

# Aspen/Pitkin County Airport Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes April 21, 2022

I. Call Meeting to Order: 3:00PM

II. Roll Call:

In Person: Meg Haynes, Jacque Francis (joined late), Howie Mallory, Rick Heede, Valerie Braun, Rich Engelhart, John Ely, and Dan Bartholomew

Virtual: Bruce Gordon, Auden Schendler, Mike Solondz, and Sara Ott

Not in attendance: Richard Burkley, Clint Kinney, and Catherine Christoff

Gallery: Ellen Anderson, Jonathan Jones, and Heath Hildebrandt

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes: Minutes approved from 3/17

IV. Board Comments:

-Howie stated that he wants to put Amory Lovins report on the table for discussion but Meg said that all had received but not all had had time to read it completely.

-Rich agreed and said that we should set up a time with the direction of the BoCC.

-Howie asked if we could put it on the Agenda for next month and Rich agreed and suggested we invite him to come to the next meeting. Dan replied that the ALP Consultants will be here next month and time will be very limited.

-Valerie stated that most were not aware of the changes to the FAA Advisory Circular. Dan said that there was an update to the design guidance but it did not change design requirements.

-Rick added that he would like to address the airport design specifically as it applies to the Lumber Yard.

V. Public Comments: None

VI. Old Business:

a. A copy of the ALP is in the room and if anyone can stop by the office anytime as this is a public document. Dan stated that he would bring it to all future meetings.

b. Meg offered another reminder to please attend in person if possible.

Comments/Questions:

-Howie asked if a charter with 30 plus passengers could be included in the commercial data. Dan replied yes but the numbers would have to be reported and GA is not required. The numbers would not always be accurate, as not all data would be reported.

-Howie asked if the airport could require them give us the data and Dan said no we could not as it is not a Federal requirement - all we can do is ask. Howie asked if we could withhold gas for the information and Dan replied that we could not.

-Bruce wonders why we can't get numbers from the big Learjet he sees two or three times a week, using the facilities and hangers, parking by Gate 7 with up to 20 people and a lot of bags. Dan said he is assuming it is Aero and he will look into it.

-Howie asked when they file a flight plan do they indicate the number of passengers.

Dan answered not always. Like GA they have a manifest but they don't have to report it.

-Tyson Weihs, from the virtual gallery said that his group is the largest filers of flight plans to the FAA and every plan does typically have the number of passengers but it is not made public.

VII. New Business:

a. FBO Guidelines: John Ely

-When the County enters into a contract, it must go through a procurement process in order to comply with state law and to afford as many companies the opportunity to present a plan that meets the County's wants/needs. It also allows the County to get the best deal on goods and services. There will be much interest locally and nationally for our FBO lease as it is intensely lucrative. No single individual can decide who gets the contract or what the terms will be. The process has to be fair and open. If AAB Members are approached, you should not engage in dialog – take the name and contact info and pass it to Dan or Sandra – there is already a list of interested parties. We will advertise the Request for Proposal (RFP) and make sure all on the list are aware. A deadline for submission will be set and they will go to a selection committee comprised of several individuals with different backgrounds. They will be evaluated and graded and the firm/individual with the highest score will be contacted so contract negotiations can begin. If this is successful then the process is over, if not the committee will go to number two. No one from the AAB or the BoCC will be selected for this committee because of your position. What the community might want or expect to be included in the RFP will be something the AAB has input on. The bids are to some extent public documents but there are portions, such as trade info unique to a business or individual, which will not be public.

Question:

-Howie asked if the county has established a minimum performance criterion for an FBO operation. John replied there is a section in the County Code that forms the basis of what is expected but we can go beyond that if needed.

-Howie asked when it was last modified and Dan replied 2014. Howie suggested that since GA operations are 3 or 4 times those of commercial it might be appropriate for the AAB to look at the quality and standards because things have changed a lot.

-Valerie asked whom and how many would be on the committee. John replied that Dan would be on it for sure but he himself would help with legal issues only. There would be an odd number, maybe 7 ish, and that they may not necessarily be employees – some could be from consulting firms in the industry for their expertise.

