



DALTON AIRPORT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 17, 2023
3:00 PM
DALTON CITY HALL

Welcome and Call to Order:

Chairman Morgan called the meeting to order at 3:10 PM. A quorum was present.

Present were: Dany Morgan, Benny Dunn, Chester Clark, Earl Boyd, Gary Crews, Andrew Wiersma, Annalee Sams, Cindy Jackson, Andrew Parker, and Kimberley Witherow.

Approval of Agenda:

On motion by Benny Dunn, second by Annalee Sams, the agenda was amended to add the re-appointment of Earl Boyd for another 5-year term to the Authority. All were in favor. This appointment recommendation will go to the City Council.

Public Commentary:

Chairman Morgan opened the floor for public comments regarding the proposed hangar rent increase. The following individuals made statements.

Tony Armour, 2060 Eagle Point Drive, Whitfield County, stated he was angry tenants were not notified of the rent increase until Christmas and asked that the \$100 increase be put on hold to allow time to come up with a better solution.

Bob Fisher, 1304 Valencia Way, City of Dalton, stated he feels railroaded and the rate increase is short-sighted. He would like a meeting to sit down and discuss other options.

Brian Mathis, 2158 Beavertdale Road, Whitfield County, stated ad-valorem taxes hurt Georgia compared to Tennessee and believes it would help to put a plan together to increase tax revenue long-term.

Dr. Anabelle McKie Voerste (Aviation Professor Dalton State College), 906 Terrace Court, Murray County, stated the airport could do without an FBO and the only thing needed at the airport is a plane, fuel, hangar and a runway. There are no advantages to having all the other stuff. The attraction of Dalton for her was the low cost of living. The hangar prices are not competitive and please look at other solutions. Her husband stated this will be a big hit to their salary and there are a lot of other options to look at on the table. He said tenants should not be subsidizing the airport for the city.

Dr. Phillip Parham (Dentist), 309 Point North Place Dalton, asked if the \$100 rent increase is final and would like assurance that this is not going to occur on an annual basis. Chairman Morgan stated the Authority voted for the rent increase and they are waiting on City Council approval. Dr. Parham asked what purpose does the Airport Authority serve to the City Council? Chairman Morgan explained the structure of the Authority and that they serve at the pleasure of the City Council. He also explained the funding by City, State and Federal governments. He encouraged all to attend Airport Authority meetings.

Joseph Farmer, 1853 Trickum Road, Whitfield County, stated due to the economic benefit of the airport he feels the city should cover the gap funding and not the tenants. The tenants should not bridge the gap since the City, Whitfield County and Murray County reap the benefits. The tenants are providing most of the revenue by hangars and ad-valorem taxes.

Chairman Morgan reported state and federal do not cover hangar funding and hangars are funded 100% by the city. There is currently a long waiting list for hangars.

Chester Clark thanked everyone for commenting today and encouraged all to be present for the City Council meeting at 6pm tonight.

Council member liaison Annalee Sams inquired what is the ask from all attending of the city council? Tony Armour said to have 2-3 months before the increase to discuss other options. Brian Mathis stated to not have the additional increase only the CPI. He stated the increase is not a long-term solution, only a temporary patch, and the City Council needs a long-term plan and goals for the airport. Council member Sams stated contrary to what people have heard or reported, the mayor loves the airport and people coming to Dalton. The City Council doesn't think negatively about the airport.

Joseph Farmer stated to roll-back the \$100 increase, it shouldn't be put on the backs of the current tenants to build new hangars.

Chairman Morgan stated the CPI increase is included in most all rental contracts. The airport has two sources of revenue which are fuel and hangars. Tenants stated they are fine with the CPI increase, just not the additional \$100 and asked to delay this until at least April 1st. Chairman Morgan stated all comments made today will be taken under advisement.

Minutes:

On motion by Benny Dunn, second by Chester Clark, the November 15, 2022 minutes were approved. All were in favor.

Financial Reports:

Cindy Jackson presented the financial reports thru November 30, 2022. The report is a part of these minutes.

Current Projects Update:

Andrew Wiersma reported on the following projects:

- Ramp Rehab Phase 2 Bids Received and waiting for GDOT contract for NWGA Paving.
 - C.W. Matthews \$2,181,047
 - N.W. GA Paving \$1,518,057.20
- 60'x60' Hangar Area is 90% Complete. Thrive to reduce Invoice by \$5300. We will reduce Steve Herndon Fire Hydrant invoice by \$5300. Look at addressing new parking area for north hangar tenants. Andrew Parker asked Andrew Wiersma to draft a MOU for memorializing details for Herndon invoice of \$11,865 and showing the \$5,300 reduction. On motion by Chester Clark, second by Earl Boyd, all were in favor of the MOU.

Current Projects Update Continued:

- Terminal Building Funding Application - CatEx, Scope and Fee Estimates and 1st Floorplan Submitted 12/6/22, Floorplan Revision Submitted 12/12/22. FAA will announce awards in March. If approved, out for bids June '23.
- Obstruction Removal Scope and Fee Submitted to GDOT 12/13/22 and waiting for GDOT review
- Hangars - Resolution by the M&C submitted to Rep. Casey Carpenter and Senator Chuck Payne for the 2023 Legislative Session Underway

Report on Operations:

Andrew presented the report on operations as well as the fuel sales charts. The report is part of these minutes. Andrew reported a fantastic year for fuel sales with highest year overall for gallons sold. He stated the Governor reinstated the fuel tax on 1/10/23 for avgas.

Georgia Airports Association Update:

Andrew presented the following report.

- Met with Sen. Warnock's Office
- Attended Eggs and Issues
- Meeting with Legislators during Session
- 2023 Legislative Agenda
- Airport Zoning Ordinance
- Airport Aid Budget Increase
- Airport Study Committee Recommendations

Chairman's Update:

Chairman Morgan stated for those who might not know, Andrew Wiersma is the Chairman of the Georgia Airports Association, which is a great honor for our area. He also stated the Authority will continue to work hard for the city and the airport and thanked all for attending the meeting today.

Announcements:

The next Airport Authority Meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2023 at the airport.

Adjournment:

There being no other business, the Airport Authority meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Signed:

Kimberley Witherow, Airport Secretary