

M I N U T E S
AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
May 9, 2023

The Airport Advisory Commission of the City of Farmington met on Tuesday, May 9, 2023 at 4:00 p.m., in the Executive Conference Room at 800 Municipal Drive, Farmington, NM.

Members Present: Mark Gordon
Via Telephone, Morey Havens
Richard Roderick, Chairman
Jonathan Rudolf

Members Absent: Bill Foutz, Alternate
Wayne Mangum, Pro Tem

Staff Present: Jody Carman, Airport Admin Aid
Mike Lewis, Airport Manager
Warren Unsicker, Economic Development Director

Others Present: Felicia Bekis, Atlantic Aviation
Jimmie Curley, Atlantic Aviation
Bruce Henry, Tenant

Call to Order

The Airport Advisory Commission (AAC) regular meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Richard Roderick, there being a quorum present, the following proceedings were duly had and taken.

Approval of the May 9, 2023 Agenda

Chairman Richard Roderick asked for a motion to approve the agenda for May 9, 2023. A motion was made by Commissioner Jonathan Rudolf, and seconded by Commissioner Mark Gordon to approve the agenda for May 9, 2023 and passed by a vote of 4-0.

Approval of the Minutes from the April 11, 2023 Regular Meeting of the AAC

Chairman Richard Roderick asked for a motion to approve the minutes from April 11, 2023. A motion was made by Commissioner Mark Gordon, and seconded by Commissioner Jonathan Rudolf to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2023 regular meeting of the AAC, and passed by a vote of 4-0.

Operations Report

Airport Manager Mike Lewis presented the statistics as they appear in the agenda. There were short discussions regarding each item. Commissioner Morey Havens asked to make a general comment. He felt the comparison charts included in the agenda might be better displayed with Year-To-Date columns inserted, bar graphs in lieu of line charts, and generally re-crafted to be clearer. Commissioner Havens gave a few yearly percentage examples and Airport Administrative Aide Jody Carman said she would rework the charts. Chairman Richard Roderick agreed and thanked Commissioner Morey Havens for the suggestion.

Northside Airport Property Update

Airport Manager Mike Lewis introduced Economic Development Director, Warren Unsicker to present current findings and the progress of the Airport Northside property acquisition. Director Unsicker explained the primary issue is the land is actually belongs to San Juan County and not the City of Farmington. Director Unsicker noted he was working with Deputy City Attorney Russell Frost to look into transferring that property from the county to city via possible annexation. There was discussion about options and alternatives for the city to gain private access through the property.

Director Warren Unsicker presented general statistics regarding speculative building, city annexation, value of the property, and lack of access. Director Warren Unsicker and Deputy City Attorney Russell Frost have been attempting to reach out to the owner regarding sales of that property. There has been no direct contact or negotiations to date as to where that stands.

Manager Lewis inquired as to whether the issue of transferring county property to city property should be resolved before the owner is contacted regarding sale of that property. Director Unsicker noted evaluation of both paths might see the way to the future. There was a short discussion regarding available Federal grants for development of municipality type infrastructure. The discussion progressed to whether a plan for development should be executed before development of any infrastructure might start. The question of should development of infrastructure progress without a development plan. It was noted by Director Unsicker, a development plan would make negotiations for sale of the property much easier. Chairman Roderick inquired about whose cost and responsibility would it be for infrastructure development. Director Unsicker explained there were options such as Elite Infrastructure funds could come from the state, but may be contingent on what is agreed up by the property owner.

It was noted the property owner has not been responding to any city inquiries. There was a short discussion regarding pursuit of this project. It is everyone's hope this endeavor might move forward. It was also noted the owner was reluctant, when he was approached in the past, to allow the current temporary road access.

Additional Operations Information

Airport Manager Mike Lewis thanked Economic Development Director Warren Unsicker for the presentation and his time. Manager Lewis then moved on to report about the additional operational items not listed in the agenda.

- 1) We have no real updates on meetings with SkyWest. We have met with Jim Dumont from Senator Heinrich's office, who has been communicating directly with SkyWest.
- 2) Last Thursday, May 4th, Mayor Duckett and Manager Mike Lewis met with Brian Lee and Sofia Bock, two members of Senator Lujan's staff. Ms. Bock deals with aviation issues and is located in the Washington, D.C. office. She indicated a number of western US senators are trying to resurrect and create a more robust Essential Air Service (EAS) system. In order to qualify for EAS monies, when the program was active, an airport was required to lose all carriers and then could apply to the program. If accepted, the airport could then produce an RFP to attract carriers to operate under the federal subsidy. There have been no new subsidies awarded in over 20 years as the program rules changed that long ago. Since Farmington has enjoyed continuous service from at least one carrier since 1947, it never has qualified for the subsidy when they were being actively awarded.
- 3) Runway 5-23 reopened Tuesday, May 9th, as the project is complete.
- 4) San Juan Rotary will be doing a Fly-in Drive-in event on Sept 23, 2023. So far we have secured the C-47 to be in town Thursday the 21st through Sunday the 24th for static display, tours, and rides. We'll probably start marketing that full event in August. With the B-17 event three years ago, most seat sales were booked last minute. We are thrilled to host the C-47 and crew, and they seemed very happy to be involved. Commissioner Gordon inquired if we could host the Blue Angels for this event. Manager Lewis explained their aircrafts require longer runways than we have, a larger market base, larger town population, and need to be booked a few years out. The Blue Angels are primarily a recruiting tool.
- 5) Manager Lewis is waiting for the grant offer from the State of NM to pay for the relocation of the three portable hangars located in the footprint of the proposed hangar to be built by Kevin Coleman. Leases expire the end of June. Deputy City Attorney Russell Frost will write the letter. The new location will be further down on the west end.
- 6) On Saturday, May 13th there will be a Fly-in at Animas Airpark, 0800. Pancake breakfast starts at that time, donations will be appreciated. Flour bombing, STOL Competition, Spot Landings, and more will be part of the activities. Manager Mike Lewis said he expects some of you to go up there and bring back some competition wins.

There were no questions.

Business from the Chairman:

Chairman Richard Roderick noted since there was no change in SkyWest situation, he asked if there weren't other alternatives discussed in the past. Manager Mike Lewis responded there are really no other carriers that are positioned to provide service. There was a short discussion regarding flights per week, Part 135, pilot hours, TSA, and lack of interline service.

Chairman Roderick inquired if there was any information Manager Lewis would like to present from the meeting with Senator Lujan's Office. Manager Lewis had passed out to commission members, an information sheet regarding talking points crafted specifically for that meeting. Manager Lewis highlighted a few specific items on the list and spoke about a few of the pertinent topics, but otherwise noted the handout was for AAC members to read at their leisure.

Chairman Richard Roderick said he had no more business, questions, or comments at this time.

Business from the Members:

Chairman Richard Roderick asked if there were any questions from commission members. Commissioner Morey Havens added he is encouraged by Roadrunner Flight School business. He noted the new owner is serious to succeed. Manager Lewis responded we are always in the market to help out where we can. Chairman Roderick added they have a well written flight school outline and are turning out a good amount of students.

Commissioner Rudolf asked about upcoming construction projects. Manager Lewis explained the next project was rehabilitation of the terminal apron. The design phase would be completed this fiscal year, and in the next fiscal year, construction would be completed. Manager Lewis added the FAA has set aside twelve (12) and a half million to execute airport projects.

Commissioner Jonathan Rudolf asked if Tower Chief Steve Turner had retired. Manager Mike Lewis explained it looked like Tower Chief Steve Turner might stay a little longer due to some staff changes.

Commissioner Havens spoke about a few landing experiences he had while dealing with the current tower staff. He noted Tower Chief Turner will be missed.

There were no more questions or comments.

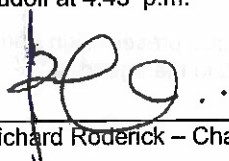
Business from the Staff:

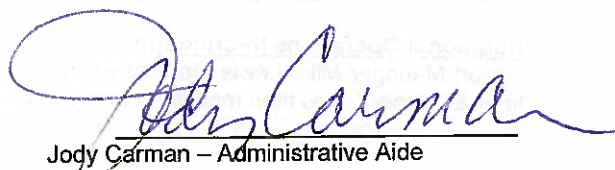
Chairman Richard Roderick asked if there were any questions from staff. There were no questions or comments.

Business from the Floor:

Chairman Richard Roderick asked if anyone from the floor had questions or comments. There were no questions or comments.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the May 9, 2023 meeting was adjourned by Chairman Richard Roderick, the motion was made by Commissioner Mark Gordon and seconded by Commissioner Jonathan Rudolf at 4:43 p.m.


Richard Roderick – Chairman


Jody Carman – Administrative Aide