

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

COMMITTEE: **PUBLIC WORKS (AIRPORT)**

DATE: **APRIL 8, 2008**

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**Committee Members Present:**

Supervisors Belden  
Bentley  
Tessier  
Stec  
Merlino  
Haskell  
Taylor

**Committee Members Absent:**

Supervisors Champagne  
Goodspeed

**Others Present:**

Representing the Department of Public Works:  
William Lamy, Superintendent  
Donald DeGraw, Airport Manager  
Jeffrey Tennyson, Deputy Superintendent of Engineering  
Kim Lussier, Empire East Aviation  
Representing D.A. Collins:  
Michael J. O'Connor, Esq.  
Todd Cochran  
Merile Latterell  
Frederick H. Monroe, Chairman of the Board  
Paul Dusek, County Attorney  
Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services  
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board  
Leonard Fosbrook, President of Economic Development Corporation (EDC)  
Donald Hess, Town of Queensbury  
George Thurston, LSA Sales  
David Lamando, LAA Sales  
Debra L. Schreiber, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist

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Mr. Belden called the Public Works Committee meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to William Lamy, Superintendent, Department of Public Works (DPW), who distributed a copy of the agenda, *a copy of which is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing with the first item on the agenda, Mr. Lamy requested to transfer funds, in the amount of \$65,000 for the purchase of automatic fuel tank monitoring systems for the five remaining fuel farms the County owned. He noted the funds had been appropriated in the 2008 County Budget.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously approving the request as submitted, and to refer same to the Finance Committee for consideration. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Moving on to the second item, Mr. Lamy requested to increase the Capital Project No. H159.9550 280 - Fuel Management Expansion, in the amount of \$65,000.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously approving the request as presented; and to refer same to the Finance Committee for consideration. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

At the previous Public Works Committee meeting, Mr. Lamy indicated they had been approached by a private entity expressing their desire to construct T-hangars at the Floyd D. Bennett Memorial Airport. Since the employ of Donald DeGraw, the new Airport Manager, he said, the Committee decided to hold a special meeting to review the status of the Airport projects and tour the facility.

Mr. Lamy listed the following Airport projects:

- ▶ update the Airport Master Plan;
- ▶ review T-hangar expansion;
- ▶ additional jet hangar expansion;
- ▶ expand the apron;
- ▶ site review for airplane washing;
- ▶ site review for storage of snow removal equipment;
- ▶ construct a new building for Airport electrical service;
- ▶ status of the RFP (request for proposal) on the old maintenance hangar;
- ▶ the overlay would be installed on the east-west runway to be installed by summer's end;
- ▶ the commencement of the safety expansion of the north-south runway had commenced;
- ▶ review an option to upgrade the PAPI (precision approach path indicator);
- ▶ brush removal project;
- ▶ off-site tree obstruction project;
- ▶ runway extension to the south involved property acquisition;
- ▶ impact of the Fire Training Center;
- ▶ T-hangar expansion involved consideration of the current tie down area and parking for pilots on the south end of the complex.

Mr. Lamy stated that he and Mr. DeGraw welcomed any Committee input regarding Airport projects that were scheduled prior to the previous Airport Manager leaving the employ of Warren County. He briefly reviewed the Airport layout plan that depicted the location of many of the Airport projects and suggested they concentrate on T-hangar expansion/improvements, specifically noting that a decision made on one particular project could have a potential impact on other anticipated projects.

After the Committee had the opportunity to review the Airport schematic, Mr. Lamy proposed the Committee tour the Airport property and identify the location of each project, as well as the area requiring brush removal. He noted the Committee authorized a resolution that was being presented to the full Board of Supervisors at the April 18, 2008 Board meeting rejecting the low bid offer and authorizing the equipment be ordered utilizing the funds that had been appropriated in the equipment bonding request.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Donald DeGraw, Airport Manager, who apprised there were pending T-hangar proposals submitted by Kim Lussier of Empire East Aviation, D.A. Collins, and a \$600,000 New York State (NYS) grant requiring the County to construct the T-hangars.

Mr. DeGraw briefly reviewed the location of each proposal on the schematic. He said Empire East Aviation currently leased the last set of hangars constructed at the Airport and they had a right of first refusal to construct additional T-hangars in the area just north of their leased hangars. D.A. Collins submitted a proposal to construct a T-hangar complex just north of the Empire East Aviation proposed site; however, Mr. DeGraw stated, there was no common taxi-way, thereby making their project dependent upon Empire East Aviation. In the alternative, he said, D.A. Collins requested permission to construct a T-hangar adjacent to the Airport maintenance facility, which was independent of their proposed hangar complex. With respect to the NYS grant, he said, he thought the previous Airport Manager held off on taking action to avoid competition and encourage development on the Airport property.

Mr. Lamy informed the Committee there had been many conference calls, emails and general discussions with Marshall Stevens (previous Airport Manager), Mr. DeGraw, as well as himself to make the transition as smooth as possible. In addition, he said, he would welcome input from those Supervisors that previously served on the Airport Committee.

Mr. Belden asked whether there was a deadline for the NYS grant and Mr. DeGraw replied there was a ten percent local match (\$60,000) and it was his understanding the County had one month to submit their request. Mr. Lamy commented that he was unsure whether any funds had been appropriated in the 2008 County Budget for the construction of T-hangars. Mr. Belden recommended the Airport Master Plan be updated prior to undertaking any additional projects. There was a meeting currently scheduled with C & S Engineers, Inc. to review the Master Plan; however, Mr. Lamy stated, it was his opinion that some projects, if properly sited, could be advanced without waiting for the final Master Plan. Mr. Belden asked that a cost estimate be assigned to each project. He further queried whether the County had been awarded any Federal grant funds that had to be utilized. Mr. Lamy responded the Runway 1 Safety Area and Overlay projects were constructed with Federal monies; however, he said, he was unsure of the exact amount that had been appropriated in the 2008 Budget. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, stated she was fairly confident funds had been appropriated for the Runway 1 Safety Area project; however, she said, she was uncertain as to the Overlay project.

Mr. Haskell asked whether a study had been performed on the number of T-hangars that were needed at the Airport and Kim Lussier of Empire East Aviation replied they (T-hangars) appeared to be in demand. He suggested the County consider seeking private sector assistance to construct the T-hangars rather than utilizing County funds. Mr. Lamy stated that had been their position for quite some time and it appeared that the private sector would support that recommendation. Mr. Haskell commented the thought of giving back \$600,000 was troubling; however, he said, he was certain the County did

not have the local match of \$60,000 that was required for this grant and they desperately needed a new Health & Human Services Building. In response to a query by Mr. Taylor, Mr. DeGraw responded the grant was written specific to new T-hangar construction.

A brief discussion ensued after which Paul Dusek, County Attorney, stated that according to the estimates they just discussed and his "rough" calculations, it would take the County three to four years to recoup the \$60,000 local match on the NYS grant.

Mr. Lamy indicated the entities that submitted proposals were anxious to construct their T-hangars once the review, approval and lease process had been completed. He again noted these areas had been identified for T-hangar development, and they wanted to make sure the Committee had been apprised of all the information to make their decision, he added.

