

**Richland-Lexington Airport District  
Commission Meeting  
Draft Minutes  
February 15, 2021 @ 4 p.m. Carolina Room**

**Commissioner Attendance**

Dan Bell, Chair; Carol Fowler, Vice Chair (Zoom); Hazel Bennett (Zoom); DJ Carson (Zoom); Duane Cooper (Zoom); Bill Dukes (Zoom); David Jordan; Hank Jibaja; Breon Walker (Zoom); James Whitmire (Zoom); Jim Wellman

**Commissioners Absent**

Pat Smith

**Staff Attendance**

Mike Gula, Ryan Kreulen, Frank Murray, Gregg Hornsby, Joel Livingston, Kim Jamieson, Chappelle Stevenson, Eddie Martin, Bri Ferguson, Nicole Huffman, Tamie Head, John Fisher

**Other Attendees**

Dave Carpenter (FOTH), Terry Macaluso (WK Dickson), Robert Moore (Mead & Hunt), Ryan Hounshell (Holt), Johnny Dickerson (Columbia Aviation), Jon Queen (FOTH)

**1. Invocation**

Chairman Bell offered the invocation.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Jordan made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Wellman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**3. Approval of Commission Minutes of January 11, 2021 and Approval of the Special Commission Meeting Minutes of January 22, 2021**

Mr. Wellman made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Jordan seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. January Financial Report—Gregg Hornsby, CPA**

Mr. Hornsby presented that the airport saw positive cash flow of ~\$73K in January. He also expressed that we have 330 days cash on-hand, which is an increase of 5 days from December 2020 to January 2021. He also explained that in January, we drew down ~\$277K from our CAREs Grant, used for payroll purposes.

Mr. Hornsby explained that if we are fortunate enough to see our operations generate cash, we will reduce the amount of CAREs funding we draw down, since we have 4 years to use it.

Mr. Hornsby presented that Lines 19 and 23 of the financials in the Commission Packet reflect our Bond Principal payments. In 2020 we paid down \$3.8M, and are projected to pay down \$4.8M or so in 2021 and 2022. He expressed that we are getting close to paying off the bonds we have (not including the new CBIS Project Bond approved by the commission in January). He concluded his presentation by saying that our revenues are under-budget, and line 15 (CAREs) was the largest impact, expenses are under-budget.

Mr. Jordan asked Mr. Hornsby to clarify that without the CAREs funding, the airport is losing ~\$100K per month, and Mr. Hornsby confirmed that as true. Ms. Bennett had a budgetary question about what was included for employee raises. Mr. Hornsby and Ms. Stevenson explained that non-exempt employees are eligible for up to 2.5% (1-step) raise, based on evaluation.

## **5. Operations Committee Report**

Vice Chair Fowler summarized that the Operations Committee approved moving forward with staff recommendation for an RFP for a mining operation. Mr. Gula gave a brief history of the project. Mr. Wellman made a motion to approve the committee's decision, Mr. Jordan seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair Fowler also reported that the Operations Committee approved moving forward with plans of selling Site 11, to be re-zoned as residential property. This was brought to the Committee for information purposes, so no action is required at this time.

Ms. Bennett was interested in the property location, and Mr. Gula explained where Site 11 is located. Mr. Whitmire inquired about the number of acres, and Mr. Gula responded that there are 28 developable acres included.

## **6. Staff Reports**

### **a. Chairman's Report—Commission Chairman Dan Bell**

Chairman Bell began his report by reminding the Commission that the SCAA has an upcoming virtual conference. If any commissioners would like to attend (and they are encouraged to do so), please reach out to Mr. Gula, as there is a small fee associated with attendance. Our own Mr. Frank Murray will be giving a talk on the Friday morning of the conference.

Enplanements are still down (57% from 2017, and 64% from 2019). These are similar to our counterparts: CHS (down 66%), GSP (down 65%), and MYR (down 49%). American Airlines are bringing back their Philadelphia and Washington DC (Reagan) flights next month.

Our revenues are down ~ \$568K, which is to be expected during a pandemic. However, greater than \$300K of those lost revenues are from parking. Chairman

Bell used this point to express how important parking is, but also to remind us that diversifying our cash flows helps our revenue stay steady.

Chairman Bell asked Ms. Jamieson for an update on the art in the airport program. Ms. Jamieson explained that of 135 applicants, 4 were selected for a quarterly-rotation display in the Connector. Transitions Homeless Center reached out about a similar initiative in Baggage Claim, which was great. Currently, Family Connection has a photography display. Ms. Jamieson expressed that the community has been very supportive of these initiatives, and that they have garnered much social media attention. She also mentioned that these were a positive extension opportunity for us to work with non-profits, and that we are able to make different connections with our community and locals. The Chairman and Vice-Chair both expressed support and praise for the project.

**b. Director's Report—Mike Gula, AAE**

Mr. Gula expressed that so far, this has been a slow month. However, CAE's Annual Report for 2020 is complete, and he feels that it is the best one yet. He expresses that 2020 was of course a difficult year, but asks for the Commissioners to please review the Annual Report—because we also have much to celebrate.

He reports that the new escalators in baggage claim and the commuter lounge are operational. He also reminded the committee of the SCAA Meeting.

He mentioned that the SC302 Beautification Project is going well so far. He is reaching out to tenants and those directly around the airport—and if anyone has contacts for HARSCO Rail or Flex, please send those. He expressed that this is a collaborative project and it needs support, and he provided an updated list of entities who have pledged financial backing.

Mr. Gula reported that there has been a national directive for an updated and required mask mandate while on airport property. He mentioned that there have been rumors and conversations about a potential new Executive Order, that those flying domestically would have to show a negative COVID-19 test dated within 3 days of their flight. He expresses concern that if this happens, it will be detrimental to operations. Lobbyists are working against it now, and we are drafting letters to our delegation.

Ms. Bennett asked for further clarification as to why this may be detrimental. Mr. Gula explained that anyone booking last-minute flights would potentially have logistical issues and therefore not be able to fly. He also cited a few personal conversations where the public has expressed that it would be easier to drive for travel if this becomes the case. Mr. Cooper had questions about who would be responsible (TSA, Airlines, CAE, some combination?) if this were to

occur. Mr. Gula explained that these logistics are another potential issue—because it is unclear what entity would enforce this.

Mr. Jordan inquired about Silver Airways, and Mr. Gula expressed that the Tampa flight is still full and that he has heard nothing negative. Mr. Gula also answered a scheduling question about the returning DCA flight, expressing that his current understanding is that flight will operate on the same schedule as it did before. Mr. Wellman asked about some of the closed gift stores in the atrium, and Mr. Gula explained that they have been flexing their hours since they are struggling with fewer passengers.

**7. Discussion & Suggestions**

Chairman Bell thanked the public for their attendance. Ms. Bennett congratulated Mr. Hornsby on his CPA designation. There were no public comments.

**8. Next Meeting is March 15, 2021 @ 4 p.m.**

**9. Adjournment**

Chairman Bell adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brianna Ferguson".

Brianna Ferguson, Commission Secretary