

County Council of Beaufort County  
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## **AVIATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2007**

A meeting of the Beaufort County Aviation Advisory Board was called to order at 1:30 PM on Thursday, September 13, 2007 at the Lady's Island Airport Conference Room. Chairman David Ames opened the meeting and noted that there was a quorum present. Guests were introduced and offered an agenda for the meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the August 9, 2007 meeting minutes. The minutes were accepted as submitted.

Guests were introduced.

An addition to the agenda under New Business was made to add Carolina Air Center Incorporated (CACI) and Signature assignment of FBO lease. There was no objection to the addition.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

David Ames-Chairman  
Pete Buchanan-Vice Chairman  
Anne Esposito  
John Curry  
Leonard Law  
Dan Lynch  
Ross Sanders  
Dick Warden  
Ken Heitzke- HHI Liaison

### **ABSENT**

Harvey Ewing  
Jared Newman

### **STAFF**

Eddie Bellamy-Interim Deputy Administrator  
Paul Andres-Airport Director  
Larry Yeager-Operations Chief  
Joel Phillips – LIA Supervisor  
Priscilla Stewart – Admin Assistant

### **GUESTS**

Joe Croley-Resident  
Jack Shuler-Resident  
Patty Blackmon-CRC  
Nick Esposito - Resident  
Tim Donnelly-Island Packet  
Gary Gildner-Resident  
Dick Liberman – Resident  
Tom Olsen – Resident  
Ray McKay – State Aeronautics Commission  
Gary Gustowski – GM for Signature in Savannah  
Jim Fisher - Resident

## HILTON HEAD ISLAND AIRPORT REPORT

1. Tower Report: Paul Andres
  - For the month of August, there were 3,916 total flight operations.
  - 2,608 were conducted under IFR procedures.
2. Operations Report: Chief Yeager
  - There were two medivac standbys during the month of August.
  - No in-flight emergencies.
3. Noise Complaints & Traffic Counters: Chief Yeager
  - There were 6 noise complaints.
    - 1 noise related complaint from Port Royal Plantation by early morning executive jet.
    - 5 over flights span Port Royal Plantation, Indigo Run and May River.
    - The over flight was not the Mosquito Control plane.
  - 33 general aviation after hours traffic count during the month of August.
  - 124 commercial airlines after hour flights also for the month of August.
4. Projects: Paul Andres
  - Tree Obstructions.
    - Contract moving forward for signature for removal and trimming of tree obstructions on the South End of the Airport at a 20:1 slope.
    - With signed contract, a pre-construction meeting will be held with Contractor and Town staff.
    - Work should start the end of September.
    - Duration will be at least 3-4 months.
    - Multiphase project:
      - Pine tree removal.
      - Pause for Town Arborist and County Forester to examine the hardwood trees for either trimming, ability to trim or necessity of removal.
      - That work then conducted.
      - 3<sup>Rd</sup> QA phase to make sure no tree obstruction overlooked due to the tree density.
      - Completion of the project.
  - Aircraft Hangars. All new hangers are rented.
  - Emergency Generator. The emergency generator design is about 85% completed.
  - FY-07 FAA Grants.
    - Airport Layout Plan Update – Requires further discussions with consultant.
    - Aircraft Rescue & Fire Fighting (ARFF) Building Design – Finance Committee has asked for additional justification for the cost of the professional services of that contract.
    - Remove Obstructions to Runway 3 Design – Reimbursement to the Enterprise Fund has begun.

- Remove Obstructions to Runway 21 Environmental Assessment – FAA requires an environmental assessment. Currently there are an active bald eagle’s nest, isolated fresh water wetland and a historical site in the area,
- Acquire Land for Development 1.76 Acres – Under negotiation at this time.

The Board would like to recognize the airport staff for the TSA security work needed for Delta to continue to fly. Enplane and deplane numbers are up to a level equal to 1999.

Chairman Ames brought up the ARFF design issue. There have been some comments and informal discussion regarding fees, etc. regarding the Wilbur Smith contract.

