

**Winter Haven Regional Airport (KGIF)  
Airport Advisory Committee  
September 9, 2021**

**Airport Advisory Committee Meeting called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Bruce Lyon, Chairman**

**Roll call** conducted by Alex Vacha, Airport Manager

**In Attendance:** Bruce Lyon, Chairman (via Zoom); Eddie McGuire, Vice Chairman; Katie Worthington Decker (via Zoom); Jeff Donalson; Alan Anderson, Alternate Member; Alex Vacha, Airport Director; Eric Labbe, Department of Economic Opportunity & Community Investment Director (arrived at 3:03 p.m.); J.P. Powell, City Commissioner/Airport Liaison (via Zoom); Eric Crump, Polk State College Liaison (arrived at 3:06 p.m. via Zoom)

**Absent:** Ben Shipps;

**Approval of AAC Meeting Minutes** by Chairman Lyon

- a. Motion was made by Vice Chairman McGuire to approve the AAC Meeting Minutes from August 12, 2021. Jeff Donalson seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**Old Business (Alex Vacha):**

- a. FDOT Inspection – Obstructions (Trees) identified on Runway 5 approach end
  - i. Obstruction removal project – Cropland Services – August, 2021
  - ii. FDOT funds are being requested to remove the obstructions that are located inside of the wetland area
  - iii. Brandon Hiers of AVCON, Inc. has been working with the City to address the non-wetland obstructions
    - i. The trees in the homeowner’s backyard on 21<sup>st</sup> Street have been removed by Cropland Services
    - ii. A large pine tree was taken down by the end of Runway 11
    - iii. Three obstructions near Runway 5 have not been addressed yet

**New Business (Alex Vacha):**

- a. The City received a request for an airport policy change regarding the sale of a based aircraft to a new owner who would like to take possession of the existing T-Hangar. Mr. Vacha stated the pros and cons of this request and also shared research received from visiting with a representative of the FAA, the Lakeland Linder Airport, the Bartow Airport and Hanson Professional Services. The majority of the individuals interviewed felt that it would be in the best interest of the airport to refrain from allowing a new aircraft owner to take possession of the former tenant’s T-Hangar, out of respect for the many people who have been waiting a long time on the T-Hangar waiting list. The industry standard dictates that the vast majority of airports defer to the T-Hangar waiting list instead of allowing the new aircraft owner to take possession of the former owner’s T-Hangar. Discussion ensued amongst the AAC members and all four members in attendance, including the alternate member, expressed that they support giving the T-Hangar to the next person on the waiting list when a current tenant’s aircraft is sold to a new owner.
- b. The Winter Haven Regional Airport has created an Airport User Group Safety Meeting, which is scheduled to meet once a quarter. The first meeting was held this morning. Robert Jex is the Orlando FAA Team Program Manager and was instrumental in introducing the idea of this type of meeting to Mr. Vacha. This airport user safety group has been created with the goal of improving safety at the Winter Haven airport. Our plan is to regularly invite all airport users to come together and discuss aviation safety matters with the objective of developing and maintaining a safer flying environment.
- c. Taxiway C Extension and Taxiway B Rehabilitation (Design) projects closed with FAA & FDOT; we are awaiting funding from FDOT for both.
- d. Hangar #95 Advertised for lease – 3,600 sq./ft. with an office and bathroom. Deadline to submit letters of intent: September 10, 2021.

## **Airport Project Updates (Alex Vacha)**

- a. FBO Update (Alex Vacha)
  - i. The FBO has remained extremely busy
  - ii. AvGas sales through the end of August have exceeded our record setting year from the past
  - iii. Jet traffic is increasing
- b. Airport Security Improvements
  - i. ITB-21-31 Re-Bid – Security Improvements – Posted July 23, 2021 (Deadline September 15, 2021); There are possibly 3 bids coming
  - ii. Pre-bid meeting occurred at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 11, 2021
  - iii. FDOT construction phase funding expected September, 2021
- c. Taxiway B Rehabilitation, Lighting & Signage (Construction)
  - i. FAA grant offer received - \$3,544,038 – This represents 100% of the construction costs
  - ii. Requesting acceptance of the FAA grant at the September 14, 2021 City Commission Meeting; We received the grant, which will cover 100% of the project
  - iii. Requesting approval for task orders at the October 11, 2021 City Commission Meeting for Hanson Professional Services and AVCON to supply construction related services
  - iv. Ajax Paving Industries of Florida expected to begin construction in November, 2021
- d. Business, Marketing, and Management Program Development – Hanson Professional Services, Inc. & Clark/Nikdel/Powell, Inc. (CNP Agency)
  - i. Initial review of draft administrative documents received August 27, 2021 is underway. Airport Advisory Committee and public comment will be requested in the coming months/
    - T-Hangar Rental Agreement
    - Minimum Insurance Requirements
    - Rules and Regulations
    - Rates and Charges Policy
  - ii. Marketing plan development anticipated to begin September/October, 2021

## **Public Comments:**

- a. Citizen David Lane shared the following comments:
  - i. Mr. Lane was happy to hear about the safety group; he suggested we could possibly ask some of the meeting attendees to assist in forming a hurricane plan
  - ii. The signage at the entrance to the airport off 21<sup>st</sup> Street could use some updating; Mr. Vacha stated we are looking into options to help the south side businesses advertise their business with signage near 21<sup>st</sup> Street; Nothing has been decided yet
  - iii. Mr. Lane expressed his approval for the flyer that was created to advertise the availability of Hangar #95
  - iv. Mr. Lane inquired if we do any national marketing; Mr. Vacha stated Hanson Professional Services is working on a broad marketing plan

## **Committee Member Comments:**

- a. Vice Chairman McGuire thanked Mr. Vacha for allowing him to be involved with the land lease
- b. Jeff Donalson asked Mr. Vacha to clarify what he meant when he said we are looking for businesses that benefit the airport when we select someone to lease a corporate hangar; Mr. Vacha stated they must be businesses that meet our Minimum Operating Standards for aeronautical use, such as an aircraft charter company, an aircraft maintenance company, medical flights, flight schools, etc. Mr. Donalson also mentioned that he would be interested in seeing the final site plan for the land lease development when a final decision has been made as to the number and sizes of the hangars to be built
- c. Chairman Lyon shared the following information:
  - i. Katie Worthington Decker had to leave the meeting early; however, she asked Chairman Lyon to mention that this coming Monday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, the Chamber of Commerce will be releasing a pod cast featuring an interview with Ben Shipps, President of Brown's Seaplane Base; Look for Happenin' in the Haven Episode #70

- ii. Thank you to everyone for their engagement today in the many topics addressed
- d. Commissioner Powell thanked the committee for their input on the T-Hangar lease situation; it will make it easier for him to support the committee's decision when this topic comes before the City Commission; Commissioner Powell thanked the airport staff for the information presented each month and for welcoming the airport customers cheerfully

**Next Meeting Date and Time:**

- a. The next regularly scheduled AAC meeting will be **Thursday, October 14, 2021** at 3:00 p.m. in the Jack Brown Conference Room.
- a. Mr. Vacha stated the November meeting falls on Veteran's Day, which is a City holiday; he requested that the AAC meeting be changed to Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. Motion was made by Jeff Donalson to change the November meeting to Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. Vice Chairman McGuire seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Adjourn – Chairman Lyon

Meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jana Wasmund.