

**County Council of Beaufort County**  
**Hilton Head Island Airport – [www.hiltonheadairport.com](http://www.hiltonheadairport.com)**  
**Beaufort County Airport – [www.beaufortcoairport.com](http://www.beaufortcoairport.com)**  
Post Office Box 23739 – 120 Beach City Road  
Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29925-3739  
Phone: (843) 689-5400 - Fax: (843) 689-5411

**AVIATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**OF AUGUST 21, 2008**

The print media was notified in accordance with the State Freedom of Information Act.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Beaufort County Aviation Advisory Board was held at 1:30 PM on Thursday, August 21, 2008 in the Executive Conference Room of the Beaufort County Government Center. Chairman David Ames opened the meeting and noted that there was a quorum.

**A motion was made and seconded to approve the August 21, 2008 agenda. The motion passed unanimously.**

**A motion was made and seconded to accept the July 17, 2008 meeting minutes with corrections. The motion passed unanimously.**

**MEMBERS**

David Ames-Chairman  
Pete Buchanan – Vice Chairman  
Anne Esposito  
Leonard Law  
Councilman Ken Heitzke – Town of Hilton  
Head Liaison  
Councilman Rick Caporale – Beaufort  
County Liaison  
Dan Lynch  
Ross Sanders  
John Curry

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jared Newman  
Harvey Ewing

**GUESTS**

Mike Bennett – Signature Flight Support  
Councilman Stu Rodman  
Councilman Paul Summerville  
Chris Eversmann – Wilbur Smith Associates  
Grover Cleaveland – Resident  
Sharon Burris – Beaufort County Auditor  
Joe Croley – Hilton Head Area Assoc. of Realtors  
Tim Donnelly – Island Packet  
Dick Lieberman – Resident  
Jack Schuler – Resident  
Joe Zimmerman – Resident  
Jim Fisher – Resident  
Bill Coleman – HHI/CRC

**STAFF**

Paul Andres – Airport Director  
Larry Yeager – Operations Chief  
Joel Phillips – Beaufort Co. Airport Supv.  
Linda Wright – Administrative Assistant

**GUEST INTRODUCTIONS** – Guests attending the meeting introduced themselves.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1. Jim Fisher – Mr. Fisher recapped an article from *USA Today* which stated regional airports were giving unbelievable concessions in order to keep the commercial airlines happy. He wanted to know what we could do to keep our airlines happy. He further

stated that even with the tree cutting finished on the South end of the Airport, we are not receiving the benefits of increased seating on US Airways until the other end is cleared. Mr. Fisher wanted to know if this was a money issue or an FAA requirement.

## **HILTON HEAD ISLAND AIRPORT REPORT**

1. Tower Report: Paul Andres
  - For the month of July 2008 there were 4,526 total flight operations of which 2,479 were conducted under IFR procedures.
2. Operations Report: Chief Yeager
  - There were five medivacs for the month of July. There were two in-flight emergencies for general aviation aircraft. Both were mechanical in nature and the aircraft landed without incident.
3. Noise Complaints & Traffic Counters: Chief Yeager
  - There were two noise complaints for the month of July. One was related to the Coast Guard and one a low flying general aviation aircraft over Port Royal.
  - There were 12 after hours traffic counts.
  - A new maintenance technician and a new fire operations officer have been hired.
4. Projects: Paul Andres
  - Mr. Andres stated they have cleared to a 20:1 slope on the South end of the Airport, but this does not benefit the commercial carriers to any great extent regarding the number of passengers they can carry particularly in the summer. He reminded everyone they will ultimately need to clear to a 34:1 slope on the South end and they are making plans for the North end of the Airport. He stated the consultant is in the process of putting together the bid package for the plant back mitigation that will occur on the South end of the Airport as a result of the initial clearing. He continued by stating the preliminary draft Environmental Assessment has been submitted within the last couple of weeks to the FAA Environmental Section for their initial review and comments. Once this is received back and their comments have been addressed, a public hearing will be scheduled on the Environmental Assessment. This information will be returned to the FAA for their final review and approval for recommendations to proceed with removal of the tree obstructions on the North end of the Airport.
  - Mr. Andres answered Mr. Fisher's questions about the slope surveys by stating that normally the slopes are periodically assessed by the South Carolina Division of Aeronautics. He stated they have indicated that this is an expensive task and they recommend this be included as one of the task items that is conducted during the Master Plan Update. Mr. Ames asked if only one or two seats would be affected by this and Mr. Andres stated that is correct on the South end with only a 20:1 slope.
  - Approval has been received from the Town's Design Review Board for the emergency generator project. He stated there are some conditions and stipulations that have to be addressed. The most significant one is that there needs to be a detailed landscaping plan for around the building.
  - Mr. Andres stated there was a progress meeting this morning concerning the new fire station design. He stated they are waiting for the site survey data from the Engineering Department. He stated they are also coordinating the geotechnical borings that are required to get the soil samples.