- Suggestion that the Board might want to consider bids from other contractors.
- If it the pleasure of this Board to do something like that, this is an appropriate time to do that.
- The ARFF is a stand alone project.

A Motion was made and seconded to seek alternate bids for the design work. There was discussion on the amount of work required to qualify a second engineering firm from the County level. Are they interested in qualifying another bidder? Eddie Bellamy indicated that the County will be willing to put it out to bid. The Public Service Committee should be pleased with this recommendation. The motion passed unanimously.

## **BEAUFORT COUNTY AIRPORT REPORT**

1. Fuel Sales: Joel Phillips
  - For the month of August, sold 6,671 gallons of AvGas and 2,800 gallons of Jet A.
  - Fuel sales are down as a result of the Secession Golf Course being closed for renovation.
2. Projects: Paul Andres
  - Tree Obstructions. Survey work to a 34:1 slope (South End) is nearly complete. Need to contact three/four parcel owners for access to their property in order to finish the survey work.
  - Aircraft Hangars. Bids are to be open on September 13, 2007 at 3:00P.M. for the Mosquito Control Hangar project. Base bid is for the Mosquito Control Hangar with the alternate bid for a second hangar connected by a common fire wall.
  - AWOS. Installation of the automated weather observation system has started. Some equipment has arrived, some pieces of equipment to arrive later this month. Start assembling the end of the month. December/January get a specified frequency for radio contact. When Air Station is closed probably forwarded to JAX center. First of the year to be fully operational.
  - FY-07 FAA Grants. Airport Master Plan Update – Project still needs further discussion with our consultant.

- Tree Removal Professional Services. This is reimbursement for monies already expended. We can start drawing down administratively.

A question was asked if we can do some selective clearing of the higher pine trees on the North End of the HHI Airport. Paul will ask the question.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 1. Finance: Dick Warden

- Mary Sieger, fiscal technician, now in place. She will be able to log into Beaufort County's MUNIS system as a read only user. This will help to reconcile our financial accounts on a timelier basis with the County's financial records.
- Mary has prepared initial monthly income statements for both Airports for the period March 1 through August 31, 2007.
- Expense reports will take some time.
- No Beaufort County financial reports can be found at this point in time.
- Budgets for FY08 have been received.
  - Lady's Island Airport was approved as submitted.
  - Hilton Head Island Airport was cut in several areas by \$50,000 to \$60,000 total.
  - Hangar rental income was a key issue in both budgets.
- At this time both airports are in the red.
  - Primary factors for Hilton Head Airport are airline fee deficits.
  - Delinquent and insufficient TSA reimbursements.
  - Homeland Security Grant Program to pay for the Sheriff's deputies. Maximum reimbursement is 2/3 of the cost. Enterprise fund looking for ways to cover the other 1/3 of the cost of those services.
  - Loss of hangar rental income at both Airports.
- Receivables at Lady's Island Airport are OK except for one account (\$632) which needs to be written off and the seized Cessna which is up for auction.
- AAB is awaiting the Financial Consultant's Final Report on Airport accounting matters. Report is not complete and the draft report is not finalized.
- Drafting a recommendation for improving efficiency of financial activities to keep pace with the County. Will bring that recommendation to the Board.

### 2. Lady's Island Airport Facilities: Pete Buchanan

- Wilbur Smith has not served this County very well recently:
  - Errors presented on the drawings for the Mosquito Control Hangar showed up repeatedly in three different meetings.
  - Specifications established by Wilbur Smith on the Mosquito Control Hangar were in error and caused delays.
  - Errors in the Hilton Head Airport runway marking caused extra

- work to be performed by the County.
  - Lack of knowledge of the slope at Hilton Head Airport changed drastically the tree cutting activity.
  - Request for Grants prepared by Wilbur Smith for Master Plan at LIA were reduced because of FAA perceived duplication of effort.
  - Sending a strong message to Wilbur Smith on the ARFF building.
  - Need a firm list of the Board's needs and concerns. We are going to put out to bid because fees are too high and prior quality control issues.
- Showed a picture of hangars that were built in Ridgeland. The hangars were built in less than a year.

