

# SUSSEX COUNTY AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes  
March 27, 2013

## **Opening:**

The regular meeting of the Sussex County Airport Advisory Committee was called to order at approximately 6:03 p.m. on March 27, 2013, at Sussex County Emergency Operations Center, by Chairman Jeff Reed.

## **Advisory Committee Members Present:**

Honorable Sam Wilson, County Council  
Todd Lawson, Sussex County Administrator  
Mike Izzo, Sussex County Engineer  
Julie Wheatley, Director, Sussex County Economic Development

Gus Croll     Garrett Dernoga     Rick Garner     Larry Kelley     Jeff Reed     Mark Ryan

Jim Hickin, Sussex County Airport (Non-member)

**Advisory Committee Members Absent:**     Richard Wilson

## **1.     Approval of Agenda**

A Motion was made by Garrett Dernoga, seconded by Gus Croll, to approve the agenda as distributed unless Representative Ruth Briggs King attended the meeting at which time the issue pertaining to her would be addressed at that time. The agenda was unanimously approved by consent.

## **2.     Approval of Minutes**

A Motion was made by Rick Garner, seconded by Mike Izzo, to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2013 meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved by consent.

## **3.     Declaration of any letters, opinions or other guidance from outside the Advisory Committee presently or in the past**

There were no declarations presented.

## **4.     Wildlife Management Update**

Jim stated that there are signs of geese present. The permit for egg and nest degradation has been renewed.

Jim noted that a dead turkey vulture was found on Runway 10-28 and it was cleared.

At this time there are minimal sightings of deer.

## 5. Airport Update

Jim Hickin discussed the following updates:

- A. Deltech Power Plant training building is under construction and should be done sometime in July. Classes are expected to begin in September 2013.
- B. Industrial Park- In the process of finalizing plans to overlay Broad Creek Avenue. Other roads in the Industrial park will be addressed pending 2014 budget approvals.
- C. Airport Restaurant Update- Arena's will be the new restaurant operator at the airport. The remodeling project is underway and will include new paint, and new flooring. The new operators, as well as the county, are sharing the expenses. The restaurant is expected to have a grand opening on May 18<sup>th</sup> to be in line with the Town of Georgetown Spring Festival. Shuttle service to the airport and to The Circle will be provided.
- D. Plans and specs are being finalized to address the concrete apron in the areas of the Aviation Ave T-Hangars and Sussex Aero Maintenance.
- E. The ditch area where the vultures are flocking is not draining as it is supposed to. This is a 2014 Fiscal Year budget issue and if money is approved it will be addressed.
- F. Wind Tee Replacement- Jim Hickin suggested in replacing the wind tee that we be creative and put a Cessna 150 on top of it and asked if anyone knew of a plane that we could obtain to let him know. It was mentioned that maybe it could be donated to museum and then let county lease it for a small fee.
- G. Runway Extension- The project is expected to resume April 15, 2013. The weather has delayed the original schedule which will push back the completion date to mid-August. There were issues with Instrument Approaches with the FAA's Airports G.I.S program. During construction, the Runway 4 threshold will be displaced 300 ft and the PAPIs will be out of service.
- H. Concerns from some committee members were:
  - 1- The VOR 4 needs to be adjusted as it takes you to the Circle in Georgetown instead of to the end of the Runway at the airport. Jim Hickin said he will contact Gus Croll to get the specifics of the problem.

- 2- Jeff Reed said the gate at Sussex Aero Maintenance area floods and it needs to be addressed.
- 3- Gus Croll noted that at the Hudson-Thompson Hangar the back slope of the drainage swale is too steep to enable him to cut grass safely and would like it addressed.

## **6. Economic Development Update**

Garrett Dernoga commented that Mountaire has a Falcon 2000 and has started using Georgetown Airport instead of Salisbury. Jim Hickin commented that the Falcon 2000 is one of the design aircraft for the 5500 ft. runway.

Julie Wheatley commented on the following items:

- 1- Due to Salisbury losing their tower that Military will not be able to use their airport.
- 2- Julie attended a meeting in Virginia where there were positive comments about Deltech having a powerplant maintenance training program in Georgetown.
- 3- Firefly Concert, Dover, DE- This event is growing and could increase the air traffic here in Georgetown. Garrett commented that we had some traffic from the event last year and if it's growing it may be an opportunity to market our airport.
- 4- Industrial Park:  
  
Broadband- Todd Lawson said that Verizon and Comcast were brought in and noted they are interested and performed a cost benefit analysis.
- 5- Business Plan: Should have first four chapters done in April and then be done with the plan in June. The consultants like the idea of renaming (branding) the airport to better describe the service area.
- 6- Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) asked if Sussex County would be interested in the Americorp program and would utilize an intern to assist with marketing of the airport to begin in October for a year.

## **7. Community Outreach- Economic Development**

Larry Kelley informed the committee of the Packages for the Troops project that was held at the airport by the Bombers travel ball team. It was quite a success.

Todd Lawson asked if the committee would consider expanding the makeup of the committee to include someone from the business community. Any changes will require a bylaw change and would need to go to Council for their approval. After much discussion it was decided to invite Ray Hopkins to the meetings. Jim Hickin will make direct contact with Mr. Hopkins and Susan will put him on the Airport Meeting Notice list to invite for future meetings.

**8. Delaware Gasoline Tax Discussion**

Garrett Dernoga brought up the Delaware AVGAS Excise Tax of \$.23 per gallon. It is a motor vehicle tax that is charged to everyone. The tax is rebated if it is applied for, however the paper work is lengthy and time consuming. Garrett noted that he had spoken to a DelDOT employee who said that last year the rebate amount for the state was approximately \$40,000 for all Delaware airports. This DelDOT employee supports legislation for the AVGAS tax exemption and encouraged conversation with the local legislators. Garrett spoke with Rep. Ruth Briggs King and invited her to the airport meeting if her schedule allowed her to attend. It was noted that draft legislation is on DelDOT's website for anyone to review. It is believed that removal of the tax will make our airport more attractive pricewise. Garrett asked if Council would take a position on the AVGAS tax exemption. Todd Lawson commented he would like to hear what Rep. Ruth Briggs King and other legislators position would be on the legislation. It was decided to contact Rep. King and to see if she could obtain data so the committee can review it to develop an opinion.

**9. Public Comments**

There were no members of the public present.

**10. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 22, 2013 at 6 p.m. at the Emergency Operations Center, Georgetown, Delaware.

A motion to adjourn was made by Garrett Dernoga, Seconded by Sam Wilson. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Susan Wise, Clerk III Technician  
Sussex County Airport