. Approval of Minutes:

Mayor Fletcher then asked if everyone had received and read the minutes from the last meeting. John Burton made a motion to approve the minutes, Jeff Kincart seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Old Business:

A. Airport Staff:

1) Minimum Standards

John DuBose explained at the last meeting the Minimum Standards were identified as a critical component to the Airport operations and new business entry at the Airport. The Airport’s Minimum Standards were updated for the first time in thirty years in 2007. During the past two years both staff and airport tenants have identified areas of concern with the Minimum Standards. Staff believes it is time to revisit them to ensure that the standards are reviewed for suitability that are specific to the airport. The Airport was fortunate to obtain the services of Mr. Daniel S.

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Reimer with Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell one of the premiere aviation law firms in the country. He will be providing legal and aviation advice to assist in the process.

Mr. Dan Reimer presented a PowerPoint Presentation regarding the Minimum Standards. It was announced the presentation will be posted on the Airport's website for review.

Nan Walsh presented a General Information and Frequently Asked Question document.

Mr. DuBose explained that a Minimum Standards survey was sent out to the tenants and users on the Airport. Some surveys were received back and some people felt the survey was hard to understand and said they did not have a copy of the Minimum Standards to look at. The Minimum Standards have been posted on the City's website and we will be modifying the questions so that it will be easier for everyone to understand. The survey will be sent back out to the tenants and users on the Airport and we will expect to get results back within a couple of weeks. Mr. DuBose explained that we are asking the Board if they would like to revise the Minimum Standards Document. This will not be a short process to go through. An open forum will be held to discuss the Minimum Standards and then we will meet again as a Board. The floor was then opened up for discussion.

Don Stephens said at the last meeting the Minimum Standards were not discussed and he objects to the time and money that has been spent to discuss this issue.

Allen Sale asked if a tenant was already on the Airport would they have to upgrade to the new Minimum Standards or would they be grandfathered in.

Mr. Reimer explained that when the lease expires they will have to change, but this may depend on the lease.

Someone from the audience asked if there were two totally unrelated businesses that combined to meet one minimum standard, would that be permissible?

Mr. Reimer said it is generally permissible according to minimum standards to contract for services such as A&P Maintenance.

Joel Adams explained when he voted in 2007 he had voted that it would be allowed.

Ron Garl said the survey was very difficult to understand. Tony Delgado explained that the survey will be updated and the time frame for response will be extended.

In response to Rick Garcia, Mr. Delgado said yes the Minimum Standards have been adopted. Mr. Garcia explained there is a company from Sanford that does not

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meet compliance with the Minimum Standards. He said the Minimum Standards are unreasonable and are not worth it if they are not being enforced.

Mr. Reimer explained that it is up to the City to enforce the minimum standards. The minimum standards may not be the issue; but rather lack of enforcement.

Tony Delgado said there are problems with enforcement. Some people feel they are too strict and some feel they should be enforced as they are now. The City wanted to allow everyone a chance to express their views.

Wayne Bradbury with Dixie Jet asked Mr. Reimer to provide a number or average number of how many Airports have adopted Minimum Standards.

Mr. Reimer said he knows of 12 Airports that have adopted the standards in Florida.

Mr. Bradbury said he has a highly specialized business and it has cost a lot of money to get it here. C.V. Avionics has been invited into his hangar to repair jets because no similar service is provided on the Lakeland Airport at this time.

The Mayor asked if the Airport had through the fence operations and Mr. Delgado said yes.

Mr. Bradbury said that LAL allows them to do through the fence operations but they are licensed certified repairmen.

Mr. Garcia said that it does not say anything about that in the Minimum Standards.

Mr. Adams said that it was discussed with the Board about people dodging the minimum standards and that Security was Mrs. Walsh's primary issue. The distinction can be made clear in the minimum standards.

Craig Payne said the effects are of Minimum Standards are cumulative. The standards for A&P are cumulative and burdensome.

Someone asked if the Minimum Standards would align with the Marketing and Business Plan.

Mrs. Walsh said that it is not necessarily cumulative and there is some interpretation.

Mr. Payne said it is subject to interpretation.