A motion was made and seconded that we recommend that the Proposal for Executive Flight Training Hanger be forwarded immediately to the Public Services and Finance Committees of County Council for their consideration. The discussion pointed out that this project is currently in legal. All new leases/agreements are tied up in the financial review. All projects are on hold pending the outcome of that review. This is one of those projects. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Hilton Head Island Airport Facilities: Anne Esposito  
Written report and pictures. The Terminal was inspected by John Curry and Anne Esposito on Wednesday, September 13, 2007. The present passenger terminal facilities are at maximum capacity and need to be updated and replaced. The following improvements are strongly suggested:
  - Secured TSA Passenger Lounge
    - Replace passenger furniture.
    - Increase seating capacity from 68 to 78.
  - Unsecured Passenger Area Improvements
    - Food area needs vast improvement.
    - TV sets with news stations.
    - Seating area furniture replaced.
    - Increase seating capacity by at least 10 more chairs.
    - Wireless capability.
  - Restroom Renovations
    - Replace fixtures.
  - Terminal Building
    - Upkeep/Cleaning.
    - Exterior needs repainting.
    - Interior dirty.
  - Expansion
    - Ticket area need to be expanded to the South.
    - Office area expanded to include additional office space and a conference room.
  - Baggage Claim Area and Loading Dock

- Area needs expanding to the North to accommodate three flights loading and unloading within 20 minutes.
- PA System
  - Only one microphone is functional at times.
- Airfield Signage needs replacement.
- Conclusion
  - The above concerns be addressed and budgeted as soon as possible.
  - A state of disrepair and neglect through lack of funding.
  - Plan to meet with the Airport Director and propose itemized renovation budget to present to the Board as soon as possible.

A motion was made and seconded that the Board accept the report and recommend that the Facilities Committee and Paul work the budget to be presented to this committee next month. The discussion pointed out that while these deficiencies need accomplishing; the funds needed are not readily available. County Council funding is generally from the general fund. They may say look to the enterprise funds. County Council needs to know specifically what is needed. The motion passed unanimously.

4. External Affairs: John Curry

- Greater Island Committee Meeting. The Hilton Head Island Airport was the subject of their meeting last month. Presentation was by Chairman Weston Newton, Mayor Peebles and Administrator Gray Kubic. Very positive meeting on how the County, the Town and the AAB are working together toward a betterment of everything. The Airport in general is enjoying the best relationship with community than its had in some time.
- Mayor now approves heliport at hospital which he will pursue.
- Administrator's point was we all have to think regionally regarding air transportation.
- Everyone there recommended the need at some point in time to study the feasibility of lengthening the runway at Hilton Head, just to know the options. Study should be deferred until the public trust and confidence has been strengthened.

5. Adhoc Committee on Airport Authority/Commission: Dick Warden for Jared Newman - The Airport Authority Commission Report.

- Provided a proposed survey and list of existing Airport Authorities/Commissions list around the state.

A Motion was made and seconded to change the words in the survey to read: As part of the AAB's study initiated to determine the advantages/disadvantages of converting the Beaufort County's Airports to an Airport Authority, visits are planned to several Airports with Authorities/Commissions.

The motion passed by a majority vote.

## **COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. Hilton Head: Don Baldwin absent. No report.
2. Lady's Island: Dick Warden. No meeting has been scheduled and there is nothing to report.

