

Athens Ben Epps Airport Authority Meeting
January 25, 2022, 3:00PM
Live Stream on ACCGOV YouTube Channel
<https://youtu.be/0CuRG-HwsTU>

In attendance: Mike Mathews, Keith Sanders, David Asman, Craig Westwood, Robert Miles, Blaine Williams, Chris Lowery (Holt Consulting), Jacob Redwine (Holt Consulting), Davin Welter.

Note-taker: Davin Welter

- 1) **Chair Update and announcements:** Mr. Sanders welcomed the participants and previewed the agenda. Mr. Sanders said that he is acting as chair while Dr. Napier is away. He mentioned that as acting chair his vote is able to count toward a quorum (which is four members).
- 2) **December Meeting Minutes:** The December minutes were approved as submitted, per unanimous vote. Mr. Westwood moved and Mr. Miles seconded to approve Minutes.
- 3) **Airport Manager Reports**
 - a) **Financial & Operations Report:** December was another very good month for the airport. UGA football and basketball games provided good generation of revenue. Mr. Mathews said that we have had a number of 717 aircraft and even a 737 are flying in for basketball games. Mr. Mathews noted that the Hanson lease payment hit twice in December and therefore reflected a higher monthly revenue amount for leases. The figures presented to not include depreciation. Fifty percent through the year, our revenues minus expenses is ahead \$377,527. December can be a tough month for general aviation because weather and the holidays may keep recreational flyers from flying.
 - b) **Capital Improvement Project Updates:** Mr. Mathews reported that the Schedule C project which is the construction of the new localizer antenna is almost complete. In February, work will be done to start the new localizer and remove the old one. Work will also be done to take out the old shelter and then hook up the new localizer. After that is complete the FAA will perform a flight check. The airport could be without a localizer for a couple of weeks during this time. Schedule A which is work on the first part of the Taxiway and Schedule B is the midfield section of the taxiway is still in progress. Cold weather and rock have slowed down the project and blasting may need to be done. A waterline that is higher than it should be will need to be lowered. Runway 2-20 is in the design phase and Holt Consulting is performing that work now. RS&H has been chosen as AHN's new consulting firm that will be handling the construction phase of the work on 2-20.
 - c) **Marketing & Outreach:** Mr. Mathews stated he is working with David Bradley at the Athens Chamber of Commerce about a new truck company, Rivian, whose new plant will be located close to AHN. Because AHN is closer than ATL it could mean increased traffic for AHN. Mr. Mathews will be attending the Mead and Hunt conference in Tucson in March to continue to attract commercial service to Athens. He will get an update from American Airlines and is hoping that this is still a strong possibility. American has been successful in their new venture in Columbus according to the Airport Director there and we are hopeful that his bodes well for Athens. Mr. Welter reported that a discussion had occurred with Ted Phillip, the Non-Executive Chair of United Airlines. Mr. Phillip reacted positively to the information that he received. Mr. Mathews and Mr. Welter quickly provided him with a market study that was designed specifically for United. Mr. Phillip stated that United's greatest challenge was obtaining new planes and pilots to expand into new markets. Mr. Phillip was going to share the info he received with his folks and AHN will follow up soon. Mr. Mathews reported that Jeff Montgomery with

the ACC Public Information Office is bringing the current class of Youth Leadership Athens in February.

- d) Clear Point Data System Update: Mr. Mathews stated that Mr. Welter will attend training in the future and will be able to perform updates after that fact.
- e) In-person meetings update: Mr. Mathews said that given indications from and in ACC, he does not see us meeting in person at any time soon.

4) Old Business

- a) Lexington Highway Projects: Dr. Napier normally provides an update but she relayed information to Mr. Sanders that the team is still doing data collection at this point.
- b) CCSD & Ben Epps Airport Outreach Opportunity: Mr. Miles reported that he has been staying in touch with his contacts at Clarke County School District. Because COVID continues to impact the ability for students to visit, there has not been an opportunity for any interaction.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Miles to continue giving updates during the monthly Authority meetings

- c) FY 2021 Annual Report: Mr. Welter reported that the Annual Report would be printed this week. He also said that AHN has a web version that will go on the AHN website and landscape version that can be used for PowerPoint presentations. Mr. Sanders asked if the web version was going to be portrait or landscape. Mr. Welter said he would try to have both versions available.

5) New Business

- a) Events – Mr. Mathews reported that the Hot Dawg Fly-In occurred this past weekend and that six airplanes flew in for the event. Mr. Asman participated in the Fly-In and shared that the chilly day may have scared off some participants. Folks from all over (Hampton, Newnan, Peachtree City) participated in the event. Fly-In events are scheduled for February 26 and March 26. The UGA Aviation Club monthly meeting is tomorrow and they are planning on holding another scholarship event.

6) Standing Committees: Issues & Updates

- a) Business/Finance: Mr. Sanders reported that work this summer will take place on the airport's Strategic Plan.
- b) Operating: Mr. Asman informed the Authority that there are no zoning issues to present.
- c) Air Service Development/Marketing: Mr. Tibble was unable to make this meeting but Mr. Mathews reported that he has a meeting scheduled with the Economic Development Office about marketing the airport. He also has a meeting with Katie Williams and Paul Cramer to continue the airport's potential work with them about marketing commercial air service. Mr. Sanders asked if AHN was receiving any air traffic from the battery plant in Commerce. Mr. Mathews responded that AHN is getting some freight flights for the Caterpillar plant.

7) Other Business:

- a) Vote: Confirmations of Standing Committee assignments, 2022: Mr. Westwood motioned and Mr. Asman seconded to confirm the Authority Standing Committee assignments. Those are as follows: Operation Committee – Mr. Asman, Mr. Miles, and Mr. Westwood
Air Service Development/Marketing - Mr. Tribble

Finance – Dr. Napier and Mr. Sanders
The vote to confirm was a unanimous yes.

- b) Next meetings: February 22, 2022: Dr. Napier is expected back for the February meeting but there could be an unexpected delay. Mr. Sanders will be away but will send out the proposed agenda.
- 8) Adjourn:** 3:35 PM - Mr. Asman moved and Mr. Miles seconded to adjourn the meeting, with unanimous agreement.