Mr. Dusek stated T-hangars could only be constructed in the designated areas as outlined in the Airport Master Plan. The proposal submitted by Empire East Aviation had already been designated for T-hangar construction; however, he said, the area outlined by the D.A. Collins proposal had not been identified in the Master Plan. During their discussions with D.A. Collins, Mr. Lamy explained they expressed their concerns with coordinating the approvals and accessing the site and, therefore, they requested another site suitable for T-hangar expansion on the Airport property. If the site designated by D.A. Collins had not been identified for T-hangar construction, Mr. Dusek stated an amendment to the Airport Master Plan would be required. Michael O'Connor, an attorney representing D.A. Collins, apprised the proposal submitted by D.A. Collins designated the third T-hangar site that existed on the current Master Plan. Mr. DeGraw stated it was his belief an addition or change in T-hangar site location did not require an update to the entire Master Plan.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Haskell, Mr. O'Connor replied the County had discussed building a "work station" for planes and they wanted to be assured the site proposed by D.A. Collins did not conflict with that area. Mr. Haskell further queried what size T-hangar D.A. Collins had proposed and Mr. O'Connor said he was advised by the previous Airport Manager the minimum size was 7,500 square feet. He stated they certainly did not need that size; however, he said, they would construct their T-hangars to the County standards and specifications. He further informed Mr. Haskell that it was their intention to lease the space they would not utilize and there were approximately 26 individuals who were on a waiting list requesting T-hangar leases. Donald Hess, Town of Queensbury, indicated the waiting list was comprised of private pilots rather than corporate owners. He further requested the contractors build the T-hangars with a cement slab rather than black top. Mr. O'Connor said D.A. Collins would petition approximately 1,200 square feet for private planes. Mr. O'Connor stated if the County expanded their T-hangar sites, they would have a bigger base to support and promote the position of the Fixed Base Operator (FBO). David Lamando, LAA Sales, commented that he moved his airplane to Saratoga Springs and he queried whether the additional T-hangars would be available for sublease. Mr. DeGraw responded that he thought that was a possibility. Mr. Lamando further asked if the County would assist him in

obtaining the NYS grant if he contributed the local match, and offer him a lease over time or would they prefer he include it in his Request For Proposal (RFP). He said it was his further belief that any individual on the waiting list would lend their support in getting T-hangars constructed at the Airport.

George Thurston, LSA Sales, commented that he and Mr. Lamando submitted a bid on the old maintenance hangar; however, he said, he later learned the County found an alternative use for that building. Mr. Lamy responded the Supervisors would be touring the Airport grounds and evaluate whether the building should be utilized to store their equipment and supplies and he anticipated the Committee making a decision relatively soon.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Haskell, Mr. Belden adjourned the meeting at 10:15 a.m. for the purpose of touring the Airport property, including the area designated for brush clearing.

Chairman Monroe and Mr. Tessier were not in attendance when the Public Works Committee reconvened at 11:50 a.m.

Mr. DeGraw stated that he was advised that New York State would consider a new grant request for a parallel taxiway and it only took a few days to receive approval.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously requesting the Airport Manager to amend the application for grant funds to construct a parallel taxiway rather than additional T-hangars; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 18, 2008 Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Lamy added they would discuss this change with C & S Engineers, Inc. at their upcoming meeting.

During the tour of the Airport grounds, Mr. Lamy apprised that he had discussed with Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services, some of their options for brush removal, including utilizing correctional services. Mr. Payne responded there were certain times throughout the year when brush could be cleared. Mr. Lamy stated it would be advantageous for the County to own the equipment so the work could be scheduled as a site condition allowing employees to access particular locations of the Airport complex. Mr. Belden added that it was his opinion the brush clearing would take longer than two months. Mr. Stec stated he was not convinced the cost and the time this equipment would be utilized would warrant the County purchasing it outright. He said he concurred this work could not be fully completed by hand and it was his belief there were many other options that had not been fully explored. In order for these areas to be adequately maintained and FAA compliant, Mr. Taylor said, he anticipated this project being an ongoing program and, therefore, was in favor of purchasing the equipment.

Mr. Lamy explained that he and Mr. DeGraw had obtained some cost estimates for leasing the necessary equipment and he did not believe the job could be completed for less than \$50,000. The cost estimate he received for this piece of equipment was \$153,000 and he estimated that within six years the County would own the equipment, added Mr. Lamy. He further stated the County would be at a disadvantage if they leased the equipment and weather conditions and project priorities were not conducive to getting the job completed. Mr. Taylor queried whether there was a lease/purchase option and Mr. Lamy said he recalled that suggestion being ruled out; however, he stated, he would make inquiry with the supplier. Mr. Haskell commented that he had spent some time with the previous Airport Manager reviewing the various projects that needed to be accomplished. He said it was his recommendation that the County purchase the equipment so the Airport staff could work on projects, such as brush removal, during "down" times; whereas, if they had inclement weather during a lease period, nothing would get accomplished.

