

Habersham County Airport Commission

Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

Executive Conference Room

Habersham County Administration Building

130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523

The Habersham County Airport Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Executive conference room in the Habersham County Administration Building located at 130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA, 30523.

Members Present: D. Higgins, Andy Anderson, Lawrence Bridges, Justin Schapansky

Members Absent: Chris Limbach

Others Present: County Staff, Members of the Public and Media.

Call to Order: D. Higgins called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

Invocation and Pledge: D. Higgins gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was amended to add "Transfer of Hangar A-4 Lease from Joe and Pat Noggle to Doug McDonald" under New Business, and "Add Chris Tatum's hangar lease selection to the Executive Summary for 5-year lease extensions" under New Business, and "Discuss Hangar Wait List Procedures" under Old Business. Motion by Andy Anderson, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted 4-0 to approve the agenda as amended.

Public Comment: Commissioner Bruce Palmer addressed the board to say thank you for the job that you do and continue to do. Later in the meeting, Doug McDonald told the board of a crash that happened in Cleveland last week, and asked for prayers for the pilot.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Lawrence Bridges, seconded by Andy Anderson, and voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2024 regular meeting.

Financials: Habersham County Airport Financials dated October 31, 2024, were presented by CFO Tim Sims. Year to date represents 33.33% of the fiscal year, therefore expenditures should be less than or equal to 33.33% and revenue should be at 33.33% minimum. The actual revenues that were collected were 37% of what was budgeted, and the actual expenses were 39% of what was budgeted. The bank account balance is \$99,122. Tim explained that expenditures are higher because of a fuel purchase at the end of October. The new rental car company has been installed and seems to be working smoothly. D asked if there was an update on the tug. Tim said the last payment has been made, and so delivery should be any day. Bill said he was told by the supplier there may be a slight delay in receiving the tug due to the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday.

Approval of Financials: Motion by Andy Anderson, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted 4-0 to approve the financials as presented.

Reports:

Fuel Sales and Airport Revenues: In the month of October 2024, the airport sold 6,969.5 gallons of Low Lead fuel and 8,523 gallons of Jet Fuel. Additional revenues for the month of October were \$47.99 for oil sales, \$1,800 in

facility fees, \$285 in overnight fees, \$475 in tie down fees, and \$250 in call-out fees, totaling \$2,810 in fees. Current full-serve fuel prices are \$4.84 per gallon for Jet A and \$6.40 for Low Lead. Self-serve Low Lead is \$5.35 per gallon.

Airport Manager Update: Airport Manager Bill Harden gave the update. All Wired Up began installing the new gate on Monday, but some of the pieces for the box were damaged and will be reordered. They are due to come back to finish installation on Wednesday. Staff put out the last 12 remaining runway lights. They will not be able to get any more bulbs. The runway will be closed on November 11th and 12th to complete the final punch list. The US Forestry Service trailer is back at the airport for the winter and will purchase their fuel here. Bill has seen them working on their sewage line for the trailer. The final mowing is done, working on islands and weed eating. Jerry Baggett's Public Works crew will come out and help fix the mess that the storm created along the sides. FBO Drive is now our main car rental source with Hertz as a backup. Bill said FBO Drive is working very well so far. Both the Avgas and Jet trucks went down at the same time. Both had injector issues. The Avgas truck was sent out for repair, and the Jet truck needed a new sensor. Bill bragged on his staff – he now has the longest-running full staff since the county took over the airport. They are all fully trained in all airport operations. Hangar B-3 has become available and will be filled from the waiting list. D asked when the jet truck goes down, are the jets able to get close to the fuel farm? Bill said they tried one and it was very difficult. The jet only had enough gas for one start, so it was in the way of filling Avgas for other planes. Bill said the tug would have come in handy in this situation. D asked if we could get a new flag for the pole at the old FBO. Lawrence Bridges asked Bill to tell the board more about the staff, saying if you have a wonderful staff, we want to hear about them. There are 3 full-time and 2 part-time employees. Bill explained that everyone on staff is cross trained on everything, and he feels confident that the staff could run the airport themselves temporarily if necessary. Lawrence also asked about the call-out fees, and how far the employees on call must travel to get to the airport. Bill said the farthest is about an hour. Justin Schapansky asked if the employees receive on-call pay. Bill explained that the employees get paid from the time they leave their home until they return home. D asked if we charge a credit card fee. Tim said that debit cards are charged \$1.50 per transaction, but credit card fees are 3%, which are automatically calculated by our credit card machines.

Airport Update: Lead Edge Design Group – Amanda Rostin gave the update. The contractor is out doing the Runway Overlay project punch list items today. They will be grading and re-grassing the shoulders. Lead Edge holds retainage until grass is established. Amanda shared with the board that the contractors have complimented the airport staff for being knowledgeable and helpful. The next project will be the lighting project, which is becoming more and more important since our current lighting is not sustainable. Lead Edge will submit the design next month to GDOT for approval, then it will go out to bid in the spring. Once the project is awarded, the contracts will be written, the materials will be ordered, and finally construction will begin once all the materials have been received. Today the RFP closes for the three remaining box hangar sites. Amanda does not expect to receive any submissions, based on inquiries Lead Edge has received, but we must still go through the process. Following the bid opening, Lead Edge will come back to the commission and the Board of Commissioners and advise how to proceed. Amanda feels like if no bids are received, it is most likely due to the 20-year reversion. Originally, Lead Edge suggested a 30-year reversion, then the Airport Commission recommended a 25-year reversion, and the Board of Commissioners approved a 20-year reversion. Amanda advised that a 20-year reversion is very tight for a bidder to see a return on their investment. Lead Edge attended the GAA (Georgia Airports Association) annual conference in Columbus. GAA recognized 11 airport projects, and one of those projects was our Runway Overlay project. Our airport also remains a finalist for the Engineering Excellence Award in the small projects category for our ROFA project. D asked if the lighting project includes a new rotating beacon. Amanda explained that the first RFP will include everything – medium intensity LED runway lights, new LED taxiway lights, all new wiring, signage, beacon, and a standalone vault. D said he was very impressed with the Cherokee County airport's beacon. Amanda shared the history of Cherokee County's beacon. The old one was on an old tower that was very short. The new beacon is on a 50-foot monopole and is state-of-the-art. When the old beacon was taken down, Lead Edge purchased it and donated it to the Cherokee County Historical Society. Amanda said they could do that with our old beacon as well.

Old Business:

- Discuss Hangar Waiting List procedures – When D. Higgins saw on Bill's manager's report that hangar B-3 is available, he requested a copy of the waiting list to see where he was on the list. He noticed there had been some changes made to the list, and that several people had been removed from the list, including himself. D assumed this happened after many people declined a previous hangar that had some accessibility issues. He reminded everyone that our current wait list procedures state that someone gets one chance to decline a hangar, and after they decline a second time, they are moved to the bottom of the list, not removed. Bill's opinion is either someone wants a hangar, or they don't, and we shouldn't have to keep calling the same people whenever there is an open hangar. Andy Anderson said that the previous open hangar was a "zebra", meaning it was not a typical hangar that most aircraft will fit in. He also said that the county website has the current wait list policy posted, and therefore we need to either follow those procedures or make changes to the policy. Ralph asked if the policy needs to be rewritten. Andy acknowledged Bill's concern that the current procedures can be difficult from a manager's standpoint, but that until the policy is changed, we should be following it. Bill said that his job is working for the county, so that's the way he looks at the list. He also said he has seen wait list policies from many other airports, and none of them manage their wait list like we do. Our procedures stagnate the list, and the list never changes. Amanda Rostin added that as far as FAA grant assurances go, we cannot economically discriminate or discriminate based on size of the aircraft. Therefore, if the pilot's aircraft won't fit in the hangar, we cannot bump them from the list or count inadequate hangar offers against them. D mentioned that our wait list application gives the applicant the opportunity to choose which hangar type they need. Amanda recommended we address any other issues if we revise the wait list policy, such as the number of hangars one person is allowed to have. Bill agreed that he doesn't see why one person needs more than one hangar. Bill stated that out of the ten people he called for the previously available hangar, two passed, and the rest either declined or never got back to him. D added that our current policy states that we send a letter. Patti McLarty read the current policy from the website. It states that the county will contact the applicant by telephone, e-mail, and regular mail. The applicant will have ten business days from the date of the mailing to either accept or decline. This two-week period can be an issue in filling the hangar quickly. Bill asked what to do if someone says they don't want a hangar anymore. D said if someone wants to be removed from the list, we should ask for that request in writing. D asked Bill to bring any requested changes to the current policy to be reviewed by the board at the next meeting.

New Business:

- Approve/recommend approval of the transfer of hangar A-4 from Joe and Pat Noggle to Doug McDonald – Motion by Andy Anderson, seconded by Lawrence Bridges, and voted 4-0 to approve the transfer of hangar A-4 from Joe and Pat Noggle to Doug McDonald
- Recommend approval of 5-year extension of lease agreements for hangars A, F, and G returning to the county on January 1, 2025 – Motion to recommend approval of 5-year extensions of lease agreements for hangars A, F, and G (A-3 Jerry Roth, A-4 Doug McDonald, A-5 David Bristol, A-6 Chris Tatum, F-2 Kathleen Walker, F-4 Bobby Sweat, F-5 Michelle Curcio, F-6 Bobby Sweat, G-1 Michelle Curcio, G-2 Jon McMillan, and G-5 Doug McDonald)
- Recommend approval of new lease agreements for hangars A, F, and G returning to the county on January 1, 2025 – Motion by Lawrence Bridges, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted 4-0 to recommend approval of the new lease agreements for hangars A, F, and G (A-1 Stefan Kuehnert, A-2 Art Griffith, F-1 Keith Kleinert, F-3 Joel Kirschner, G-3 Dave McKinnon, G-4 Jim Butterworth, and G-6 Jeremy Modisette)

- Consider/Recommend approval of the First Amendment to Fuel Supply Agreement – World Fuel Services – World Fuel Services offered to provide a Phillips 66 sign for the airport if we extend our current fuel agreement from 3 to 5 years. Amanda with Lead Edge warned against changing the terms of the agreement because the vendor was chosen through an RFP process with certain parameters, which included a 3-year contract term. Motion by Lawrence Bridges, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted 4-0 to deny World Fuel's request to extend their current contract from 3 to 5 years.
- Discuss CAA Fuel Program – D Higgins reached out to CAA (Corporate Aircraft Association) to inquire about our airport becoming a supplier. Andy Anderson explained how the program works. It is primarily for Part 91 operators of privately owned Jet A aircraft. Pilots use an app to find airports who support the program to find the best fuel price. The closest airports offering this service are PDK, Lawrenceville, and Cherokee County. Having this service would increase our air traffic tremendously in Andy's opinion. To become a supplier, there is an application and a voting process. There is no long-term commitment required, and there is no cost to the airport. If the service doesn't work for us as expected, the service can be cancelled at any time. Bill Harden said that he used CAA at his former airport, and he would support the program, as long as we are not under a contract. D said he will look further into the program.

Other Reports:

- 2025 Proposed Meeting Schedule – The 2025 meeting schedule was given to the board for review. There were no objections.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting is Tuesday, December 10, 2024, at 9 a.m. in the Executive Conference Room at the Habersham County Administration Building located at 130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523.

Adjournment:

Motion by Andy Anderson, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 a.m.



Chairman – D. Higgins



Secretary – Lawrence Bridges