-Valerie wondered how you make sure there is no conflict of interest. John said that we do the best we can but we do not normally have issues with that kind of problem.

-Rick wanted to know when the RFP process would begin – specifically the input that the AAB would be involved with. John answered that it will begin now. He suggested the AAB make sure they know what their rolls/functions are and to get familiar with the minimum standards and the expectations.

-Rick asked if the AAB will be able to read the RFP and Dan said not necessarily, as it is being drafted. John interjected that the AAB input will be on what goes into the RFP not the actual setup. The primary duty is to make sure that aspects of the operation are considered – what kind of service levels are expected.

-Howie added that community values and expectations include noise control and emissions reductions but John added that there are limitations to what we can require of an operation which is why the FAA wants to see it before it goes out. We cannot discriminate.

-Mike wondered if the AAB would be involved in the design, size of building, hanger space, etc. John replied yes.

b. FBO Presentation: Dan

**What is an FBO:** An entity granted the right to provide certain aeronautical services on an airport such as:

- Fueling
- Hangaring/Parking/Tie-Downs
- Aircraft Maintenance
- De-Icing (for private aircraft)
- Flight Instruction
- Etc..

**Fixed Based Operator History at ASE:**

- 1992 County issues an RFP for FBO services
- October 1993 ABO selected to provide FBO services. Term of 30 years expiring Sept 30, 2023
- October 2005 lease is transferred to Trajen Flight Support
- June 2006 Atlantic Aviation (current operator) acquired Trajen
- Lease will expire in Sept 2023 and the facilities will revert back to Pitkin County

-Besides the FBO there is also Specialized Fixed Base Operators that are subleases

- Weststar Aviation (aircraft maintenance)
- Mayo Aviation & Bubba Air (Charters)
- Aspen Aero (Flight Instruction & Aircraft Rentals)

-FBO is required to maintain, repair, and equip all facilities at own expense and pay their own utilities.

**FBO Current Facilities:**

- 6,00 Sqft General Aviation Passenger Terminal (No TSA requirements)
- Three aircraft hangers totaling 30,00 Sqft
- Fuel Farm
  - 100,000 Gallons JetA
  - 12,000 Gallons AvGas
- Vehicle Parking Areas
- Aircraft Apron
- Aircraft Tie-Downs and Patio Shelters (they manage on behalf of the county)

**FBO – Revenue Sources:**

- Fuel Flowage Fee - \$0.12/Gallon (Set by the BoCC annually)
  - Minimum Annual Guarantee (MAG) – Fuel flowage fee
  - Fuel Flowage Fee (excess over the MAG)
- Rent (Including Ground Lease)

- Monthly Patio Shelter Fees

**Title 10 Pitkin County Code – Airport Minimum Standards:** To establish “minimum” requirements an entity must meet when providing services and/or operating on a public use airport

-Purpose of Minimum Standards:

- Provides a safe operating environment (ex: Furl Handling)
- Ensures compliance with Federal and local regulations (ex: Night Curfew)
- Ensures compliance with Federal Grant Assurance obligations (ex: Non Discrimination and Exclusive Rights)

-Limits risk and liability and ensures adequate levels of services and expectations

**FBO Selection Process:**

1. Prepare and solicit Request for Proposals for the development and operation of FBO facilities at ASE. (Estimated June/July 2022)

-Tyson Weihs asked if the county knows the total fuel pumped by the FBO in 2021, (Dan replied yes) and he also let everyone know that the price of fuel at the FBO is \$9.70.

-Howie asked if we have adequate fuel storage capabilities. Dan replied yes for daily operations but if anything out of the ordinary happens, we do not. (Canyon closure, fires, etc...)

-Rick stated that he has an understanding that Atlantic provides sustainable aviation fuel and asked if it is kept separately. Dan answered that they do but it is a mixed percentage with the other fuel – not kept separately. There is a maximum percentage of 50% mixture allowed by the FAA. He also said there is a very limited supply of sustainable fuel – the demand is higher than the supply.

