

**County Council of Beaufort County**  
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**AIRPORTS BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**OF DECEMBER 17, 2009**

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

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Beaufort County Airports Board was held at 1:30 PM on Thursday, December 17, 2009 in the Council Chambers of the Beaufort County Government Center. Vice Chairman Jared Newman called the meeting to order.

**A motion was made and seconded to approve the December 17, 2009 agenda with an amendment to this agenda to add a financial report from Mr. David Starkey. The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Starkey gave a report concerning the financial status of both Airports (see Attachment A). During his report, Mr. Starkey asked the Airports Board to make a recommendation concerning the 10 year old loan of \$240,000.00 from the Hilton Head Island Airport to the Lady's Island Airport which is still on the books. After an open discussion a motion was made.

**A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the Finance Committee and County Council that the Lady's Island Airport repays the \$240,000.00 loan to the Hilton Head Island Airport through the General Fund. The motion passed 6 to 2.**

Mr. Starkey then continued with his report and answered questions.

Mr. Newman introduced Mr. Zimmerman who will be a future Board member.

**A motion was made and seconded to accept the November 19, 2009 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.**

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

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jared Newman – Vice Chairman  
Councilman Rick Caporale – Beaufort County Liaison  
Councilman Ken Heitzke – Town of Hilton Head Liaison  
Will Dopp  
Leonard Law  
Graham Kerr  
Ross Sanders  
Joseph Mazzei  
Noel Duncan  
Paul Jorgensen

**GUESTS**

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Pete Buchanan – Chairman  
Rich Tritschler

**STAFF**

Paul Andres – Airport Director  
Rob McFee – Director, Engineering and Infrastructure Division  
Larry Yeager – Chief of Operations  
Joel Phillips – Beaufort Co. Airport Supv.  
Linda Wright – Admin. Asst.

Councilman Steve Baer  
Mike Bennett – Signature Flight Support  
John Morrisette – Resident  
Bill Coleman – Resident  
Joe Zimmerman – Resident  
Leo Brennan – Resident  
Joe Croley – Hilton Head Area Assoc. of Realtors  
Councilman Bill McBride  
Chief Bruce Kline – Lady's Island/St. Helena Fire District.  
Laura Nahmias – Island Packet

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1. Bill Coleman – Mr. Coleman stated he had asked a number of questions at the last meeting and had been instructed by the Chairman to submit the questions in writing to Mr. Andres. Mr. Coleman stated his questions were in the November 19<sup>th</sup> minutes and wanted to know why these questions cannot be answered using the approved minutes.

## **HILTON HEAD ISLAND AIRPORT REPORT**

1. Tower Report: Paul Andres
  - For the month of November 2009 there were 3,170 total flight operations of which 1,678 were conducted under IFR procedures. The year to date total operations are down from last year, but this is understandable with the current state of the economy.
2. Projects: Paul Andres
  - Tree Obstruction Removal – The Environmental Assessment Public Hearing was conducted on December 3, 2009 at the Hilton Head Island Library. The public comment period concluded on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Those comments have been forwarded to the consultant who is preparing the final submission that will be forwarded to the FAA for their review and final approval. With a positive finding of no significant impact by the FAA, channels will open for funding the tree removal process. Mr. Andres stated he has attended numerous meetings with the Hilton Head Island Town Council and committees concerning revisions to their LMO in order to expedite the tree removal process on the North end of the Airport and the remaining tree obstructions around the Airport. Following lengthy discussions a compromise was reached on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Andres feels this is a fair compromise. This compromise is a combination of complete removal of trees in certain sections on Airport property, expanding some widths of buffers on Airport property, and examining and trimming of variable growth rates of hardwood trees off Airport property. There will be another reading at the Town's meeting on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Andres stated they still need to address the slope on the South end in the approach zone as well as the side slopes in the transition zones. He continued by stating that there have been questions raised as to whether the slope is to be 20:1 or 34:1. Mr. Andres read a letter from the FAA reconfirming their position that they want the Airport to apply 14 CFR Part 77 Obstruction Free Airspace Requirements which means there are to be 34:1 clear slopes on both approach zones to the Airport.

Mr. Andres then addressed Mr. Coleman's questions from the last meeting. One question was whether the Airports Board members are unanimous in support of

the tree issue. Mr. Andres stated the Board members drafted a letter of unanimous support of the tree issue which was sent through the County to be forwarded to the Hilton Head Island Town Council. Mr. Coleman's next question was about the CIP and 5 Year plans. Mr. Coleman understands that the County is not responsible for the estimated \$23 million, but wanted to know if we would really receive this money from the Federal government. Mr. Andres stated this depends upon the amount of discretionary funding available and the level of priority. He stated we will probably not receive all of the money, but it will be project specific with safety related projects receiving the highest priority. Mr. Coleman also wanted to know if the firm doing the Master Plan for the Hilton Head Island Airport is unbiased. Mr. Andres stated they are completely independent and unbiased. He stated they are compiling their own data for the Master Plan and not relying on information from any other firm.

- Emergency Generator – The consultant is working with the contractor to get the two remaining punch list items resolved.
- ARFF Station – The contracts are now in place for the construction administration and engineering inspection oversight. This project should start sometime in January.
- Runway Safety Area Drainage Improvements – This project should also start in January.
- Hilton Head Master Plan – The consultant is currently working on recommendations for critical design aircraft and forecast of activities for the Airport.
- Design Projects –These projects are still on hold.

