

**VERMONT AVIATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
NATIONAL LIFE BUILDING
DAVIS 5th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM 1
MONTPELIER, VERMONT
November 7, 2017**

ATTENDEES:

Joe Flynn, VTrans
Trini Brassard, VTrans
Jason Owen, VTrans
Larry Lackey, VTrans
Scott Fortney, VTrans
Chris Beitzel, VTrans
Cisco Herrera, VTrans
Jennifer Davis, VTrans
Guy Tapper, VTrans
Dan Zura, VTrans
Juliann Sherman, VTrans
Costa Pappis, VTrans
Dan Delabruere, VTrans
Bob Atchinson, VTrans
Doug White, VFA-MVL-BTV
Walter Striedeck, NBSA/Aerophoto
Alex Kelly, Green Mountain Skydiving
Bob Furey, Hoyle Tanner
Jean Mongillo, Holye Tanner
Steve Tibbetts, Shell Aviation
Rick Lucas, McFarland Johnson
Mark Johnson, VT Digger
Tom Anderson, Sugarbush Airport
George Coy, Franklin County Airport
Clifford Coy, Franklin County Airport
Robert Desmardis, Franklin County Airport
Guy Rouelle, VAMA
David Corey, AQXing
Brady Brewster, Jacobs
Heath Marsden, Jacobs
Nikolas Ippolito, Gale Associates
Dan Gauvin, Newport
Bob Flint, SRPC
Janice Peaslee, Caledonia Airport
Barbara Murphy, General Assembly
Steve Dolgins, KCDA
Russell Barr, SA
Michael Vincent, J&M Aviation
Kelly Colling, BTV

Mike Bielawski, Ture North Reports

1. CALL TO ORDER and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary of Transportation, Joe Flynn, called the meeting to order at 1 PM. Introductions were done.

2. PUBLIC INPUT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 23, 2017 & May 11, 2017

MOTION by George Coy, SECOND by Bob Flint, to approve the 2/23/17 minutes as written and the 5/11/17 minutes with correction to the date of the minutes to be approved to 2/23/17. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

4. VERMONT AVIATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (VAAC) CHARGE

Trini Brassard reviewed the Executive Order for VAAC and the charge of the council to recommend aviation policy, an investment program for state airports, airport classifications, project priorities, and links between aviation and the state's economic vitality as well as to discuss aviation issues and encourage cooperation between VTrans and airport business operators. Other responsibilities include involvement in the update of the state policy plan, review of draft master plans for state airports, and provide input on economic development opportunities. The current focus is FBOs. VAAC is asked to give input on FBO duties, roles of FBOs and VTrans, and areas that can be combined. VAAC is also asked to give feedback on airport leases.

Joe Flynn stated the Executive Order will be followed and VAAC will be a working council.

5. PROJECT UPDATES

Larry Lackey gave a brief update on projects at state airports:

- Newport
 - Runway extension and obstruction clearing
 - Relocate power line
 - SRE building construction
 - Taxiway A fix
- Middlebury
 - Avigation easements
 - Taxiway extension
 - Clearing for fencing
- Rutland
 - Snow removal equipment
 - Taxiway A
- Highgate
 - Obstruction study
 - Runway length analysis

- EA
- Caledonia
 - Obstruction analysis
 - Avigation easement
 - Runway extension
- Morrisville
 - Master Plan
 - EA
- Hartness
 - Property acquisition
- Morse (Bennington)
 - Property acquisition
- Statewide
 - Pavement maintenance
 - System Policy Plan

Mr. Lackey noted grant applications for FY18 include airport projects at Knapp, Franklin, Caledonia, Middlebury, Morrisville, Newport, Rutland, and Morse.

George Coy mentioned the runway extension at Highgate needs to be 1000' so planes can land per their insurance. The FAA approving only 600' does not make sense. Larry Lackey said the state can extend the runway 600' as one project then show the need for 400' additional feet as the next project. Mr. Coy asked about the gravel pit land swap at the airport. Trini Brassard reported the state will control the land to the northeast of the airport in exchange for what is on the far easterly side of the state property line. The state will do hangar development. Negotiations continue with the landowner.

Russ Barr stated a 4,000' runway is needed at Stowe Airport for safety purposes and to accommodate the commercial airline service with PC-12 aircraft that is provided three to four flights from White Plains, NY to Morrisville weekly. The company would like to expand further in the state. The runway extension is paving and safety area. If there is any water on the runway the planes cannot land and this impacts the economy of the area. Mr. Barr urged making sure the runway project is in the queue and funded and moving forward. Trini Brassard explained the master plan is the first step. VTrans did convince the FAA to provide a grant for the EA as well. The EA is just started for the runway safety area extension. The permit will not be place by December 31, 2017. The FAA asked that the project be shown in the CIP and when realistic apply for a grant. All the environmental permits that are needed will not be in hand by December 31, 2017. Russ Barr mentioned having private funding to pay the grant match if that will help move the process forward. Trini Brassard explained VTrans is signing the agreement with the contractors for the EA and then the permits must be pulled before any funding for construction is received. Larry Lackey added per the grant cycle the project would fall into the next cycle which is next year.

There was further discussion of accelerating the Stowe runway project. Doug White pointed out the public sector does runway projects and purchases equipment knowing the

cost will be reimbursed so the private sector should be able to do the same. Joe Flynn explained state funds cannot be spent on the hope of receiving a grant. VTrans will apply for a grant in November 2018 for the Stowe project. Award will be the following spring.

