

VERO BEACH AIRPORT COMMISSION MINUTES

Friday, June 17, 2022 – 9:30 a.m.

City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida

PRESENT: Louis (Buck) Vocelle, Chairman; Carlos Halcomb, Vice Chairman; Members: Carole Jean Jordan, Arthur Hodge, Joseph “Danny” Markford, and Alternate Member, Philip Canal **Also Present:** Airport Director Todd Scher; City Attorney, John Turner and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Chartier

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called today’s meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

Mr. Vocelle announced that they have two (2) new Airport Commission members with them today. He welcomed them and asked them to introduce themselves.

Mr. Danny Markford, Piper Aircraft CFO, said he is a long time Vero Beach resident and he graduated from Vero Beach High School. He has been with Piper for 18 years and he is glad to be on the Airport Commission.

Mr. Philip Canal stated that he is a retired Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Manager after working with them for 30-years. He is originally from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but Vero Beach is now his home. He has a Master’s Degree in Aviation Management from Embry-Riddle University and he is ecstatic to be appointed as an Alternate Member of this Commission.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) March 11, 2022

Mr. Hodge made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2022 Airport Commission meeting. Mrs. Jordan seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Skip Wood, stated that an Airport Museum has been a dream of his since he and a couple of other people started putting the idea together in 2020. He said once he talked about it with Mr. Carlos Halcomb, it was like starting a fire. Now Mr. Halcomb has things moving and he has Mrs. Pat Geyer involved. He believes this is going to be an awesome museum based on the amount of support they are receiving. The museum will be across from Dodger Town and they have the property and the letter of intent has already been submitted to the Airport for the lease. He announced that three (3) aircrafts have already been donated to them along with numerous artifacts.

Mrs. Pat Geyer, mentioned that three (3) months ago she did not want to be an official part of the Vero Beach Museum of Aviation. She went to one (1) of the groups meetings to advise them on how to file the paper work to become a 501(c)3. After attending a second meeting, she knew this was going to be a winner, so she got involved. She gave an update on what they have done so far and what they will be doing in the near future to keep things

moving along. They are planning on having an open house near the end of August to show what pieces they have for display. She mentioned that the text amendment Ordinance was approved by the Planning and Zoning Board and now it will go to City Council. She stated that this museum will be a destination location and bring people to the area, which will benefit many local businesses.

Mr. Hodge asked if they are going to concentrate mostly on the history of Vero Beach Aviation.

Mrs. Geyer replied that it is going to be about aviation in general, but they are going to emphasize Vero Beach. There will be various groups from schools and organizations that will visit the museum so they want to focus on the local issues and history.

Mr. Vocelle mentioned that Mrs. Geyer should get in touch with Mr. Mike Skiscim because his father was a photographer and he has all kinds of pictures from when the US Army Air Corps and the Navy were stationed here. Also, the Holman family can give her a lot of the history.

Mrs. Geyer explained that they expanded their Board of Directors to include experts in other areas. They now have a developer and an expert on museums, so they have a well-rounded Board.

Mr. Halcomb explained that one (1) of the donated planes is a 1957 Piper Tri-Pacer and it needs a full restoration.

Mr. Ray Hooker, County resident, said that he has a business located at 3212-3308 Aviation Boulevard and they are in the process of creating Indian River Distillery. He said through his reading he knows they have an Airport Master Plan that was passed in 2016. He would like to discuss some things that the business community and commercial village needs. First, they would like to see enhanced pedestrian traffic with sidewalks and more parking. He feels that the industrial zoning and commercial industrial zoning that they fall under at the Vero Beach Regional Airport is different, but they are subject to the same zoning laws. He noted that they don't have enough parking for expansion and now they have the new stormwater tax. They are trying to limit the amount of impermeable surfaces at the Airport and in the City, but the City mandates that they put in more asphalt parking lots, which creates more stormwater. He would like the Airport Commission to consider and recommend to City Council to allow certain industrial zoning areas to have gravel parking.

Mr. Vocelle asked what is the status of the distillery.

Mr. Hooker explained that they are still waiting on permitting. Once they have their building permit they will start on the interior construction, which will take 60 to 75 days. They have all of their equipment and they are ready to go.

Mr. Halcomb commented that Mr. Jason Jeffries and his staff did a fantastic job of delivering a comprehensive review of the Zoning Code and how other places are doing museums within their zoning districts. He said the Planning and Zoning Board approved the recommended text amendments. He noted that Mr. Jeffries mentioned that the City's

Zoning Codes are from about 1948 and the definitions were created in the 1950's and 1960's and they are still using them today.