Mr. DuBose said there are areas that need to be clarified and it is important the Minimum Standards are easily understood.

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Mr. Reimer responded to Mr. Adams by saying that the FAA would be the one to render a decision if there is someone who challenges an unreasonable standard. Mr. Reimer also responded to other questions asked by various members of the audience. He said the minimum standards are very general and there is no rule of thumb as to what can be required in the standards. He also said that it is up to the individual leases in regard to lease renewal options and not necessarily the minimum standards. He answered Mr. DuBose's question regarding the response time from the FAA if a report was sent to them, he said that it could take up to a year to receive a response.

Daryl Hicks asked to get a copy of Mr. Reimer's Presentation. It was announced that the presentation will be placed on the website and can be emailed to anyone that would like to have a copy.

Mr. Reimer responded to a question regarding his experience of how many City or County's operate an Airport. He said that more Cities than Counties operate Airports. He also said that if there is a minimum standards issue the responsibility falls to the staff or it could go to the Advisory Board or the FAA, there is just not one answer.

Mr. DuBose said the difficulties we experience here is that the documents are not in place to enforce the issues and we do not have standardized leases. This can be very frustrating.

Mr. Delgado answered Mr. Garcia's question by stating not everyone is required to have a Lakeland Occupational license if they are housed outside of the City.

Mr. Delgado asked if we could respond to Mr. Stephens's previous request regarding property availability and asked Teresa Cornett to present this information.

IV. A. 2.) Properties Available for Lease and Undeveloped Land

Mrs. Cornett presented to the Board a listing of available office, hangar and warehouse space. There are no prices included in the listing.

Mr. Delgado explained there are specific curbs in the pricing. If they are an aviation customer they may get a better price than a non-aviation customer. This is due to the FAA & FDOT Grant dollars that the Airport has incorporated into obtaining leased properties and areas surrounding the airport. This is why listing the prices may be considered informational at best.

Mr. Stephens said he would like to get a price on some land so that he can build a T-hangars. Mr. Delgado said that we would set up a meeting with him to discuss.

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2.) T-Hangar Rates

Mr. DuBose explained that the Advisory Board had recommended the scheduled October T-Hangar rate increases be delayed for a six month period. After the six months, they would be reviewed again to determine if the rate increase should be postponed for an additional six month period. The Airport has included this postponement in the 2010 budget. This budget will be voted on by the City Commissioners in the latter part of September. The City Manager presented this last night and the City Commission appeared to be in concurrence.

Mr. Garcia said he gave out a spreadsheet at the last meeting with T-Hangar rates listed. He does not think it's fair and wants longer than the six month extension; he thinks it should be more like a year.

Mr. Delgado said the Board can come back with another recommendation. The recommendation approved at the last meeting will roll through the budget process.

Mr. Adams said Airport Administration should keep the rates within the Market rates.

Mr. Stephens asked how many people were on the waiting list for T-Hangars.

Someone from the audience noted that the majority of the people at the meeting last night were T-Hangar tenants. Most of the T-Hangar renters are retired and rent should not be raised for at least one year.

Mr. Sale said the Airport spent \$19,000 in 2009 and \$15,000 a year is being spent on the T-Hangars.

Mr. DuBose said \$19,000 was spent on upgrades and electrical this year. The Hangars were paid for by grant dollars. The grant requires us to charge market value on the hangars. The rates went through the Airport Advisory Board and were approved by the Commission in 2007.

Joel Adams made a recommendation to hold all current lease rates until further notice. Jeff Kincart seconded the motion.

John Burton said he has a problem with indefinite. He thinks we should extend the rate for a year looking at the T-Hangars only.

Mr. Adams said it should be any current lease holders that would increase within the year.

Mr. Kincart said it is important to still have businesses on the Airport in a year. If we raise the rates it might force people to leave.

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Doug Thomas explained that we are required by the FAA and FDOT to meet the market rates. It is understood that after the first six month extension we will have to come back and evaluate the leases again for an additional six month extension. He said extending this to all the leases and not just the T-Hangar leases is not a good idea. Everyone's leases are unique and he could not support this recommendation. We can deal with leases within the City on a case by case basis but he would be opposed to a blanket statement.

