

AIRPORT COMMISSION MINUTES

December 10, 2024

3:00 P.M.

Danville Regional Airport – Eastern Conference Room

The following were present for the Danville Regional Airport Commission meeting held on Tuesday, December 10, 2024.

Attendees:

Marc Adelman, Director	Fred Shanks, Chairman	Todd Pinekenstein, Trans. Bld.
Sid Allgood	Hampton Wilkins	Grounds Superintendent
Doug Appleton	Travis Williams, Chief Flight	Lisa Bivens, Senior Admin.
Stephen Daniel	Instructor, Averett University	Assistant.
Phil Hall, Vice-Chairman	Nishad Memon, AU Aviation	
Gene Jackson	Alan Spencer, Deputy City Attorney	
Bob Jiranek		

Guests:

Marcio Couto, Instructor and Program Manager of Aviation Maintenance Technology, Danville Community College

Melissa Mann, Dean of Career & Technical Education, Danville Community College

Chairman Fred Shanks opened the meeting at 3:00 pm, welcomed the guests in attendance and requested a roll call.

Approval of Agenda

Phil Hall made a motion to approve the agenda for the December 10, 2024, meeting. Stephen Daniel seconded the motion; all members in attendance were in favor and the motion passed. Later in the meeting Fred Shanks recommended reversing items 4 and 5 on the agenda. A motion was made by Sid Allgood and seconded by Phil Hall to reverse the items. All members were in favor of the motion.

Approval of Minutes

Sid Allgood moved that the minutes of the November 12, 2024, Airport Commission meeting be accepted as presented and Gene Jackson seconded the motion. All members in attendance were in favor and the motion passed.

New Business

Topic: Danville Community College Aviation Maintenance Training Program presentation

Action: Marcio Couto, Instructor and Program Manager of Aviation Maintenance Technology, Danville Community College and Melissa Mann, Dean of Career & Technical Education, Danville Community College were present for the meeting and completed a presentation to provide the Commission an update regarding the aviation maintenance technology program.

Disposition: Plans are for the Aviation Maintenance Technology program to start offering classes in the Fall of 2025.

Topic: Danville Community College Aviation Maintenance Training Program presentation (Continued)

Marcio Couto, Instructor and Program Manager of Aviation Maintenance Technology and Melissa Mann, Dean of Career & Technical Education for the Danville Community College were present for the meeting and completed a presentation to provide an update regarding the aviation maintenance technology program. Marcio Couto provided some background information regarding the anticipated shortage in the future for Aviation Maintenance Technicians (ATM's) due to an aging workforce, competition with other industries, the rigorous training and certification requirements, and the rapid growth of air traffic causing the demand to outpace the supply of qualified technicians. The purpose of the Aviation Maintenance Technology Program is to equip students to become certified Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) ATM's by providing comprehensive training, essential skills, and knowledge. Marcio Couto indicated they must receive approval from the following organizations to obtain accreditation and certification: Danville Community College (DCC) Advisory Board, Virginia Community College State Board (VCCS) approval, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and the FAA.

Melissa Mann said that the program has already received curriculum approval and DCC's Advisory Board approval. She stated that required documentation has been sent to the State Board for their review and approval. It is anticipated that the program will receive SACSCOC approval in the Spring of 2025. The FAA certification pre-application step one was processed on September 12, 2023. The FAA's availability to proceed to step two depends on the FAA's resources. Currently, DCC's program is #72 on the FAA national certification list and it is anticipated that step two will begin in mid-January 2025.

Marcio Couto discussed employment opportunities that will be available for students that complete the Aviation Maintenance Technology Program. He said that it will be important to make students aware as early as middle school of these career opportunities. The collaboration with Danville Public Schools is going to be very important. Melissa Mann discussed the program's curriculum with the Airport Commission. She also said that she has reached out to Dr. Gwyn Anderson-Stone, Career and Technical Education Director for Danville Public Schools so that goals can be aligned to create an actual pathway to the Aviation Maintenance Technology program at DCC. Melissa Mann said that a meeting has been scheduled with Dr. Stone and other stakeholders at Danville Public Schools (DPS) later this week to talk about the aviation pathways program for high school and middle school students. Discussion continued.

Fred Shanks asked DCC staff about how they feel about getting the program started. Melissa Mann commented that as part of their prospective work, they have already started to get the word out about the program through surveys that will go out to all the constituents of DCC. She added that most programs are allowed to operate for about three years with minimum enrollment to allow the program to gain traction. Marcio Couto said that the survey results received were very positive towards the program.

Bob Jiranek asked whether DCC is experiencing any issues with hiring faculty. Marcio Couto said they are having issues hiring instructors that meet all the requirements. He indicated the aviation maintenance technology program requires instructors to have an associate's degree as well as experience in aircraft maintenance and it has been difficult to recruit people with related experience and credentials.

Topic: Danville Community College Aviation Maintenance Training Program presentation (Continued)

Mr. Couto commented they have met with two good candidates but neither of them had an associate's degree. In addition, the salaries offered are not very high, which opens the door for creativity when developing the contracts for some instructors. The Airport Commission was informed that DCC is currently exploring opportunities with some of their current instructors in other programs that could teach some of the classes. Discussion continued.

Phil Hall asked when DCC would bring on the instructors if hired since the program has not started. Melissa Mann said they would be employed immediately to assist Marcio Couto in building the curriculum. Marc Adelman said that the aviation training facility building is not scheduled to go out to bid until February 2025 and asked whether the planned timeframe for the project would influence the FAA review process since the building will not be ready until the summer of 2026. Melissa Mann said that this issue has been discussed with their FAA representative, and they were informed that they would not need to withdraw the application if they had some alternative options. It was explained the DCC's plans are to hold classes at DCC until the building is completed. They also indicated depending on possible FAA approval in the spring, there is potential for classes to be offered during the Fall 2025 semester. If so, it may require that the classes do not require labs until things are up and running as far as the building is concerned. Marcio Couto said that since DCC is an education entity the campus can be used, which may require having aircraft parts in one of their existing labs. Discussion continued.

Topic: Update on Site Preparation Construction Projects

Action: Marc Adelman updated the Airport Commission on the site prep construction work for the Corporate Hangar Development project and the Aviation Training Facility project.

Disposition: Site prep construction work is underway for the Corporate Hangar Development project and work for the Aviation Training Facility should begin in February 2025.

Marc Adelman updated the Airport Commission on the site prep construction work for the Corporate Hangar Development project and the Aviation Training Facility project. Specific work activities completed and underway are identified below.

Corporate Hangar Site Prep Development Project – T-Hangar Building Area

Completed Activities:

- Contractor mobilization
- Temporary silt fence installed
- Excavation of temporary sediment basin
- Removal of topsoil

Activities in Progress:

- Embankment fill
- Installation of 18" outlet pipe from the temporary sediment basin
- Installation of 24" pipe in the temporary sediment basin area

Upcoming Activities:

- Continue installation of pipe work from the temporary sediment basin area towards the east side of the site

Topic: Update on Site Preparation Construction Projects (Continued)

Corporate Hangar site construction project – T-hangar building area

- Continue grading activities
- Begin the retaining wall construction

Update on the Aviation Training Facility Site

- On December 6th Blair Construction submitted a change order request to the Airport Engineering firm based on the revised plans for the aviation training facility site preparation construction project. Once the change order is approved by the city a change order request will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Aviation for review and approval.
- Engineering plans were revised to include a grinder pump station for the sanitary sewer line. In addition, utility line modifications were needed for the water line that connects with the sprinkler system for the training facility building, which includes a backflow preventer and vault. Conduit for the gas line was also required for underneath the long-term parking lot area and cables were required to link from the transformer to the meters for hangars 200 and 400.
- The project inspector recommended to help expedite completion of the site prep work to remove the paving requirement from the corporate hangar site prep project located in the t-hangar building area and include the tie-in work with the construction of the new 80' x 80' hangar.
- Presently, it is anticipated the Aviation Training Facility Site Prep Construction project will begin in February 2025.

Topic: Review of the FY26 Operating Budget and Capital Projects

Action: Lisa Bivens reviewed the FY26 Operating Budget and Marc Adelman updated the Airport Commission on the FY26 program of capital projects.

Disposition: Budget items will be updated regarding comments received from the Commission.

Lisa Bivens reviewed the proposed FY26 Operating Budget with the Commission members. A few line items of significance were discussed. Specifically, it was recommended to increase the budget amount for Repairs and Maintenance of Buildings from \$25,000 to \$40,000 to cover the increasing cost for basic repairs for building roofs and hangar doors.

The Finance Department is now including mail delivery expenses provided by the Print Shop in the postal service account. Previously, this charge was assessed at the end of the year and did not appear as a budgeted item. In addition, funds were included in the FY26 operating budget to cover travel and training expenses. A portion of these funds will cover any travel that is approved and completed by Airport Commission Members.

Topic: Review of the FY2026 Operating Budget and Capital Projects (Continued)

Marc Adelman reviewed the proposed Capital Projects for the FY26 budget with the Airport Commission. Specific project information is identified below.

Project Description	Cost Estimate	Local Cost Estimate
Site prep construction for south ramp – future hangar development	\$1,475,318	\$295,064
Obstruction Removal – Runway 31 end	\$388,000	\$77,600
Stormwater erosion mitigation – South of the south ramp adjacent to Taxiway A	\$994,426	\$198,885
Corporate Hangar – T-Hangar building area (10,000 square feet)	\$950,000 – hangar \$36,500 – design <u>\$5800 – admin</u> \$992,300 – total	\$99,230
Utilities for Corporate Hangar (10,000 square feet)	\$200,000	\$200,000

State funds will be requested to complete site prep construction for future hangar development adjacent to the south ramp. The Airport is already under grant to complete site prep design services for this portion of this project.

The airport will submit a grant request for state funding to complete obstruction removal adjacent to Runway 31. Originally, it was intended to submit a state grant request for this project this fiscal year but due to ecological issues the project was delayed. During the Airport Commission meeting Todd Pinekenstein received an email from the Virginia Ecological Services office in Gloucester, Virginia, which indicated the agency does not recommend completing any trimming or tree removal from April 1st through November 15th due to potential tri-colored bat presence. As a result, it is anticipated that this project will be bid this June and if state funding is awarded in August construction would begin after November 15, 2025.

Marc Adelman updated the Commission concerning issues regarding storm water erosion that exists adjacent to Taxiway A. The south ramp's stormwater detention basin is not functioning as originally designed since the corrugated metal riser has corroded and is no longer in the basin. The intent of the project is to provide for a new riser that will allow the basin to function properly. The proposed design will also include reviewing the size of the basin to determine if it can be enlarged to facilitate proposed development on the west side of the south apron.

A grant request to construct a 10,000 square foot hangar in the t-hangar building area was also discussed. Marc Adelman indicated that the size of the hangar will be linked to available Bipartisan Infrastructure funds and the bid price that will be received for the new 80'x 80' hangar for the aviation training facility project. Utility connections are estimated to cost \$200,000 for the 10,000 square foot hangar project. It was the consensus of the Airport Commission to construct a 10,000 square foot hangar.

Topic: Review of the FY2026 Operating Budget and Capital Projects (Continued)

Marc Adelman asked if there were any projects the Airport Commission would like to see included in the FY26 program of projects. Phil Hall said he would like to include the terminal generator to be considered with FY26 capital budget. Sid Allgood said he would like to recommend including the Runway 2/20 LED lighting upgrade project in FY26.

A motion was made by Bob Jiranek and seconded by Phil Hall to approve the proposed capital program of projects discussed and include both the Terminal Generator and Runway 2/20 LED Lighting projects in FY2026. All members agreed and the motion passed.

Topic: FBO Management Update

Action: Nishad Menon was present for the meeting and updated the Airport Commission on recent activities.

Disposition: AU Aviation Services will provide additional updates at the next meeting.

Nishad Menon updated the Airport Commission on FBO activities during the last month. During the Berry Hill Mega Site Announcement on November 12, 2024, AU Aviation Services supported operational requirements for aircraft that flew in for Governor Youngkin's announcement at Berry Hill.

A military exercise took place on November 22, 2024, at Danville Regional, which involved a special VIP drop-off/pickup. The operation utilized the Navy's MH-53E Sea Dragon, a variant of the CH-53 Sea Stallion, as the drop-off aircraft and the Air Force's Dornier 328 as the pickup.

P&P AIR LLC, which operates a Gulfstream 450 as their main aircraft, have recently come in for service and will continue to make trips to Danville. This activity is significant since this customer has quickly become the FBO's fourth largest in sales since June 2024.

As a part of AU Aviation Services continued efforts to promote and emphasize a culture of safety all new staff members have been completing National Air Transportation Association (NATA) Safety First Training Courses. These modules cover topics important to both line and customer service operations and training will be recurrent on an annual basis for all staff. The FBO currently has a total of five employees, two full-time and three part-time employees excluding Mark Ballard, the mechanic. Discussion continued.

Marc Adelman asked FBO staff if their Operations Manual identified to call 911 and to identify the airport's street address in case of an emergency. Travis Williams indicated that he believes that it is included in the manual and he will check on that. Travis Williams asked if they could get a copy of the airfield grid that was provided to the Fire Department. Marc Adelman asked Todd Pinekenstein to coordinate with the Fire Department to complete additional training as well. Discussion continued.

Topic: **Review of items discussed at the April 19, 2024, Strategic Planning meeting**

Action: The minutes from the April 19, 2024, Strategic Planning meeting, were distributed to the Airport Commission members for review and discussion.

Disposition: Phil Hall indicated he would update the document noting any comments made so that the Commission has a strategic plan moving forward for the next workshop.

The minutes from the April 19, 2024, Strategic Planning meeting, were distributed to the Airport Commission members for review. Phil Hall led the discussion. Both short and long-term goals were considered for all discussed projects. After discussion Phil Hall said he would update the document noting any comments made by the Commission for the next strategic planning meeting. It was also discussed to invite other stakeholders to attend the next workshop such as Corrie Bobe and Kelvin Perry. A date for the next workshop was discussed. It was decided that the next Strategic Planning Workshop should be scheduled in April at the airport so a tour could be included.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Communications

Sid Allgood said he was at the airport the last time the Governor came in and the FBO did a great job.

Phil Hall commented he hopes everyone understands his comments and questions.

Adjournment

The Airport Commission meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm. The next regular Airport Commission meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, January 14, 2024, at 3:00 pm in the airport's Eastern Conference Room.**