

**VERMONT AVIATION ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
NATIONAL LIFE BUILDING  
DAVIS 5<sup>th</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM 1  
MONTPELIER, VERMONT  
June 18, 2018**

**ATTENDEES:** Michele Boomhower, VTrans  
Dan Delabruere, VTrans  
Jason Owen, VTrans  
Guy Tapper, VTrans  
Paul Libby, VTrans  
Jen Davis, VTrans  
Costa Pappis, VTrans  
Rollin Tebbetts, VTrans  
Kyle Wells, VTrans  
Elaine Sopchak, for Mike Schirling, ACCD  
Doug White, VFA-MVL-BTV  
Chris Carrigan, Vermont Chamber  
Steve Dolgin, Caledonia Airport  
Jean Mongillo, Hoyle Tanner  
Patrick Sharrow, Hoyle Tanner  
Rick Lucas, McFarland Johnson  
Travis Gallant, Stowe Aviation  
Toni Barr, Stowe Aviation  
George Coy, Franklin County Airport  
Heath Marsden, Jacobs Eng.  
Paul Carroccio, Green Mtn. Fl.  
Bob Flint, SRDC  
Janice Peaslee, Caledonia County  
Ed Peet, Cornwall  
Kelly Colling, Burlington Airport  
Walter Striedieck, Springfield  
Gary Joseph, EAA 968  
Barbara Murphy, legislature

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**1. CALL TO ORDER and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dan Delabruere called the meeting to order at 1 PM. Introductions were done.

**2. PUBLIC INPUT**

- George Coy mentioned the following:
  - Action is needed on the four or five inactive hangars at Franklin County Airport. The hangars have not been in use for over five years. Leases should be revoked and the hangars made available. [Dan Delabruere said VTrans is addressing the situation.]

- Aviation education should be a line item in the aviation budget. [Dan Delabruere said VTrans is addressing the matter.]
  - An update is needed on the land swap in Swanton and the lost revenue into the aviation budget (money is going into the General Fund). [Dan Delabruere said the state is not pursuing sale of the property at this point in time.]
  - Continued support by the state for ACE camps is requested. [Dan Delabruere said a proposal should be submitted for support from the state for the camps. The state cannot do a contract without a proposal. VTrans is developing a grant application process that can be used for the ACE camps.]
- Gary Joseph, EAA 968, announced Rutland Regional Airport will have a B-17 on the airfield September 20 through 23, 2018. There will be Young Eagle flights as well.
- Travis Gallant, Stowe Aviation, asked about the state providing volunteer workers as safety observers for events. [Dan Delabruere said the state will not staff events. A proposal is needed for the event before the state makes any commitment of resources. Michele Boomhower added the state supports the aviation sector by bringing facilities to aviation. The public/private relationship is people volunteering their time or siting a business at the airport and using the airport. The state has limited resources and needs to have these partnerships.]
- Steve Dolgin, Caledonia County, said an update is needed on the ongoing negotiation of leases with FBOs.

### 3. UPDATE ON NATIONAL LIFE BUILDING EVACUATION

Dan Delabruere reported the Rail and Aviation sections did not sustain damage from the recent fire in the National Life building, but the offices have been relocated temporarily to Knapp Airport in Berlin.

### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*March 12, 2018*

**MOTION by Steve Dolgin, SECOND by George Coy, to approve the 3/12/18 minutes as written. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.**

### 5. T-BOARD AVIATION RULES

Dan Delabruere reported the State Transportation Board is refreshing the rules for airstrips in the state. More information will be available at the next Aviation Council meeting.

### 6. FY19 VTRANS AVIATION BUDGET

Dan Delabruere reported the FY19 budget has not yet been approved so the Aviation Section is operating under the Governor's Recommended Budget. The FY20 budget will be drafted in the next few weeks. The status of the projects in the FY19 budget was reviewed. Authority is needed to spend any savings on projects or the money must be sent back. Budget adjustments occur in January per the Budget Adjustment Act.

Barbara Murphy, legislature, said the aviation items in the renditions of the budget being presented to the legislature at this time have not changed.

Bob Flint questioned why routine maintenance is not being done on buildings and runways. Dan Delabruere said there is more money in this year's budget than last year for operations maintenance and facilities. The aviation budget will likely be level funded. Michele Boomhower said planning for pavement markings and the condition of buildings can be on the agenda for the next meeting. Concerns/comments should be forwarded to VTrans.

There was discussion of administrative support and staffing. Michele Boomhower said time code classifications have been done to attribute costs and know where resources are going. There are temporary and limited service staff positions and fewer permanent positions. Consultants and contract services are used when needed. There is no change in staffing in the budget.

