

## WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**COMMITTEE: JOINT MEETING - COUNTY FACILITIES/ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT**

**DATE: APRIL 30, 2014**

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### **COUNTY FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

#### **PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS GIRARD  
WOOD  
STROUGH

### **COUNTY FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

#### **ABSENT:**

SUPERVISORS WESTCOTT  
MONROE

### **ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS TAYLOR  
BEATY

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

JEFFERY TENNYSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC WORKS  
REPRESENTING FLOYD BENNETT MEMORIAL AIRPORT ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE:

WILLIAM MASON, CHAIRMAN/MEMBER APPOINTED BY CHAIRMAN  
OF THE COUNTY FACILITIES COMMITTEE  
ED BARTHOLOMEW, MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE WARREN  
COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
STEVE ABBOTT, MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE FIXED BASE  
OPERATOR  
HARRISON FREER, RECORDING SECRETARY/MEMBER APPOINTED  
BY THE PILOTS ASSOCIATION  
ROSS DUBARRY, MEMBER/AIRPORT MANAGER  
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER  
SUPERVISORS BROCK  
FRASIER  
KENNY  
MCDEVITT  
MERLINO  
SEEBER  
WAYNE LAMOTHE, COUNTY PLANNER  
PATRICIA TATICH, ASSOCIATE PLANNER  
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*  
CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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Mr. Girard called the meeting of the County Facilities Committee to order and Mr. Taylor called the meeting of the Economic Growth & Development Committee to order at 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Girard said the purpose of the meeting was to receive an update on the progress of the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Advisory Committee. He noted William Mason was the Chairman of the Committee and a former Supervisor-at-Large for the Town of Queensbury.

Mr. Mason explained the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Advisory Committee was made up of five members, as follows:

- ▶ William Mason - Chairman/member appointed by the Chairman of the County Facilities Committee;
- ▶ Ed Bartholomew - member appointed by the Warren County Economic Development Corporation (EDC);
- ▶ Steve Abbott - member appointed by the Fixed Base Operator (FBO);
- ▶ Harrison Freer - Recording Secretary/member appointed by the Pilots Association; and
- ▶ Ross Dubarry - member/Airport Manager.

Mr. Mason pointed out he was the citizen member representing business owners and had no ties financial or otherwise to the Airport or local government. He noted Mr. Bartholomew was the President of the EDC and Mr. Abbott worked for Rich Air/Schermerhorn Aviation. He added Mr. Freer represented two Pilots Associations and Mr. Dubarry, as Airport Manager was the representative for Warren County. He stated the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Advisory Committee had met five times so far and they met monthly on the Monday preceding the regular Board of Supervisors Meeting at 10:30 a.m. in the Airport Conference Room. He noted the meetings had been well attended by County Supervisors which was greatly appreciated. He said the Committee's purpose was to investigate and make recommendations to the Warren County Economic Growth & Development Committee regarding marketing of the Airport. He mentioned the members of the Committee would serve for 18 months and a final report would be issued in March of 2015. The purpose of this meeting, he continued, was to provide a verbal progress report of the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Advisory Committee.

Mr. Mason referred to the first five meetings of the Committee as a fact finding voyage and he said they had a clearer picture of how marketing dollars were being spent and by whom. He apprised the Committee members were in the process of examining all of the strengths and weaknesses to determine where they stood and how to proceed. He explained they were utilizing past studies including the McFarland Johnson, Inc. September 2002 Warren County Airport Business Plan. He announced the Committee was working with SUNY (State University of New York) Adirondack in a joint effort to develop and implement a marketing plan and provide teams of students an opportunity to receive college credit and real life experience. He said they were working with Warren County Tourism to use existing County resources to better market the Airport. He mentioned they were working toward a cooperative and mutually beneficial effort with Saratoga Airport. He added they were working on implementing a procedure for issuing press releases. Mr. Mason thanked the Board of Supervisors and the County Facilities Committee for their hard work, thus far.