Russ Barr said the FAA requires safety and usability of the airport. Mr. Barr asked what can be done to help the safety aspect of the airport with increased traffic (i.e. expedite the extension and get the information to the FAA so the project can move forward). There is demand now and the state does not want to lose this opportunity. Trini Brassard explained the federal process must be followed with FAA grants. Some projects have been advanced prior to the state being reimbursed by the FAA and that is a risk to the state. In general the state is not fronting projects and taking the risk because that removes state funds from the program. VTrans will ask the FAA about private funds. Larry Lackey noted all FAA requirements must still be met.

Bob Flint asked if it is a policy decision to not put forth state funds and be proactive to drive growth and aviation, but to be reactive to the federal cycle. Joe Flynn said VTrans must be prudent in how finite state dollars are managed. Russ Barr stressed the opportunity at Stowe is an economic catalyst for the region. The airport is doing exceptionally well with private funding. Having the runway extension will bring tremendous value. Private enterprise is willing to pay the state share. The runway cannot be used if there is water on it so the extension is badly needed. It was thought the land side and airport development were trying to run parallel, but that does not appear to be the case now and that will stop development. Multi-million dollar investment will be made, but without a 4,000' runway the opportunity of the landside development will be lost. Mr. Barr said he would like to work with the state so neither the private side or the state loses the opportunity. The state desperately needs the airport investment.

Doug White stated the 4,000' mark makes the most difference. Trini Brassard said the 4,000' runway is in the planning process, but the FAA will only fund 600'. VTrans continues to work with the FAA on the matter. Cliff Coy asked if the project on the state side is funded and planned for 4,001'. Trini Brassard said the plans are for 4,001', but the project is for what the FAA will fund. Joe Flynn stressed growing the economy and making Vermont more affordable is the cornerstone. VTrans will look at gaps and how to fill the gaps. The policy is not to blindly fund projects with state dollars.

Guy Rouelle said the runway project at Stowe was in FFY18 for design work of the runway reconstruction and to do the EA concurrently with design work.

Joe Flynn briefly reviewed the budget planning process that plans out four years.

Dan Gauvin stressed the economic development opportunity at Stowe Airport and the need to understand the airport is a big economic driver for the area. Bridges or other infrastructure in the state do not breakeven. Airports are economic drivers employing many people and bringing in revenue. The state needs to keep this in mind.

6. FBO DISCUSSION

Trini Brassard reviewed the list of responsibilities for FBOs and VTrans. VTrans is looking for ways to increase efficiencies across departments and contractors. Comment was made on fuel farm operation by the FBO and different circumstances at different airport so flexibility is required. FBOs will be asked to review the list of responsibilities and forward comments to VTrans and VAAC for review at the next meeting.

There was mention of renewing FBO contracts and keeping FBOs after making the investment. Trini Brassard explained the procedure to have an annual evaluation of FBOs to determine what is working or not working and the plan of action before renewing the contract.

George Coy stated there needs to be a policy in place to address private FBOs versus state airports run by state employees and the benefit of different fuel costs. Trini Brassard said setting fuel rates has been an agenda item for VAAC, but no recommendations have been submitted. Past VAAC minutes mention fuel price at state owned airports without FBOs and taking the price paid for the delivered fuel and adding a set amount for the price. The state rates are not below the lowest rate and no more than one dollar is being added to the cost to deliver.

7. LEASE RATES

Trini Brassard reported review of lease rates began in 2006 and was completed in 2008. The focus was to set rates that are comparable regionally, but cover costs of investment at the airport. Elements that were considered include fuel at the airport, lighting, number of aircraft, runway length, number of runways, population, revenue generators. VAAC is asked to give feedback on comparable airports out of state so the state can set lease rates that are fair and equitable. The state set a fee per square foot across airports. Privately maintained taxiway in front of the hangar is not considered. A percentage of gross receipts is paid, but there is no way to check this so a two tiered approach may work.

George Coy mentioned having a different rate for non-aviation leases, and looking at the cost to build versus to lease a hangar.

Cliff Coy suggested looking at the local property tax rate.

It was suggested a subcommittee on leases be formed to report recommendations at the next meeting. VAAC will submit comments on lease rates to Trini Brassard.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Steve Tibbetts

Jennifer Davis introduced Steve Tibbetts with Shell Aviation who has worked with airports all over the region and is a good information resource. Mr. Tibbetts offered his expertise and assistance to VAAC.

Priorities for the Legislature

Bob Flint urged letting VAAC know about any priorities for the legislature so members can advocate for VTrans.

Concerns

Walter Striedieck mentioned the loss of the Aviation Director and the need to have an individual of the high quality of Guy Rouelle. Mr. Striedieck also mentioned the responsibility of the FBO for hangar storage and tie down of GA aircraft, but the FBO at Springfield only has use of part of the hangar which defeats what the FBO is there to do.

VAAC Membership

Russ Barr requested appointment to the Aviation Council. Staff will look into the matter.

9. NEXT MEETING/AGENDA TOPICS*VAAC Meeting Schedule*

Following discussion there was agreement VAAC meetings will be quarterly on the first Monday of the month. The next meeting is February 5, 2018.

Agenda Items for VAAC Meeting: 2/5/18

- Update of the GA rules and regulations
- Update on cost to state to operate state airports
- Feedback on FBO minimum standards
- Feedback on fuel rates
- Feedback on lease rates

10. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business and without objection the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 PM.

RScty: MERiordan