## **7. PROJECT UPDATES**

Paul Libby reported on construction projects in summer 2018. The projects include runway reconstruction, west end safety area, turnaround on the east end, and paving at Morse Airport in Bennington. Construction will start at Rutland Airport on connection of Taxiway A, reconfiguration of the runway, and removal of lights not in use. Over a mile of fence is being installed at Middlebury Airport.

Steve Dolgin asked about fence at other airports. Dan Delabruere said VTrans will apply for FAA grants for fencing.

## **8. STATE AIRPORT SYSTEM PLAN UPDATE**

Costa Pappis said feedback and comment is needed on whether the mission, vision, and goals in the airport system plan are still relevant, and if the recommended minimum service and facility levels are still appropriate. How realistic each item is to be able to achieve within the available financing is a consideration. Different funding sources may be needed. Rick Lucas with McFarland-Johnson added the system plan is the parameter (high level), but what is in the plan and what is built is contingent on funding.

Bob Flint asked about the accuracy of the data in the plan. Rick Lucas said the data reflects current information.

Next steps with the plan include:

- Public hearings the end of July/early August
- Continued work on the plan
- Gather feedback from the Aviation Council on policy issues
- Do economic impact assessment and marketing

Doug White said a channel for financing is needed so private investment can be accepted. Dan Delabruere said there have been a few proposals, but nothing panned out. Private/public financing can be done if a business wants to locate or expand at a state airport. Michele Boomhower added there is legislation that allows resources to enhance

public/private partnerships for a more robust system. Stowe Aviation is a good example. Costa Pappis said the plan is a roadmap showing how to get from policy to outcome.

Chris Carrigan asked if there is any part of the economic assessment or public/private partnership that will help secure more FAA funding. Costa Pappis said assets and funding, public and private, are critically integrated. Rick Lucas noted FAA funding has been flat so as costs increase FAA funding essentially decreases. When the update of the mission and goals is done state goals such as growing the economy and making Vermont affordable will be addressed. Aviation goals in the system plan will be put into the context of state goals. A strong competitive aviation system will help make Vermont affordable. Michele Boomhower said H.620 directed ACCD to work with VTrans to update the comprehensive statewide economic development strategy and this will include aviation/aerospace business development, emergency technology, event based economic development/tourism, and FBO business support and expansion. Comments from the Aviation Council are welcomed. Chris Carrigan said there are lots of opportunities to market and promote state airports as economic development magnets. Define the assets and services then create a marketing plan to “sell Vermont”.

George Coy mentioned that Shelburne Airport continuing to operate is tenuous.

Janice Peaslee asked for a report on the work by ACCD on the state’s marketing plan and business development relative to aviation. Michele Boomhower noted there will be public outreach meetings and a report to the legislature in January 2019. The Aviation Council will receive a copy of the report.

## **9. LEASE RATE COMPARISON**

Dan Delabruere referred to the spreadsheet showing comparing lease rates across state airports in 2018 and asked for comments. VTrans feels the current lease rates are too low. The lease rates are based on the amenities offered, not land value.

George Coy said amenities did not really play a part in the past. The state would do the prep work, but if there was an FBO and plowing was done that had influence on the lease rate. Dan Delabruere said the state now has other considerations, such as storm water management. Demand and ability to expand are considerations (this is where there could be public/private partnerships). Michele Boomhower said the state looks at return on investment.

Steve Dolgin said an FBO is one of the biggest assets at an airport. The state should view FBOs differently. A two year lease with an FBO does not work. Contracts in the surrounding states are at least five years with renewal options. Vermont needs to look at this issue and have a plan that works for FBOs. Dan Delabruere said the state is open to five year leases, but does not have the funding to sustain this. The leases must be consistent and equitable across all airports though the leases will not be “one size fits all”. Michele Boomhower said the state is working with FBOs on how to operationalize going forward under budget constraints. The state was able to offer startup funding in the past, but that funding is not available now.

Teri Barr said the FBO with Stowe Aviation is fabulous and gets positive feedback from users of the airport. Ms. Barr publicly thanked Travis Gallant for his work as FBO at Stowe Airport.

#### **10. VTRANS DRONE PROGRAM**

Dan Delabruere said VTrans has an unmanned aircraft system (UAS) program. Rollin Tebbetts said the drones will fly when needed for agencies in support of projects. The UAS pilots are under Part 107 (commercial operations license). There will be eight certified drone pilots at VTrans. A grant was received to purchase more drones (VTrans currently has one drone). The mission with the drones includes emergency response, monitoring construction projects, viewing the condition of highway and rail bridges, beacon inspections, public outreach and economic development videos to market airfields or other areas (“a picture is worth a thousand words”)

#### **11. OTHER BUSINESS**

*Next Meeting/Agenda Items*

Next Meeting: Date to be announced

Agenda Items:

- Update on T-Board aviation rules
- Plan to address pavement markings and condition of buildings at airports

#### **12. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business and without objection the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 PM.

*RScty: MERiordan*