Mr. John Turner, City Attorney, replied that a lot of the City Codes were written decades ago, but Mr. Jeffries has been updating the Codes to make them more acceptable in commercial uses. There are numerous changes coming forward, particularly in the Land Development Code and a lot of it will be involving the Airport. They are focusing on the needs of the Airport because they are excited about what is happening there.

Mrs. Brooke Malone, County resident and City business owner, thanked the Airport Commission for the support and the work they have done, because planning a Commercial Zoning District is difficult. She said she is excited about the growth and she hears a lot of people talking about looking at commercial property in the commercial village for their ideas of a possible business. The museum and some of the recreational facilities they are hearing about are exciting. Her fear is that the infrastructure cannot handle the plans. She asked the Airport Commission to stay focused on the Citrus Park Village Mobile Home Park because they just passed the stormwater assessment fees. Planning and Zoning does not offer any forward thinking, modern, and contemporary permeable surface options, which they can see examples of in other surrounding counties. They are restricted to using asphalt or very expensive paver options. She said landscape buffers are not necessarily needed in industrial and heavy commercial zones. They can fill those areas with art, lighting, or creative walking spaces. She talked about a business located at 3209 Dodger Road who brings in a plumber about every five (5) weeks to snake and clean the old terracotta pipes from the 1950's, which have decayed, so they are flushing sewage and water into the ground. A report from six (6) years ago states that is happening and this business is contributing to wastewater and sewage going into the Lagoon.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A) Review of the Proposed Resolution:

A Resolution of the City of Vero Beach, Florida, amending "Attachment B," which is also known as the Standard Lease Provisions for Airport tenants, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein; repealing the "Attachment B" adopted effective February 16, 2016; providing for repeal of conflicting Resolutions and Airport policies; and providing for an effective date.

(Attachment B to be sent out at a later date)

Mr. Turner stated he is presenting this Resolution to the Airport Commission for their review and comments before it goes to City Council next Tuesday. He said the "Attachment B" is what the Airport uses in connection with leases and leasing agreement and it lists the general terms of what is required of the tenants at the Airport. Since it was amended in 2016, the FAA has adopted requirements that must be included in the leases of Airport property. The City updated some of the language to streamline the requirements for insurance to include that flood insurance is not a requirement unless the property is in a flood zone. The new Attachment B will be attached to the leases and make them more streamlined.

Mr. Vocelle said he applauds his efforts to streamline the process for the tenants. Since Mr. Scher has been the Airport Director there has been a focus on improving the management of the Airport leases. He asked what are they doing to enforce the insurance provisions.

Mr. Todd Scher, Airport Director, reported that they now have a leasing team of four (4) employees instead of just a lease person, because the leasing process is more than one (1) person can handle. They are conducting more frequent reviews of the insurance certificates. They are also conducting physical inspections of properties on a regular basis. They conduct inspections, document the findings, and make sure that any repairs are done.

Mr. Halcomb made a motion to approve the proposed Attachment B and revisions to the leases and recommended it be presented to City Council. Mr. Hodge seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS

None

6. AIRPORT DIRECTOR'S MATTERS

A) Airport Director's Report

Mr. Todd Scher, Airport Director, explained that the new Attachment B is the first step to bringing a lot of the Airport document issues into the current ages. They found issues with the minimum standards and Airport rules and regulations that no longer existed. He continued by briefly going over the Airport Director's Report with the Commission members (attached to the original minutes). He said they will take a hard look at the commercial village to see if there is an opportunity to put in sidewalks and make it more pedestrian friendly. There will plenty of opportunity for input by the public, tenants, and the Airport Commission for the Master Plan update. He reported that Elite Airways has not operated a scheduled revenue flight here since June 6, 2022, but that is coming to an end because they have a flight schedule set for tomorrow.

Mr. Vocelle asked where is Elite Airways with their financial obligations.

Mr. Scher replied that Elite has always been an authorized carrier, which means that the Airport draws the funds from an account and then Elite reimburses the Airport when they are invoiced. That has not happened for 90 days, so they are no longer a permitted carrier, but they are continuing to operate as a non-signatory carrier.

Mr. Vocelle asked if they are in default.

Mr. Turner explained that the regulations for air carriers at the Airport are controlled by City Resolution #2000-16, which was adopted by City Council. It has provisions establishing the use of the Airport facilities by carriers who are in good standing. At this point, Elite has been removed from the good standing status and is included as a non-signatory public air carrier. They will be charged the full rate of operational expenses to use the Airport plus 30 percent, which will be required to be paid within 30-days.

Mr. Scher continued going over his report.