- Concerning the Fiscal Year-08 FAA Grant Design Projects, Mr. Andres stated the consultants made site visits yesterday and acquired the preliminary information they need to start the designs.
- Mr. Lynch wanted to know if there had been any discussions with Delta as to whether the tree problem was a determining factor in their pullout. If so, is there anything that can be done to bring them back and to prevent US Airways from doing the same thing? Mr. Andres stated that the trees are a problem for the airlines, but was not the determining factor in Delta's decision to suspend service. He stated this was a business decision to retire their only turboprop aircraft. They are examining other options with the hope to restore service as early as next Spring. Mr. Andres further stated the County Administrator had asked that a meeting be arranged with US Airways officials in Charlotte to include the Administrator, the Chairman of County Council and Mr. Andres to discuss issues from US Airways' perspective as it pertains to operations at the Airport. Mr. Andres concluded by stating that at this time there is no indication of change other than their normal seasonal reduction in flights. Removal of the trees will be a benefit to both airlines when they are able to clear the slopes to 34:1.

## **BEAUFORT COUNTY AIRPORT REPORT**

### **1. Fuel Sales: Joel Phillips**

- For the month of June a total of 7,809 gallons were sold (4,442 gallons of AvGas and 3,367 gallons of jet fuel). The AvGas sales are down approximately 1,600 gallons and jet fuel sales are up 720 gallons compared to the same time period last year. There were a total of 985 operations which is down considerably from the same time period last year.

### **2. Projects: Paul Andres**

- Mr. Andres stated that County Council approved awarding of the contract for the tree obstruction removal at Lady's Island to Asphlundh Tree Expert Company. The County Administrator is in the process of executing the contract documents. Once they are executed, the contractor is prepared to commence work immediately. It is expected to take approximately two months to complete the work.
- The aircraft hangar project for Mosquito Control is now under construction. The foundation was poured this past week.
- The site visits for the FY-08 FAA Grant Design Projects which includes design of runway overlay, addition of Runway 07 runway end identifier lighting systems, and replacement of the rotating beacon and wind cone were made yesterday by the consultants. They gathered all of the information they need to get these projects under design.
- The Master Plan Study Update for the Lady's Island Airport is currently underway. Mr. Andres stated the initial inventory chapter has been provided for preliminary review and comment. He stated after it has been looked at, they will get back with the consultant. It is anticipated that the next Advisory Committee Meeting for the Master Plan will be sometime in September.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. Finance and Lady's Island Facilities: Pete Buchanan**

- Mr. Buchanan stated Mr. Stu Rodman had prepared a report concerning the status of the Beaufort County Airports. The report shows the airports are "healthy".

Mr. Buchanan asked that this portion be included as a part of the minutes. He asked that the balance sheet be excluded because there is still a question as to what the Airport does or does not owe the County. He stated they need to get the details from the County's financial office in order to have a correct balance sheet. In response, Mr. Rodman stated that at the next meeting they will be visiting what they call "forgiving" the money owed from the Airport Enterprise Fund to the County. He stated there are several reasons this might be considered such as the County could and has made an investment in the Airports.

- Mr. Lynch asked about the possibility of the County subsidizing some of the expenses such as the fuel in order to get more people to use the facility. After some discussion, Mr. Ames asked the Finance Committee to look into this matter.
- Mr. Buchanan stated the Inventory Chapter and Pilot Surveys are underway. He further stated the forecast for the future of the airport is being explored internally by Wilbur Smith Associates.

2. Hilton Head Island Airport Facilities: Anne Esposito

- Ms. Esposito stated that until the budget is resolved she is at a standstill.
- Mr. Andres stated that County Council has recently expressed a desire to review and approve the Airport's 5 Year AIP program. Due to the timeframe, he and the consultant will be working on the revised 5 Year Plan which will be for Federal fiscal years 2010 through 2014. He stated this is due to the FAA by the end of December. In order to meet the timeframe, they hope to have this information in the next couple of weeks for Ms. Esposito and Mr. Buchanan to look at and then bring the recommendations back to the September Aviation Advisory Board meeting for review. This process will then be forwarded to Public Services Committee and full County Council.

3. External Affairs: John Curry

- Mr. Curry stated the Chamber of Commerce will be in touch with Delta and US Airways to express the importance of the air service to the community and if there is anything the community can do to assist the airlines.

4. Community Relations Committee (CRC) Reports:

- Hilton Head Island – No report due to inclement weather and low attendance.
- Lady's Island – No report.

### **HILTON HEAD ISLAND CRC ISSUE UPDATE**

- Mr. Andres stated the FAA promised visual approach has been published in the Terminal Procedures Publication (TPP) effective July 31<sup>st</sup>. The approach is titled the "Broad Creek Visual Runway 03 Approach". Mr. Andres stated that this can only be flown under good weather conditions. It cannot be flown at night and it is not mandatory, although they are encouraging the pilots to use it.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. Hilton Head Island Airport Master Plan Study: Paul Andres

- The consultant selected is Talbert & Bright located in Charlotte, NC and Columbia, SC. Mr. Andres stated he has been in contact with them and they are developing a preliminary scope of work for the Master Plan Study. He said they are also negotiating fees. Mr. Ames asked how the Master Plan Committee will be involved in the near term. Mr. Andres stated the Committee will be part of the

review of the preliminary scope of work and any revisions that need to be made. He said they will be involved all the way through the Master Plan Update. There will also be a public meeting to inform the public as to what is included in the Master Plan and to solicit their input and comments.

