

## Athens Ben Epps Airport Authority Meeting

June 27, 2023, 3:00PM

### Minutes

Live Stream on ACCGOV YouTube Channel

[https://youtube.com/live/fCcoC\\_ZUL8?feature=share](https://youtube.com/live/fCcoC_ZUL8?feature=share)

**In attendance:** Mike Mathews, Jeff Benjamin, David Asman, Diane Napier, Keith Sanders, Craig Westwood, Davin Welter, Jim Duguay (MBI), Niki Jones

**Apologies:** Grant Tribble

**Note-taker:** Davin Welter

- 1) **Chair Update and announcements:** Mr. Benjamin presided over the meeting since Mr. Tribble was away. He welcomed the participants and previewed the agenda.
- 2) **April and May Meeting Minutes:** The April minutes were not approved because there was not a quorum at the last meeting. Mr. Benjamin called for a vote on the April minutes. The April minutes were approved as submitted, per unanimous vote. Mr. Westwood moved and Mr. Sanders seconded to approve the minutes. Then the May minutes were approved as submitted, per unanimous vote. Mr. Westwood moved and Mr. Asman seconded to approve the minutes.
- 3) **Airport Manager Reports**
  - a) **Financial & Operations Report:** Mr. Mathews reported that our financials continue to look good. Lease revenue was off this month because we had not received the Hanson lease payment but we should see that in the June financials. Operations for the year thus far are 35,595. Mr. Mathews provided an overview of the Athens-Clarke County Budget Process at the request of Dr. Napier and Mr. Sanders. The process starts in September and ends in June. The new fiscal year begins on July 1. Mr. Mathews said it is a comprehensive process that serves the airport well.
  - b) **Capital Improvement Project Updates:** Mr. Mathews said the 2-20 Runway project is nearing completion. Paving is complete but the significant rain recently has delayed the project. The edges need to be dressed and the contractor needs to finish bringing dirt in the safety areas on each end of the runway. Mr. Mathews will provide one of our tenants the opportunity to be the first pilot to fly on 2-20 once it reopens. The redesigning and rebidding of the Taxiway Alpha project are moving forward. Some borings and drone work were done to survey the project area. Only one boring found rock. Phase one of the fencing project is in the approval process at ACC. The new Control Tower siting is under consideration. The FAA requests two acres for the new tower and it will be hard to provide that much space on the Northside of the airport. Mr. Mathews met with the FAA committee this morning and believes that they will be able to build the new tower with just one acre of land. Dr. Napier asked if the micropark will be disturbed by the project. Mr. Mathew said that it would not.
  - c) **Marketing & Outreach:** Mr. Mathews reported that we had some school groups visit the airport. Mr. Welter and Becca Shoppy, one of AHN's Operations staff, provided the tour to three different groups over a couple of days this month.
- 4) **Old Business**
  - a) Dr. Napier reported that she was not expecting major updates from the Lexington Highway corridor.
- 5) **New Business**
  - a) None

**6) Standing Committees: Issues & Updates**

- a) Business/Finance: Mr. Sanders reported that we will review the strategic plan at the next meeting. Mr. Welter said that the strategic plan was updated and in synch in Clearpoint with help from Andy Minish with ACC Geospatial Information Office (GIO).
- b) Operating: Mr. Asman had no report.
- c) Air Service Development/Marketing: Dr. Napier said that Mr. Mathews has sent an update to the Air Services Development group. Mr. Mathews said that he continues to have conversations with airlines but that the pilot shortage continues to hamper our efforts. Dr. Napier said that it is time to start looking down the road and will call a meeting of the group to begin to determine what we will do. Mr. Mathews said that plans were in place before COVID but those were disrupted unfortunately. He said pandemic is over and we need to bring in the community to the airport. Mr. Mathews said a career day would be good and Dr. Napier said that we also need to continue to look at trails around the airport. Mr. Mathews wants to have Doug Blissit, our consultant with Mead and Hunt, make a presentation to the Authority and to the Air Services Development group about the new research that Mead and Hunt has found. Some discussion occurred about the pilot shortage and that it takes about a year to bring a new qualified pilot into the system. Staffing is tight across the entire aviation industry.

**7) Other Business:**

- a) ACC Fireworks Event (July 1 at AHN) Mr. Mathews said that set up will begin to occur on Wednesday and the event is on Saturday. Fireworks will begin around 9 pm. This is a different group than last year and the new group does the fireworks for the Braves games. No public will be allowed on airport property grounds except for based tenants. The main runway will be shut down beginning at 8:15 pm on Saturday and open back up at 2:00 am on Sunday.
- b) The **next meeting will be held on July 25, 2023, 3-5 p.m.**, in the conference room in the Flight Center Building. Mr. Sanders moved and Mr. Asman seconded that the Authority meeting be adjourned and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

**8) Adjourn: 3:58 PM**

**Minutes Approved, DATE:**

**Jeff Benjamin, Authority Vice-Chair**

**Davin Welter** \_\_\_\_\_