Mr. Scher reported that any project for the Mobile Home Park are on hold, because the FAA is now questioning whether the Airport should have a Mobile Home Park. It will be the FAA's decision if they can keep the Mobile Home Park and maintain it as a revenue stream, or do something else with the property. All code violations have been taken care of at the Mobile Home Park and all of the tenants have filed their paperwork. If they do get to keep the Park they will be spending some money to upgrade the sewer system.

Mr. Halcomb asked if the FAA responds that the Mobile Home Park is inconsistent with the Airport, would that open up options for federal grant funding to relocate the mobile home tenants and purchase their homes if they cannot be moved.

Mr. Scher replied that is a possibility but it has not been committed to yet.

Mr. Turner explained that the FAA contacted the Airport several months ago and advised them that the use of a mobile home facility is inconsistent with the FAA regulations. The FAA now prohibits residential uses within an Airport's property boundaries. The FAA has approved the Airport plan for years with the Mobile Home Park, but now they are changing their position.

Mr. Halcomb asked if they are able to keep the Mobile Home Park, would they be eligible for Federal funding for the stormwater drainage issue.

Mr. Scher stated there are two (2) different issues, the stormwater runoff and the sewer system. The Master Stormwater drainage plan will tell them how to handle the runoff of impermeable surfaces and how it is treated for future development. He explained that the sewer system under the Airport is maintained by the Water and Sewer Department. However, the Citrus Park Village is a parcel that the Airport owns and operates, so it is the responsibility of the Airport. He noted that several years ago they had State funding in place to rehabilitate the sewer system at the Mobile Home Park, but a decision was made to possibly do something other than keep the Mobile Home Park. The current staff's intent is to maintain the Park and keep it on site until they are told otherwise. If they can keep the Mobile Home Park they will look for funding from the State to rehabilitate the sewer system.

Mr. Hodge asked what is occupancy rate of the Mobile Home Park and what kind of lease agreement are new tenants asked to sign.

Mrs. Lee-Anna Otis, Airport Business Specialist, explained that she inherited the Citrus Park Village Mobile Home Park about a year ago and she has been addressing issues according to the City Code and Ordinances. She explained that the leases are a one-year term that automatically renew every year. The Airport only owns the land, so if a tenant sells their mobile home they have to notify the Airport so they can do a background check on the prospective buyer. After that is done the new owners enter into a simple lease agreement. There are 69 units on the property that are leased, and there are a total of 75 lots. There are some empty lots, which will stay empty due to the setbacks. The City owns two (2) mobile homes, but they are not in good enough shape to be leased or lived in. Before the FAA situation came up, her thought was to sell or auction off the mobile homes.

Mr. Canal reported that within the last week the agency he used to work for distributed \$500 million out of the Airport Improvement Program and there is \$3.2 billion in that account that has to be distributed by the end of September. He asked if the Airport has anything coming up that they could use funding for.

Mr. Scher replied that they always have applications in for funding for projects that are identified in the Master Plan.

Mrs. Jordan asked why can't people park on the grass. The fairgrounds are grass and it is parked on all the time.

Mr. Turner stated that is a land development issue with the Planning Department and they are looking at that. When they are talking about commercial grade parking lots that are used on a daily basis, the materials used and the maintenance are very important.

Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, explained that parking on the grass is part of the Land Development Code and it is done for ecological reasons and the safety of the Lagoon. Regular use parking of commercial sites is required to be a hard surface per the City Code. They do allow for alternative surfaces, such as pavers. They do allow grass parking for intermittent public assembly uses, such as overflow church parking, Riverside Park, etc.

Mr. Vocelle stated that the Planning Department needs to work with the Engineering Department for more pervious ways of allowing more parking in the Airport district.

Mr. Jeffries replied that he understands what their concerns are, so they will look at it.

Mr. Vocelle said anything they can look at to improve the situation would be appreciated.

Mr. Jeffries explained that once the Airport completes their Master Plan it will create the basis for them to update the City's Comprehensive Plan as it relates to the Airport and the zoning districts that surround the Airport.

Mr. Will Howard, Assistant Airport Director, said as part of the Master Plan process they have been communicating with the Water and Sewer Department about collaborating with them regarding the planning needs of the Airport for current and future projects and repairs.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mr. Vocelle thanked Mr. Scher for his report and that he and his staff have done an outstanding job to streamline the processes at the Airport.

8. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mr. Halcomb welcomed the new members to the Airport Commission.

Mr. Vocelle announced that a former employee of his and a past member of City Council, Mr. Jack Capra, passed away and that is a very sad loss for the City and the State.

9. CITY ATTORNEY MATTERS

A) Sunshine Law Presentation

Mr. Turner gave a Power Point presentation on the Sunshine Law and Public Records (on file in the City Clerk's office).

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Airport Commission meeting will be held on Friday, September 16, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., in the City Hall, Council Chambers.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

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