2. AAB Charter Revisions: David Ames

- Mr. Ames stated this issue came before the Public Services Committee last week. He stated the Committee decided to postpone any decision for that day, but encouraged Liaison Rick Caporale and the Aviation Board to get together to come up with a recommendation for moving forward. He stated he, John Curry, Rick Caporale, Stu Rodman and Pete Buchanan (via telephone) talked about options. Mr. Ames asked for a discussion of the four items that were emailed to the Aviation Advisory Board members as well as a fifth item. He stated he wanted to get their feedback in order to for Mr. Newman to make any changes to the Charter that the Board deems appropriate and then pass this on to County Council for their consideration. *(NOTE: Attached to these minutes are Mr. Newman's comments concerning these items via an email to Mr. Ames.)*

The following items were discussed with motions made:

a. Term Limits

**A motion was made and seconded to not have term limits for officers of the Aviation Advisory Board included in the revised Charter. The motion passed six to one.**

b. Committee Structure

**A motion was made and seconded to adapt to a committee structure consisting of a single Aviation Advisory Board with a Finance Committee, an Airport Committee for Hilton Head and an Airport Committee for Lady's Island all under the umbrella of the Aviation Advisory Board, but that it is not to be included in the revised Charter. The motion passed unanimously.**

c. Council Quarterly Update

**A motion was made and seconded that providing the County Council with a quarterly update be included in the revised Charter. The motion passed unanimously.**

d. Citizens Task Force

**A motion was made and seconded to include in the revised Charter an acknowledgement of the County Council's prerogative to appoint a Citizen Task Force for the purpose of addressing extraordinary airport matters. The motion passed unanimously.**

e. Liaisons

**A motion was made and seconded to include in the membership section of the revised**

**Charter that there will be two non-voting liaisons, one from the County Council and one from the Hilton Head Island Town Council. The motion passed unanimously.**

- Mr. Curry stated he wanted make a motion on a related issue. He stated they should open up comments from the public without limitations unless the comment becomes too lengthy and that the Board should respond at that time. Mr. Ames stated this did not require a motion, but rather a general agreement between the Board members. The members were in agreement.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Signature Hangar Proposal: Mike Bennett

- Mike Bennett of Signature Flight Support stated they have been approached by a group of individuals who are interested in constructing a private hangar to be located on the south side of the current Beaufort County general aviation hangars. He stated the hangar would be similar to the existing ones. There was an open discussion following Mr. Bennett's proposal.

**A motion was made and seconded to recommend the Signature Hangar Proposal move forward for approval. The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Andres stated he has provided Mr. Bennett with preliminary due diligence information that he (Mr. Bennett) will be compiling in order to move forward with a recommendation to the Public Services Committee for their consideration.

2. Aircraft Property Taxes: Paul Andres

- Mr. Andres stated the topic of boat and aircraft property taxes were discussed at a prior Finance Committee meeting which he did not attend. He stated the State has passed legislation that allows counties, at their discretion, to reduce the property tax rates for boats and aircrafts from a maximum of 10.5% assessment rate to a 6% or 4% rate. He stated a number of counties have chosen to do this although Beaufort County is still at the 10.5% assessment rate. The Finance Committee had asked the Aviation Board to discuss and provide any recommended changes to the aircraft property tax rates. Mr. Andres then introduced Beaufort County Auditor, Ms. Sharon Burris to speak on this topic. Ms. Burris concurred that this legislation has been passed, however this reduction in taxes will most likely be challenged in court since the constitution states all personal property in the State of South Carolina will be taxed at the same rate. Following Ms. Burris' presentation, an open discussion was held and she answered questions. Mr. Curry stated he felt the Board owes it to the County Council to make some kind of estimate of the positive and negative impacts. He suggested the Finance Committee take on the challenge. Mr. Ames stated he would appoint a task force to meet with Mike Bennett and Joel Phillips concerning this issue. Councilman Rodman suggested this information be completed by December in order for the County to act on it for the next tax year. Mr. Andres suggested that the task force bring the information back to the September Aviation Advisory Board meeting so it will be eligible for the October Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Ames asked Mr. Lynch, Mr. Sanders and Mr. Curry to be on the task force with Mr. Lynch serving as the chairman. Mr. Curry had to decline. Mr. Ames asked Mr. Law to take Mr. Curry's place and Mr. Law accepted.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1. Dick Lieberman – Mr. Lieberman stated he is in favor of Signature's hangar proposal. He further stated he pays private property tax on his hangar and aircraft and wondered if any consideration was going to be given to Signature for the hangar and the aircraft that use it.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:45 PM.

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

Aviation Advisory Board: The next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 18, 2008 at 1:30 PM in the County Council Chambers of the Beaufort County Government Center.

Hilton Head Island Airport Community Relations Committee: The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 6, 2008 at 4:30 PM at the Hilton Head Air Services Building.

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