When the DPW went through the 2008 Budget process, Mr. Lamy stated the decision was made to purchase and subsequently bond this equipment and, therefore, no monies had been appropriated to contract for services or lease the equipment. If the Committee chose to contract or lease the equipment in 2008, he said, the source of funding (approximately \$50,000) would have to be identified. In discussions with the entity that submitted the low bid, Mr. Payne said the County could lease the same piece of equipment for \$10,000 per month and based on his observation, he estimated the Airport staff could clear ninety percent of the brush within one month. According to their calculations, Mr. Lamy said if they cleared almost two acres per day, it would take approximately 55 days or three months to remove the brush from all 110 acres.

Based on the condition of the 2008 County Budget, Mr. Stec encouraged the Committee to consider deferring the purchase of this equipment a few years and attempt to clear as much brush as possible in a one or two month period. Mr. Haskell reiterated that the Airport was currently in non-compliance and he was unsure how long the FAA would allow them to continue operating. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Lamy, Mr. Payne indicated the lease estimate he received was for the same piece of equipment the Committee was considering purchasing. Mr. Belden recommended leasing the equipment, refer the matter to the Finance Committee to determine the source of funding, and authorize overtime for Airport staff to accomplish as much work as possible. Mr. Lamy replied his Department already had a \$20,000 shortfall in their overtime budget and lacked the available funds to fully sponsor the Adirondack Balloon Festival.

Mr. Haskell asked Mr. DeGraw whether the Airport would be penalized if they did not become FAA compliant. Mr. DeGraw replied they would risk their 139 Certificate, which allowed them to receive commercial air carrier operations, and possibly lose any Federal grant monies. If the Airport was in jeopardy of losing this certification, Mr. Stec suggested they lease the equipment for an additional thirty days to clear all 110 acres.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Stec, authorizing the Airport Manager to lease the necessary brush removal equipment for thirty days, and refer the

matter to the Finance Committee to determine the source of funding. Messrs. Haskell and Taylor voted in opposition and the motion failed by lack of a majority vote.

Mr. Belden said he had no problem constructing T-hangars in the proposed locations as identified on the tour. Mr. Haskell commented that he did not believe the Committee could take any action until Empire East Aviation had submitted their financial information, which he anticipated would be at the next Committee meeting, and he further suggested that D.A. Collins submit their information simultaneously. After a brief discussion, the Committee asked Empire East Aviation and D.A. Collins to forward a letter of credit to Mr. Dusek for his review.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried unanimously authorizing the T-hangar project to proceed contingent upon Empire East and D.A. Collins submitting their financial information to the County Attorney.

In response to a query by Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Lamy indicated the D.A. Collins T-hangar site would be determined by their study with the engineer. While they had a preference to locating the D.A. Collins T-hangar on the southern end of the runway, he said, he was reluctant to locate it near the taxiway improvements. Even if the County received approval from NYS to amend the grant from T-hangar expansion to Taxiway improvements, Mr. O'Connor stated the County would still be required to pay the ten percent local match. He suggested the County Attorney research the option of a sign-on bonus, whereby a pilot would pay a deposit for an anticipated "unrestricted" hangar lease.

Mr. O'Connor indicated that it was his understanding the Committee approved the request of D.A. Collins as a potential contractee pending their submission of financial evidence to the County Attorney, and Messrs. DeGraw and Lamy would advise them of their site decision. In the meantime, he said, their organization would prepare their final construction plans that would be submitted to the FAA for approval.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Haskell and seconded by Mr. Stec, the Public Works Committee was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Schreiber, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist