

Minutes of the Danville Airport Commission Strategic Planning Workshop

Held 19 April 2024

City Hall Conference Room (4th Floor), Patton Street, Danville, VA 24540

City Representatives: Marc Adelman, Todd Pinekenstein, Alan Spencer, Earl Reynolds, Ryan Dodson, Renee Burton, Brian Dunevant

Commission Members: **Present:** Sid Allgood, Stephen Daniel, Michael Duncan, Phil Hall, Bob Jiraneck, Fred Shanks, Hampton Wilkins

Absent: Gene Jackson

Other: Leslie McMinnis, Cheryl Green, Star Bennett (residents of Miller Drive)

Phil began the meeting at 09:04 with the call to order and roll call. The only absence from the Commission was Mr. Jackson, who was not expected to attend due to a work conflict. All other members were present. The agenda, incorporated herein by reference, was opened for discussion and one item was added. Hampton made the motion to approve the Agenda as amended and Bob provided the second, motion passed by voice vote without dissent.

Phil asked for communications from the Miller Road visitors. They introduced themselves and where here to learn where things might be heading with the Airport's development. They have a concern about "sound" if larger/more jet traffic will be coming into the field. They live in the vicinity of the airfield. Phil thanked them for their presence and encouraged them to continue to be informed, explaining that this was a planning session with an emphasis on brainstorming what the future may look like. Michael offer to provide a link for the minutes of this and other Airport meetings and that can be found at https://danvilleva.portal.civicclerk.com/?category_id=27.

Ryan offered an update on the comprehensive Code update project offering that the changes are mostly cosmetic. The Transportation section is where the Airport has been listed but it will now be listed as the Airport. Section 6-13 and Section 6-38 were specifically addressed, the former on what should be posted at the Airport and the latter on Commissioner duties and structure. Some discussion on use of the descriptor of "licensed pilot", the way the Code reads today versus a "current" pilot as another approach. The consensus was to leave the language as is. There may be some interest in amending the membership rules to three versus four members potentially being non-City residents as the financial burden is the City's.

Sid submitted a draft of a travel reimbursement policy. After discussion Michael made the motion to submit this to Marc and the City Attorney for their review and comment. Alan found the Overnight Travel Policy within the City's Administrative Policy Book. This appears to only cover overnight travel and some of our travel would be same day. Fred seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The referenced existing overnight travel policy was attached to an email Alan sent out at 0943AM 19APR2024. Sid's draft document was provided to each member at the meeting.

The format for the remainder of this report will be bullet points to allow easier integration of the topics into future meetings. The number is the sheet number from my notes and the data captured highlights/condenses the information from that sheet.

Sheet 3 – Todd’s Concern

- Standby Generator for the Main Terminal is needed
- Upgrade the Airfield lighting system to LED (equipment, labor and utility cost savings)
- CAP and older Averett Building status (usefulness, maintenance concerns, and code compliance)
- Gate 8 (South Gate) is not functional, power and safety issues, also location considerations.

Sheets 4 & 5 – Hangars (Current and on Airport Layout Plan (ALP))

- New 80x80 for AU exclusive use adjacent to the Aviation Maintenance Facility (AMF)
- Hangar 100 to be renovated for AU use
- Hangar 34, newest hangar, cost \$340,000 but was rented immediately
- All hangars are occupied
- Any construction on the field must be on the ALP or it will not be constructed. FAA and State funding have constraints and rules; there is a process to install “pen & ink” changes to the ALP but it is better to have a comprehensive plan than try to push something through.
- It is expensive; site development work for AMF quoted a year ago was \$825,000. Today the cost estimate stands at \$2MM.
- VAB has raised its percentage to 90% of funding ask though that could change back at any time.
- The Hangars will most likely be a City cost.

Sheet 6 – Hangar Specifics

- Need for transient hangars (hereinafter: Transient) – large but not too large. Develop additional new hangars (could use two remaining Infrastructure allocations @ ~ \$575,000 to help offset cost)
- Ownership/Revenue streams & demand considerations all come into play
- Ownership considerations; heliport discussion

Sheet 7 – T-Hangars

- On Airport Drive side – ground concerns because of old landfill waste being discovered during previous build in that area.
- ALP has T-hangars tagged on east side of 31
- Storage management of transient small craft – hangars or shelter options

Sheet 7 – New Maintenance FBO

- Michael announced plans for a new maintenance oriented FBO to begin operating in Hangar 34, developing a larger hangar on Taxiway H as phase 1 and then, in two years or so construct a larger hangar on the South Ramp as Phase 2 of the company’s growth plan. Time is of the essence given the movement around Taxiway H site preparation contract so this project will become a topic for the Commission at the next meeting. A Fee Appraisal process will begin shortly to determine the land lease costs associated with the project. The long-term plans

incorporate additional service offerings as the business grows. The pipeline of AMF graduates is an important consideration for the business owners.

- There is an ongoing concern over the structure of AU Aviation Services being a part of the University and not a stand-alone entity. The liability is a worry for the Commission and Airport management should something unfortunate occur. Averett University is our largest customer and an icon for the community. A taxes paid question also came up and the City Finance officer will be asked for a report. This topic will need to be addressed as the lease is coming up for renewal. That discussion will be held in a closed session.

Sheet 8 – Parking

- Long term lot presently has 66 spaces; a planned gate modification will bring that number up to 68. However, between the Flight School and the AMF we will have insufficient parking given present conditions. One option is to establish a policy where AU Flight School students must use public transportation currently available but underutilized and limit the Flight School to 20 spaces for staff and flight instructors.
- Additional parking projects (across the Terminal) need to be evaluated and crafted into next year's budget so we have sufficient parking available when AMF opens operations. The crosswalk and "around the corner" (from Tower) were also mentioned.

Sheet 9 – Buildings/Projects

- The CAP is outmoded and becoming quite costly to maintain. The roof is in need of immediate repair and that repair will only be good for 5 to 7 years. The grounds/maintenance facility that is part of that complex is an important asset but would prefer this equipment, etc. be relocated away from the high aircraft traffic area where it presently sits. This hangar should be on the tear-down and replace list.
- Storage space can be moved to Taxiway H, Closed 24 (X24) or the US58 field area.
- Virginia Aviation Board funding for 3 Phase power was an exciting opportunity but turns out only applies to moving power to areas that are not easily accessible for the service.
- Fuel Farm expansion is on open topic - an FBO & AU staging discussion.

Sheets 10 & 11 – Further Out items

- Discussion on Electric Fueling site; do we need to put on ALP? Where and do we really want it?
- Long Term development area is the X24 area; MP & ALP in FY2027 (beginning 1 JULY 2026) is where this needs to be addressed; TSA consideration for commercial service terminal (regional jet service expected/desired); the new Terminal will likely require an FAA control tower, road access, utilities considerations and the like must be considered. With Plan revision noted above we need to
 - Discuss engineering considerations with our firm soon to better understand requirements
 - Begin a "journal" process for the Commission and generate data in a useful manner that can be provide to future Commissions
 - Speak with Jeff Breedan, FAA Planner
 - Develop a timetable to help guide our planning effort

- A response to Bob's question: The casino does not consider the airport as a needed resource to drive their business growth. We know that as that site becomes a destination; there will be increased traffic but it will not be traffic generated by the casino's fleet.

Sheet 12 – Other Items

- We need to begin an immediate process around the land lease topic (Michael's business and the if the heliport people come back or any other development prospect who wants to build facilities at the Airport.
- Marc will ask for a tax report from Michael Adkins
- Hangar Rates/users are a demand issue... while all our hangars are filled, many simply house inactive aircraft and we do not enforce the provisions of the Minimum Standards so likely half of the hangars are simply storage units and do not generate maintenance or fuel sales.
- We continue to evaluate and will recommend changes to rates (fees & taxes) to Council for their consideration.
- We are looking to sponsor a Free Fly Day in OCT 2024
- A thought of outreach with a cookout aimed at businesses (Chamber co-sponsor) with access to tarmac and static displays.

Sheets 13 – 14 – Detailed planning

- Renee and Brian joined us for discussion about City resources to help with the planning.
- Immediate need for Airport input to Comprehensive 2040 Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Michael, Phil & Marc) – submit a paragraph bullet summary ASAP
- VDOT funds are not normally available for Airport funding though the turn-off into the parking lot (as part of the right-away) might be possible. "Smart Scale" funding is a six-year program window and next cycle is two years out (2031 before we could make something happen); The 50/50 program is a six-year program but operates on an 18 month lead time, i.e., current 2023/24 funds will be expended in 2027/28. Brian will look into Industrial access funds. Marc needs to submit scope to Brian to get a study started.
- But the City controls South Boston Road so the State funding while a consideration is not necessarily a gating problem. Driveway discussion re new terminal area and move access road to align with existing crossover; utility tie-in to existing service lines on South Boston road is possible (pending review of specifics which do not yet exist)
- Look into the Mountain Mill Road access to Runway 31 for T-Hangar development. A gate and gravel driveway already exist though improvements will be needed.

Phil ran the room for comments from Commission members – most expressing appreciation for the meeting and the effort that went into pulling it off. The group then adjourned. Meeting concluded about 1:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Duncan

Michael Duncan, Member