3. Operations Report: Chief Yeager

- There were 4 medivacs for the month of November. There were multiple false fire alarms at the new airfield lighting vault. This is a punch list item for the contractor to correct.

4. Noise Complaints & Traffic Counters: Chief Yeager

- There were 4 noise complaints for November from one resident in Port Royal Plantation. It was determined that this was a low flying general aviation aircraft.
- Chief Yeager stated that 2 of the 3 older after hours traffic counters have been fixed by the maintenance technician and are currently taking traffic counts. The new counters have been removed and will be returned to the company to be repaired under warranty.

## **BEAUFORT COUNTY AIRPORT REPORT**

1. Fuel Sales: Joel Phillips

- The total fuel sales for November were 9,507 gallons (4,538 gallons of AvGas and 4,969 gallons of jet fuel). Fuel sales are up approximately 5% from the same time period last year. There were 1,326 total flight operations.

2. Projects: Paul Andres

- Tree Obstruction Removal – The tree obstruction removal project is still on hold. The staff is completing a cost benefit analysis for the County Administrator's consideration.
- Master Plan – The consultant is arranging a briefing for Mayor Keyserling and City Manager of Beaufort. Once this is conducted, the analysis for the Master Plan will resume.
- Runway Overlay and Airfield Electrical Improvements Projects – The CA/CEI contracts have been signed. The construction administration consultant is now preparing the construction contracts for the contractors to sign. These projects should get underway in January. They hope to coordinate these projects as it will require temporary runway closure.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Finance: Leonard Law – No Report.
2. Lady's Island Airport Operations: Graham Kerr
  - Mr. Kerr stated the age of the fueling equipment, the failure of the equipment and not having replacements caused the Lady's Island Airport to lose 53 days of fueling which amounted to approximately \$42,000.00 in lost revenue. Mr. Kerr stated that approximately \$10,500.00 was spent on repairing the refuelers which included hiring a specialized driver to transport the refueler due to the hazmat content. The brakes also failed on one of the trucks. Mr. Kerr stated something has to be done. He stated buying and maintaining new trucks would be very expensive. The most cost effective method would be to rent the trucks from the company that supplies the fuel as there would be no maintenance cost associated. Mr. Kerr stated the cost is approximately \$700.00 per month per truck with de-fuel capabilities and they would also install a sump saver. Following an open discussion, Mr. Phillips stated he would report back to the Board at the next meeting after he has had the opportunity to discuss the leasing of trucks with staff.
3. Hilton Head Island Airport Operations: Will Dopp
  - The Coin Toss lease is moving forward and should go before the Public Facilities Committee at their January meeting.
  - There have been no changes to the Signature Flight Support lease. He stated he has recommended some changes, but it appears the lease will remain as it was written in 2002.
  - Signature Flight Support has lowered the price of Jet A fuel to \$5.98 and their 100 octane has been reduced to \$5.68.
  - Signature Flight Support is working to put a Wi-Fi system that will reach aircraft on the ramp so the pilots can remain in their aircraft to do their computer work.
  - Mr. Dopp stated that Mr. Bennett of Signature Flight Support has always indicated on his monthly report that there are 3 vacant storage areas in the County's hangars which are approximately 10' x 17'. Mr. Andres stated he would look into it, but he is concerned with what would be stored in these spaces.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### 1. Aircraft Tax Rates: Paul Andres

- Mr. Andres stated that prior to the last meeting he had received the aircraft tax records for 2008 and 2009. He stated that on average, the County collects between \$300,000.00 and \$330,000.00 per year on aircraft property taxes. Mr. Andres stated that after the first of the year, Mr. Dopp, Mr. Law, and Mr. Massei will work with him on enhanced revenue planning which may include the aircraft taxes.

### 2. Signature Operating Agreement: Paul Andres

- Mr. Andres stated he is waiting on a reply from Signature Flight Support's corporate headquarters as to whether they are willing to enter into voluntary discussions to renegotiate their lease.

### 3. Through-the-Fence Access Agreement: Paul Andres

- The consultant is arranging for a meeting with the Property Owner's Association where they will be briefed on the new recommendations before taking this to the Public Facilities Committee and County Council for their approval. Mr. Andres stated the FAA has approved the recommendations.

### 4. Hilton Head Island Airport Parking Concessions: Paul Andres

- Negotiations are being finalized with the top ranked firm. It appears some equipment upgrades will be required that will be covered by the contractor at his expense, but it will be amortized over a longer period of time so that he can recoup his capital investment while still generating some revenue for the Airport. An independent kiosk system for inside the terminal was examined, but it is not cost effective. Mr. Andres stated he is hoping to bring the contract up for approval in January.

### 5. Lady's Island/St. Helena Fire Department Lease: Paul Andres

- This discussion was tabled at the last Airports Board meeting due to unspecified concerns. Mr. Andres wanted to know what those concerns are so he could address them, but Mr. Kerr asked that this discussion be tabled again since Mr. Buchanan had some concerns and was absent from this meeting. Mr. Newman concurred and stated that the Fire Department would continue to lease on a monthly basis for the time being. Mr. Phillips stated that the current location is ideal for the fire station.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1. Jim Morrisette – Mr. Morrisette wanted to know the height of the trees in the 75' buffer. Mr. Andres stated he did not know the exact height of the trees, but they must conform to the slope requirements.

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next meeting of the Airports Board will be held on Thursday, January 21, 2010 at 1:30 PM in the County Council Chambers of the Beaufort County Government Center.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:05 PM.