

**VERMONT AVIATION ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
NATIONAL LIFE BUILDING  
DAVIS 5<sup>th</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM 1  
MONTPELIER, VERMONT  
June 24, 2019**

**ATTENDEES:** Michele Boomhower, VTrans  
Dan Delabruere, VTrans  
Jason Owen, VTrans  
Guy Tapper, VTrans  
Costa Pappis, VTrans  
Cisco Herrera, VTrans  
Paul Libby, VTrans  
Chris Beitzel, VTrans  
Rollin Tebbetts, VTrans  
Scott Fortney, VTrans  
Jen Davis, VTrans  
Juliann Sherman, VTrans  
Michael Schirling, ACCD  
Chris Carrigan, Vermont Chamber  
Steve Dolgin, Caledonia Airport  
Jean Mongillo, Hoyle Tanner  
Rick Lucas, McFarland Johnson  
Steve Boisvert, McFarland Johnson  
Heath Marsden, Jacobs Eng.  
Sean Tiney, Jacobs Eng.  
Bill Hanf, Green Mountain Avionics  
Robert McEwing, BTV NEAC  
Steve Tibbetts, Shell Aviation  
Armand Dufresne, Gale Associates  
Toni Barr, Stowe Aviation  
Randal Weidemann, Weidemann & Associates  
Paul Carroccio, Green Mountain Flight Training  
George Coy, KFSO  
David Howe, KFSO

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**1. CALL TO ORDER and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dan Delabruere called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. Introductions were done.

**2. PUBLIC INPUT**

- George Coy mentioned his letter to VTrans that requested rental money from hangars on state airports be spent on rent related objects and to make more hangar space available. The state should put the infrastructure in place so it is easier to build hangars.
- Dan Delabruere said presently he is approving all expenditures because the Aviation Budget was over-spent as of February/March 2019 due to the amount of plowing needed over the winter. The new budget begins July 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Bill Hanf, Green Mountain Avionics, said there are many people without hangar space who are taking their airplanes out of state for the winter.
- Mike Schirling, ACCD, briefed the Aviation Council on H.162 which was signed into law and allows VTrans and the Agency of Commerce to get a suite of permits to build on state airports. The legislation should help the process with hangar space, commercial space, blended space, and modernizing. VTrans will have the ability to issue permits at reduced or no cost. The goal is to have two or three designs that are replicated. Michele Boomhower said the permitting system timeline is not predictable and the cost is absorbent making it difficult to get financiers. VTrans will have ready-to-build configurations to attract developers more easily in a public/private partnership. There is much on the plate before building hangar space for the state including deferred maintenance, updating lighting, and navigation systems. Dan Delabruere noted Aviation is the only transportation mode to be able to get a suite of permits.
- Dan Delabruere mentioned the permitting for water and sewer to hangars. Paul Carroccio said there are various permits required (environmental permit for drainage, storm water permit, waste disposal/septic system permit). Master permits do work, but each airport has different environmental concerns. Michele Boomhower said once the draft airport systems plan is done VTrans will meet with each airport on particular needs for the site and what can be sold to developers.
- George Coy stated the state's expectation that individuals will build out taxiways to state standards is beyond the ability of individual owners. Dan Delabruere said it is difficult to get state dollars for taxiway infrastructure and the FAA is not interested. Michele Boomhower said there have been comments that the state should provide access to hangars. This will be considered when building the budget next year.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*March 11, 2018*

**MOTION by Steve Dolgin, SECOND by Mike Schirling, to approve the 3/11/19 minutes with the minor edit on Page 2, FY2020 Governor's Recommended Aviation Budget, to insert the word "paving" before "the safety area" in the paragraph beginning "Kelly Colling asked....". VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.**

### 4. UPDATE ON NATIONAL LIFE/BARRE CITY PLACE

Dan Delabruere said the Aviation Division is moving to Barre City Place in October. There is a meeting room that can be used for the Aviation Council meetings or the conference room in the Dill Building by Knapp Airport can be used. The next Aviation Council meeting is tentatively October 7, 2019.

### 5. AVIATION EDUCATION FUNDS

Dan Delabruere said the VTrans Aviation Event Application will be posted on the Aviation website. If supplies, financial assistance, or help is needed with an event, contact VTrans.

### 6. FAA GRANTS

Dan Delabruere said VTrans received a discretionary grant out of supplemental funding for the Stowe/Morrisville parallel taxiway (\$3.1 million for the north leg). Funds for paving of the safety areas on each end of the runway have been requested, but there has not been any notification from the FAA. A statewide paving maintenance grant was received (\$270,000). VTrans applied for seven grants and has only heard on one.

### 7. LEASE RATES

Dan Delabruere said VTrans is trying to make it easier to track leases. Gross receipts are no longer included in the commercial leases. VTrans used a licensed appraiser to value the land in each area and reviewed aviation rates in neighboring states before establishing the lease rates for hangars (non-aviation commercial use, aviation commercial use, building lease aviation use, building lease non-aviation use). Vermont's rates are below the rates in neighboring states.

David Howe asked for background information on the appraisal methodology and rent value amounts.

Bill Hanf asked if consideration of uses inside the airport was given. Dan Delabruere said there were different categories for level of service.

Juliann Sherman asked about lease rates for FBOs. Dan Delabruere said this was not included.

MOTION by Steve Dolgin, SECOND by Paul Carroccio, to adopt the airport lease rates as presented effective July 1, 2019.

DISCUSSION:

- Bill Hanf said the people impacted by the lease rates have not been informed. Other lease holders should be brought into the discussion. Michele Boomhower said notice of the lease rate changes will be sent out. The state has been under-market for a long time, both in-state and with adjacent states. There is lots of state investment in aviation facilities, and financial participation as part of facilities available for public use is expected.
- Paul Carroccio said people would not mind paying more if the infrastructure were in better shape. A commitment from the state is wanted that the facility being leased will be consistently usable.
- Michele Boomhower said VTrans needs to be informed about problems with the infrastructure.
- Chris Beitzel asked if there are FBO rate changes because there are FBO lease requirements that might impact other leases. Dan Delabruere said the FBO lease is different from the airport leases. Michele Boomhower said VTrans will bring more information to the next meeting on FBO rates and how the leases vary from airport to airport.
- David Howe stressed the need for transparency on how the rates are computed. The rates have not changed since 2008.
- Toni Barr stated there has not been much money available to airports for items to justify the increased rent.
- Steve Dolgin said every airport has problems and it has been years since the rates were increased. Comparisons were done. An increase is due to the landlord as well.
- George Coy said airports can phase in the increase.
- Guy Tapper mentioned hangar space that is subleased. Dan Delabruere said more discussion is needed on the matter.
- Mike Schirling suggested shifting the business model to where VTrans gets out of owning hangars and there is private ownership and maintenance. The state can reinvest the proceeds from sale of the hangars in infrastructure.
- Dan Delabruere said the state as owner of the airports owns the terminals and hangars. The state needs continuity to keep the airports in operation. It is easier to get an FBO if there are facilities at an airport.

VOTING: majority of ayes; motion carried. (note that Paul Carroccio voted in the affirmative with reservations because there was not enough forewarning of the lease rates as required in the CFRs.)

Paul Carroccio said the deficiencies in the property being leased need to be addressed especially if safety is an issue. Mr. Carroccio asked if a bill for repair of safety items should be forwarded to the state. Michele Boomhower said if an airport is not getting action from VTrans staff then contact Dan Delabruere or Michele Boomhower.

Chris Carrigan said not all the stakeholder airports were informed of the lease rate changes.

## **8. PROJECT UPDATES**

Paul Libby reviewed the following:

- Obstruction removal work at the Bennington Airport. The threshold will be relocated.
- VTrans is trying to address tree obstructions and secure aviation easements to make the airports safer.
- A supplemental grant was received for the Morrisville/Stowe Airport for the runway safety area and parallel taxiway

Dan Delabruere said VTrans applied for seven FAA grants for statewide paving, fence relocation in prep for the runway extension project at Franklin County Airport, the safety area paving at Morrisville/Stowe, reimbursement of the easements at Morrisville/Stowe, Northeast Kingdom obstruction study for the crosswind runway, easement acquisition reimbursement, and ongoing vegetation management.

Chris Carrigan asked about EV charging stations. Mike Schirling said ACCD is looking into this. The state will make an investment in charging stations and is looking at how cars and aircraft can be charged.

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

Rick Lucas reviewed the categories in the prioritization process and the challenges facing airports in the future such as increasing demand, growing itinerant opportunities, multimodal activity, preserving infrastructure, environmental impacts/permitting, modifying infrastructure to changing standards, and positioning for new technologies. FAA standards address safety areas, protection zones, obstruction mitigation, and clear approaches. Vermont airports need to prepare for new technologies such as electric aircraft (Cape Air has an electric aircraft and flies to Vermont). Newer airplanes have a longer wingspan that will not fit in most T-hangars. Education of the needed workforce in aircraft maintenance is needed. There is a massive shortage of pilots and mechanics. An action plan is needed to get people interested and involved in this career field. Colleges need to be alerted to the need. Education and training need to be coordinated to go along with marketing. People trained in the trades are needed.

Costa Pappis stated reliable data must be compiled to identify the nexus of investment and operation at state airports.

Ground transportation at airports was reviewed. Fourteen of 16 public use airports have taxi service in the proximity. Burlington Airport has public transit service. Eleven of 16 public use airports have rental cars available in the area, and ride hailing services cover a large portion of the state.

Regarding economic development and marketing, land development should be maximized by designing for the type of aircraft that will be using the airport and needed utilities (water, sewer). There is a lot of buildout on

many airports so a balance is needed between development of hangars and other airport uses (office space and such) to avoid running out of space. When runways are built developable space is removed. Many of the airports are currently land constrained. The Act 108 legislative report deals with marketing state airports. There is opportunity with the Canadian market, aerospace manufacturing, public/private partnership information portals, aviation events (fly-ins, hosting of clubs). ACCD has an aviation component.

Regarding airports being financially sustainable, revenues are keeping up with costs. There are monetary and economic returns on investment in hangars and leases, and funding opportunities in addition to FAA grants such as the Northern Borders Regional Grant Program and grants focused on job growth.

There was discussion of the prioritization method for projects for FAA funding. There are three general categories: general safety, preservation, growth. Projects are prioritized at the state level then sent to the FAA.

The vision and goals of the Airport System Plan were reviewed. Changes include broadening the definitions to encompass all users and surrounding communities. Aviation goals are state goals, not just VTrans goals.

Randall Wiedemann reviewed results of the survey as part of the economic impact assessment, noting the airports provide 3,457 FTE jobs. Visitor spending at airports is estimated at \$127 million and on average \$18 million in capital spending. Burlington Airport has 92% of the total impact. The other state airports generate 8% of the economic impact. There is \$314 million in direct impacts and combined direct and indirect economic impact of all airports in the state of \$525 million up from \$289 million in 2003.

Chris Carrigan said according to the 2017 FAA economic study, nationally civil aviation spending was \$1.17 billion. There was continued discussion of jobs to support operations and construction of hangar space.

Costa Pappis said the draft Airport System Plan will be circulated. The final draft will be available in the fall. Public meetings will be held. The Aviation Council is asked to submit comments on the plan.

## **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

### *FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget*

A copy of the budget was provided to the Aviation Council.

### *Next Meeting/Agenda Items*

October 7, 2019. Location to be announced. Forward agenda items to VTrans.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by George Coy, SECOND by Steve Dolgin, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 PM.