The Mayor said it would be better heard by the Commission if we leave it like it is.

Mr. Adams amended his recommendation for Airport Administration to consider not raising lease rates for one year and will send advisement for Airport Staff to look at leases on a case by case basis.

Mr. Knight said he has a problem with adjusting all leases carte blanche.

Allen Sale said we should freeze the T-Hangar rates and separate the two issues.

Someone from the audience said that we should get a fair market valuation and distribute to everyone.

John Burton said we should get a market survey within the next two weeks.

Mr. Delgado explained it would have to be done within the next two weeks. Mr. Delgado said there is a motion on the table to suspend the lease rates. It may be prudent to take current leases and find out how this will impact the City. We need to take a look at the maintenance and repair budget. The Airport is an Enterprise fund and must sustain itself. We would like to provide better financial data prior to any global decision being made on all the leases at the facility.

Mr. Adams amended his motion to say he would like to advise staff to review the financial impacts and analyze holding rent rates and to handle leases on a case by case basis. John Burton seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Delgado said we will review all the leases and provide information on how it will impact the Airport and bring back to the Board.

John Burton made a motion for a T-Hangar lease survey be provided to the Board. Joel Adams seconded the motion.

Someone from the audience asked what percentage of leases are renewed yearly at the Airport.

Mr. DuBose said no leases are yearly they are renewed at various times.

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Mr. Bradbury said when the C.P.I. goes up; we can do something or keep it the same.

Ron Garl said the T-Hangars are not businesses they are for pleasure aircraft.

B. Board Members:
No comments.

IV. New Business:

A. Airport Staff:

1.) Communication

Mr. DuBose said we have several projects underway. We are currently working with the City's IT and Communications department in developing a new website for the Airport. The website is scheduled to be implemented the beginning of October. Staff will be sending out a request for information later this week to all the tenants to gather information about each business operating at the airport.

Samantha Blaschke handed out a copy of the draft home page and an example of the format of the website. She explained the timeline of the implementation of the site.

Mr. DuBose said we will be distributing a quarterly electronic newsletter. The newsletter will provide an opportunity for both the airport and tenants to highlight activities, events and special information. In time the newsletter may provide opportunities for advertising. The airport terminal advertising and kiosk is on schedule to be implemented late this calendar year. The primary purpose of the kiosk is to promote on airport tenants and activities for the City of Lakeland. Staff will be discussing in the very near future methodologies of static advertising displays in the terminal.

2.) Properties Available for Lease and Undeveloped Land

Discussed in previous section.

3.) Tenant Meeting Schedule

John DuBose said as we discussed at the last board meeting we plan to have tenant meetings in an open forum twice a year. The first of these meetings would normally be scheduled in mid September prior to the end of the fiscal year and the second in mid March prior to the annual Sun 'n Fun convention. Because of the minimum standards issue this year, the first meeting will be held in November.

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4.) Fuel Prices

Nan Walsh presented a fuel comparison. In reviewing the fuel prices, Lakeland's fuel prices are in line with other competing airports.

5.) Maintenance of Buildings

Nan Walsh presented a list of major maintenance projects and briefly went through each of them with the Board. Nan explained the Airport took over Maintenance over two years ago, since that time we have implemented a work order system. Within the last year we have completed over 900 work orders. We have worked on getting them down to a workable number and we currently have 40 open work orders.

Mr. Kincart asked if someone called in could they get the work order number over the phone. Mrs. Walsh explained they could get the number right away and we are still working on handling those details. Mr. Kincart said he was using an online program that issued case numbers and it could be updated back and forth.

6.) Business and Marketing Plans

Mr. DuBose explained that both drafts of the new business and marketing plans were electronically distributed to the tenants. The City Commission has not had the opportunity to fully review these plans. They are currently under review by the City Manager's office. We wanted to provide them to the Board prior to this meeting so the Board would be able to ask questions or give comments on the documents.

Don Stephens said he spent years in Marketing and he said we need to be careful in the projections listed. They are unrealistic projections. The airport needs a professional sales person that pushes property. He also thinks we need something right away on the website.