Chairman Ames reminded all Committee Chairs that if conducting a full Committee meeting, it must reflect the FIOA requirements of public notice, agenda and minutes.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Hilton Head Hanger Rental Rates: All hangers are rented. Price is \$3.75 sq. ft. or \$328 a month for T-hangars. Fees increase proportionally based on size.
2. Aviation Advisory Board Vacancy: David Ames
  - Mr. Jerue was recommended to County Council.
  - Beaufort County Web site is now the master Web site for this information.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. FAA ATC Meeting: Paul Andres
  - FAA sent its Air Traffic Control (ATC) and Flight Procedures Branch to meet with Savannah's ATC, MCAS ATC and HHI Airport Tower personnel at the Hilton Head Island Airport.
  - Information that was gathered will be researched and used to formulate recommendations.
  - Main topic was having Savannah handle the final routing into the area as far as air space is concerned.
  - This means that Savannah has final hand off.
  - Do not want to modify the area of air space control.
  - Both approach facilities need to coordinate.
  - Savannah has some issues i.e., staffing, frequencies etc.
  - IFR and VFR or maybe IFR under VFR conditions.
2. CACI lease transfer to Signature Flight Support (Signature).
  - CACI had entered into an agreement with Signature to assign their existing FBO contract at HHI Airport.
  - FBO can assign lease but this transfer requires County Council approval.
  - Approval will not be unreasonably withheld.
  - There will be a special meeting on Monday September 17, 2007. Public Services Committee wanted to know Aviation Advisory Board's position/recommendation with regard to the assignment of the FBO contract.

John Curry proposed the following Resolution:

## RESOLUTION

Carolina Air Center, Inc. was awarded the contract to be a fixed based operator at the Hilton Head Airport in 1996.

They completed construction of the abandoned aircraft terminal building in a first class manner and have added many unique amenities such as a putting green, fitness center and lounge area causing it to be recognized as one of the best FBO facilities and operations in the region. The entire staff, under the leadership of Ed Grisham and the able management of Mike Bennett is well trained and totally service oriented.

The Beaufort County Aviation Advisory Board commends Carolina Air Center for their long and dedicated service to the Hilton Head Island Airport, Beaufort County, Hilton Head Island and the aviation community. It is our hope that their successors will carry on in the fine tradition that Carolina Air Center has established and maintained.

The Resolution was seconded and passed unanimously.

Welcome to Gary Gustowski as a Signature representative. He has been in the FBO business 30 years. Will be working together with Hilton Head and Savannah. Mike Bennett and structure to stay as it is now.

The Board will recommend approval to the Council based on a comfort level.

A Motion was made and seconded that we endorse the transfer and welcome Signature and offer them any assistance we can render. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Ames stated that he has had a request to switch meeting date from the second Thursday to the third or fourth Thursday. One advantage will be to give the Finance Committee longer to review the financial reports. Is there any objection to the meetings being on the fourth Thursday of every other month with the same rotation? The chair hears no objection, and the meeting date is changed.

Chairman Ames stated that according to the Charter Ordinance a Board member can only miss 4 meetings.

A Motion was made and seconded that the Minutes of the Aviation Advisory Board Meeting be action item bullets that summarize salient points and skip extensive verbiage. The motion Passed unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1. Nick Esposito - He was recently on the Hilton Head Chamber of Commerce web



site and there was a Savannah Airport link but no HHI Airport link. When looking at the recommendations of the Facilities Report for the expansion of the terminal and refurbishing, most of the funding will be covered by Federal grants but you need another revenue stream. He would like to thank Ed Grisham and Carolina Air. Welcome to Signature. Also Signature has done consultant work and maybe they can help with some of the projects.

2. Dick Lieberman - Questioned the bald eagle's nest as he thought the bald eagle had been removed from the endangered species list. The answer is while the bald eagle has been removed from the endangered species list, it is now on the threatened list. These are current rules and regulations in place we have to comply with.

2. Jim Fisher - Requested copies of the 14 point paper and copies of the minutes of the FAA meeting. We have all these great controls about noise abatement. People are abiding by the noise abatement areas. The one exception that everyone remembers is the one corporate jet that took off at two in the morning. You can get 200 great things happening but you remember the 2AM flight that wakes up people. It's the exception that continues to cause complaints. Chairman Ames will supply the 14 point paper. Minutes of the FAA meeting have not been provided to us.

#### ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.

#### FUTURE MEETINGS

Aviation Advisory Board: The next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 25, 2007 at 1:30 PM at the Hilton Head Air Service Building.

Hilton Head Island Airport Community Relations Committee: The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 1, 2007 at 4:30 PM at the Hilton Head Air Service Building.

Beaufort County Airport Community Relations Committee: The next meeting will be announced at a later date.