Mr. Bartholomew stated the Committee had been able to freely and frankly discuss opportunities to undertake improvements at the Airport. He said from the EDC's perspective the Airport was a vital economic tool for Warren County and the region. He opined it was necessary to improve the communication, enhance the website and develop better usage of the Airport. He commented the marketing campaign would not focus on inviting people to come to the Airport as there were no scheduled airliners. He noted they wanted to concentrate on increasing the usage of the Airport by the pilots and companies which were currently using the Airport. He mentioned that large area companies utilized the Airport, as well as government representatives, such as Senators Gillibrand and Schumer. He noted during the summer there were planes landing at the Airport carrying people staying at the Sagamore Resort. Mr. Bartholomew commented that pilots and key corporate personnel made the decisions regarding which airport their executives landed at. He stated the Committee was looking at a type of campaign which would make direct communication and information about the improvements that would be made at the Airport, as well as the services offered. He said the Committee was headed toward making a series of recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. He stated increasing the usage of the Airport would increase the revenues and decrease the amount of tax dollars required to fund the operation of the Airport.

Mr. Freer pointed out the Committee was also working with SUNY Plattsburgh at Queensbury. He said it was important to look at the content that the Airport had to market. He commented a series of new T-hangars had been constructed which were now being rented and occupied. He explained some of the obstruction removal had taken place and the Airport was working hard to get the standard precision approach minimums lowered.

Mr. Beaty said the implementation of a procedure for press releases was being worked on and he asked if there were any events which were not currently being publicized. Mr. Mason responded the construction of the T-hangars was under publicized and he pointed out the 2002 Master Plan had indicated the County should undertake an effort to upgrade the hangars. He noted the County had undertaken concerted efforts to take care of some of the issues listed in the Master Plan. Now, he continued, the Airport had usable T-hangars and the next step would be to possibly remove some of the older structures and replace them. He asserted private investment dollars had constructed the T-hangars and not County funding. He stated this type of activity would be great for advertising the Airport through press releases.

Mr. Freer announced the Experimental Aircraft Association Local Chapter 353 was hosting a Young Eagles Fly In on June 7-8, 2014. He said he had explained to the Association that the Tourism Department would assist with a press release if they provided the content. Mr. Beaty agreed it was necessary to increase the revenues at the Airport but he asked how the Committee intended to increase the usage of the Airport by local pilots and companies. Mr. Bartholomew responded that regional and national pilots and companies needed to be made aware of the improvements made at the Airport by Schermerhorn Aviation. He said better connections needed to be made to the website through social media to various pilots associations and corporations. He presented an example of a jet landing on a cold night and commented the Airport now had the ability to store the aircraft in a hangar for a fee. He mentioned Rich Schermerhorn, FBO, was in the process of constructing a stand alone restaurant on Airport property. He said they wanted to increase usage by pilots and companies but also wanted to increase the number of events held at the Airport. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Girard commented that Mr. Schermerhorn had made a substantial investment in the Airport through the construction of the T-hangars and the proposed construction of a restaurant and office space. He pointed out that ESMI (Environmental Soil Management, Inc.) had also constructed a sizable T-hangar at the Airport. He acknowledged there were older structures at the Airport and pointed out there had been discussions pertaining to a newer more efficient structure to house all of them. Mr. Freer responded there were two options: either the County could construct additional T-hangars using grant funding or they could lease the land to companies who wanted to construct their own T-hangars. He noted the ESMI hangar was referred to as the "toy box" due to the number and styles of the planes contained in it. He noted ESMI had recently purchased an additional plane which was maintained and fueled by services offered at the Airport. He opined the Airport could increase revenues significantly if they had twice the number of pilots and companies utilizing it.

Mr. Taylor referred to an upgrade of maps of land which were available for development and Mr. Dubarry said there was land which surrounded the Airport that could be developed for non-aviation purposes. Mr. Dubarry stated they were exploring all of the areas surrounding the Airport to determine what might be available for development. Mr. Bartholomew said they were working with Hacker-Craft Boat Company, Inc. and he noted the company had located their headquarters at Queensbury Business Park due to the proximity to the Airport. He noted the EDC wanted to use this fact as a way to encourage other companies dependent on the Airport to look at the available properties at Queensbury Business Park.

Mr. Freer said one of the requirements to land an international corporate jet was the ability to clear customs and he noted the Airport had this ability. Mr. Girard mentioned a businessman who had indicated his business did not need to be located in Warren County; however, he continued, the businessman had indicated the Airport had been instrumental in determining the selection of his business location. A brief discussion ensued.

As there was no further business to come before the County Facilities Committee, on motion made by Mrs. Wood and seconded by Mr. Strough, Mr. Girard adjourned the meeting at 10:22 p.m.

As there was no further business to come before the Economic Growth & Development Committee, on motion made by Mrs. Wood and seconded by Mr. Strough, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist