

Carteret County – Beaufort Airport Authority Minutes

Regular Meeting

May 24, 2023

Members Present: Robin Comer, Jesse Vinson, Dean Graham, Jimmy Falwell, Bucky Oliver, John Floyd

Members Absent: Randy Ramsey

Others Present: Janie Mason -Interim Airport Manager, Peggy Piner – Accounting & Finance, Anthony Held – Maintenance & Grounds Technician, Chad Noble – FBO Manager

Zoom: Jay Talbert – Talbert & Bright

Call to Order: Chairman Comer called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the conflict-of-interest statement. There were no conflicts.

Approval of Agenda:

Chairman Comer made a motion to move Talbert & Bright’s presentation after Public Comment. It was seconded by Jesse Vinson and passed unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Mr. Oliver had one correction from last meetings minutes. The minutes read “A motion was made by Mr. Oliver to prepare engineering to study site”. It will be corrected to read “A motion was made by Mr. Oliver to prepare a proposal for engineering to study site”.

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda with the correction by Mr. Oliver, it was seconded by Chairman Comer and passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

Chad Noble, Manager FBO spoke of he and Janie Mason being contacted by Triworks Studios requesting a TFR (Temporary Flight Restriction) for the flying of drones in the weighing area for the Big Rock Blue Marlin Fishing Tournament. The FAA language pertaining to TFR’s is as follows: “TFR’s are issued for safety or security purposes. Reasons for issuing a TFR include: “Natural disasters such as wildfires and hurricanes, certain major sporting events and Emergency or national security situations”. Major Sporting events included: Major League Baseball, National Football League, NCAA Division One Football and NASCAR Sprint Cup, Indy Car, and Champ Series Racing.” The Board agreed that the Airport is not involved in this.

Old Business:

Jay Talbert of Talbert and Bright presented their update for May 2023.

Fuel Farm – This should be the last report for the Fuel Farm. Closeout documentation has been submitted to the DOA so this project should be complete.

Runway 321 Rehab – 60% design documents have been submitted to the State and they are still reviewing them. Talbert and Bright are awaiting comments. They are continuing with design and will incorporate any changes.

Taxilane Widening Project – Grant closeout documentation is in process of being pulled together and should be submitted in the Month of June.

Project Little Fish – Hangar 75 Site Work – Project completed well ahead of schedule. A punch list was provided to the contractor and items have been completed. Final markings are done, and all work elements are complete. Contract was decreased by \$6,722.10. Coordinating with Contractor now to get closeout documents and as soon as they are received will begin the closeout of the Little Fish project.

Laughton Property – Talbert & Bright are preparing a work authorization for additional design. Plan to submit by first week in June.

Mr. Talbert asked if anyone had questions regarding the BIL funds. He stated that Year 2022 and 2023 are available now. They are only accepting quarterly applications currently. They can be design only projects or construction only projects or a combination. These funds can only be used for Capital Projects. BIL funds have a 10% match.

Mr. Oliver suggested that Randy Fender and Janie work on a listing of possible projects (Five Year Plan) with funding sources and matching fund requirements prior to the next meeting to circulate to Board Members to discuss next meeting.

Chairman Comer discussed the roof coating of two large hangars near the highway. The supplies have been ordered and work will begin after the supplies arrive.

Joe Wagner, Ground Lease No. 71 requested to extend the pavement behind his hangar to have access to a back door that he will have installed in his hangar. This work will be completed at the cost of Mr. Wagner. Chairman Comer made a motion to allow Mr. Wagner to extend this pavement with the proper drainage in place. Mr. Oliver seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Chairman Comer suggested that the balance of the Fuel Farm loan be paid back to the County now rather than waiting until the due date of December. Mr. Oliver made a motion to pay the County back now and to amend the current fiscal year budget for that amount. It was seconded by John Floyd and passed with five yes votes and one no vote by Jesse Vinson.

Mr. Oliver asked that the proposed budget line items be reviewed and be more in line with the last two years' spending.

Chairman Comer commended Mr. Vinson for bringing the airport back into a good financial place. Mr. Oliver agreed and said he did not want to change anything and that he wanted to stay just as tight as Mr. Vinson has been. He would rather money be in a contingency line item and the individual line items budgeted tightly.

Runway 321 Rehab matching funds were discussed. According to our Engineer we should be on track to bid the project late summer/early fall 2023. Construction possibly beginning late fall this year. We will need approximately \$730,000.00 in match money.

Mr. Oliver reiterated that we need to do a five-year plan that lists projects, funding and where match will come from. He stated that the efforts of Mr. Vinson and Ms. Mason have resulted in tremendous success in getting the airport in a much better financial position. He stated that now we will have the good luck of not having to ask the County for operating money the way we have had to for the last 30 years. He stated we will still have to ask for help with matching funds for Capital projects.

Mr. Vinson stated that it is not right for the County to help with all the matching funds and the Town of Beaufort, who also collects tax revenue from the Airport, not contribute any money at all. Mr. Oliver stated that it needs to be determined how much money is being received from taxes from the airport before Beaufort does anything. He stated that he has spoken with his Beaufort Board and that they need to have a line item that works in relationship to the money that is derived from the airport. He stated that he agreed and that the figures have to be grinded out. Mr. Floyd stated that as money is spent at the airport it is establishing more revenue for the Town and the County.

Chairman Comer stated that if the Airport would de-annex from the Town of Beaufort, it would be a windfall for the County and the Airport because the taxes on aircraft based here in Carteret County would go down and more aircraft owners would register their aircraft here in Carteret County vs other counties.

A motion was made by Chairman Comer that he and Mr. Vinson would meet with the County about working together on the match for the Runway 3-21 Rehab Project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Graham and passed unanimously.

Mr. Oliver asked if the Board would approve of the Town of Beaufort setting off fireworks again this year on the 4th of July like last year. The Board agreed to the request.

Mr. Graham asked if the Airport has the equipment to maintain the ditch banks around the airport. Anthony Held stated in the past that work was done by a former Board member. We no longer have access to that equipment. Ms. Mason will follow up with the County to see if there is any way for them to do it or allow us to use equipment to do this.

A motion was made by Chairman Comer to go in to closed session. It was seconded by Mr. Vinson and passed unanimously.

The Board returned to open session.

A motion was made to promote Janie Mason to Airport Manager. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

A motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

Minutes prepared by Janie Mason