Mr. Stephens responded to Mr. Knight's question, he said Brima restaurant will close on Friday.

Rick Garcia said there is a problem with people walking into the terminal and the subtenant of Columbia, Leading Edge, sending customers out of Lakeland and sending them to Tampa.

Daryl Hicks said he has stopped people from leaving and they have told them they were being sent to Tampa.

Tom Dunn said they are a tenant of Columbia and this was the first he has heard of it and will see what he can find out.

Tony Delgado said we will work with Tom on this issue.

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Kelly Bare said there is no flight training on the Airport. If someone wants to get a BFR they have to go to Plant City.

Allen Sale said he met with Columbia and they did help him. He said they are getting close.

Don Stephens asked when we were going to get a marketing guy here at the Airport.

E. Airport Transition:

In response, Mr. Delgado said we can move to the last item on the agenda. He said John DuBose has taken a position at Lakeland Electric. We have finalized the job description and it went out yesterday to various locations. We have already started receiving resumes. We are taking a look at who can run the Airport and would like to get someone that also has Marketing experience. We have dollars set aside to move into Marketing. The Marketing plan was sent out to the tenants so we could get some feedback. He said he will be here as the Interim Manager, and that we are trying to get things done in a timely manner. We are hoping to fill this position within a 90 day period. He stated he would like to give credit to John, at the time he was hired we needed someone with a lot of financial experience and he has done a really great job. We are now in a time that we need someone with a lot of marketing and aviation experience and we hope that we will be able to accomplish that.

Don Stephens said the Airport should use Industrial Realtors. Doug Thomas responded by saying that it is not fair to say that the City does use local marketers. We have brought in people like PODS and Publix. We have worked with others like Steve Scruggs. Mr. Bradbury said none that were mentioned were aviation related. Mr. Thomas responded by saying we have brought in DayJet and Elite.

Someone from the audience said there is too much non aviation out here. Mr. Delgado responded by saying this is partially due to the market. Marketing to the aviation industry is tough and we hope the economy changes.

Tony Delgado said we are looking for a Director and are taking resumes. We are putting together a panel and would like to request a representative from the Advisory Board to sit on that panel.

7.) Master Plan

John DuBose said we currently have an approved Master Plan. Our primary consultant has met with his sub-consultants and given us a tentative internal completion time frame of ten months. This is an aggressive schedule, but we

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feel it can be met. There will be a Technical Advisory Committee and a Stakeholder/Citizen Advisory committee. We are seeking the Boards guidance and input for committee members you feel should be represented on the committee.

Mr. Delgado said we will send something out to the Board requesting names for the committee.

Mr. Burton asked if the meeting notices were being posted properly. Tony Delgado said the notices were being posted properly.

Mr. Knight asked if the Advisory Board should meet more frequently. Mr. Delgado said we can change the meeting dates.

Mr. Knight said he misses having the restaurant here in the terminal. Mr. Delgado said that a RFP for food services did go out for the Lakeland Center and Cleveland Heights Golf Club and the Airport has also piggy backed off of it.

Mr. Delgado said we would like to get the questionnaire back from everyone before the next meeting.

John Burton said he would like Joel Adams to represent the Advisory Board on the panel for hiring a new Airport Director and he could be the backup. The Board agreed.

The Mayor thanked Dan Reimer for his presentation and said the presentation will be sent out to the Board.

Jeff Kincart said we should schedule an Advisory Board Meeting every other month.

Tony Delgado said we can schedule one every other month with the ability to schedule one in between if needed.

John Burton made a motion to hold the Airport Advisory Board Meetings every other month with the ability to schedule in between if needed. Bob Knight seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

B. Board Members:
No comments.

C. Agenda Items for Next Meeting:
There were none discussed at this time.

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D. Time and Place for Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held in October with an exact meeting date to be announced.

E. Airport Transition:

Discussed in previous section.

V. Audience:

None

IV. Adjournment:

There being no further comments and/or items for discussion. The meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM.

Respectively Submitted,

Samantha Blaschke
Airport Administrative Assistant

Mayor Ralph "Buddy" Fletcher
Chairman of the Airport Advisory Board