-Howie stated that if we had more efficient planes we would not need more fuel storage and Dan said that is true but we cannot force someone to have a more fuel-efficient plane – that is discriminating. We can only encourage.

-Howie asked if what about carbon emissions. Dan replied that there are no FAA controls for emissions except noise emissions and that is done by the age of the aircraft. Typically, they are classified by stages (1, 2, 3...) with dates set as to when they can no longer fly in the US.

-Rick stated that we cannot have a tighter standard than the national and Dan said that is correct as they are set by the FAA.

2. Response Period (Estimated 4-6 months)

3. Short List Interviews (Q1 2023)

4. Selection (Q1/Q2 2023)

5. Contracting (By September 2023)

**Post Selection:**

- Take over existing facility
- Redevelop facility within “X” years
- Operate and maintain for 30 years (Lease Term)

-Valerie asked if we are requesting they have a new building would they have to move out and start over. Will there be a time when there is not an FBO.

Dan said no - it will have to be done in phases to allow them to keep operating.

-Valerie also wondered if everything will be at the expense of the FBO tenant and Dan answered absolutely everything.

-Tyson Weihs asked if the county had ever considered running the FBO. Dan replied that they had but the concern is the expense of developing the facility while also building a new terminal and doing a major runway rehab. In addition, the business model of an FBO is not something we do at the airport – there is a unique clientele in Aspen.

-Dan explained that offering a 30-year lease is important because there will be a significant amount of capitol going into this project and the leaseholder will need that amount of time to see a return on their investment. The FAA has a max on leases of 40 years.

-Rich added that we would make sure being able to revisit terms over the 30 years would be in the RFP.

-Howie asked if we will be able to evaluate performance and Dan replied we would but not everything will be public record. We are not privy to what they charge internally.

-Rick asked if the County will review and adjust rents and fuel flowage and Dan answered that all will be reevaluated.

***Relationship to the Common Ground Recommendations:***

1. Maximize the safety of our airport (Does not apply)
2. Maximize the sustainability of our new airport
  - Carbon neutral/free facility and optimize renewable energy and storage
  - SAF , reduce overall use of leaded fuel and pursue other fuel options as they become available

-Mike asked if we are allowed to increase the flowage fee to offset the cost of putting in a solar component or any other sustainable feature. Dan replied the FAA has not ruled on whether aeronautical revenue can be used for non-aeronautical purposes, as it would go against grant assurances. We would need specific approval from the FAA.

- Noise
  - Maintain and strictly enforce the curfew
  - Electrify the airfield
  - Use landscaping to enhance the visual appearance of noise berms & walls

-Valerie – Can we increase pressure on GA as far as noise is concerned other than a letter. Dan replied that we could not force anyone to anything more than the minimum standards set by the FAA. We do have the Fly Quiet Program that we will introduce to this board. It is meant to incentivize operators and pilots to fly in a more quiet fashion. We will bring in our consultants to give an overview, answer questions, and discuss alternative places to install more devices.

-Rick asked about the status of electric aircraft and Dan relied that we do not have the infrastructure to allow planes to plug in – we do not have enough amps.

-Howie asked who owns the commercial ground equipment. Dan replied that the airlines (SkyWest) owns their own equipment.

3. Seamless ground connectivity
4. Improving airline service reliability (Does not apply)
5. Non Airline reserved parking (ramp space)
  - Move large GA & Air Taxi to the north end away from noise sensitive areas
  - Provide electrical and tempered air hookups at each parking space
  - Implement ICAO spacing standards
  - Reduce drop and go's
    - Rick asked if Atlantic keeps track of drop-and-go's. Jonathan replied that they do not have a drop and go log but they do keep track of number of operations.
6. FBO reflects community values
  - Striving towards carbon neutral/free emissions
  - GA Terminal to convey community character, values and culture
    - Valerie stated during the ASE Vision it was discussed that we need to be careful about using off setting as a way to achieve net neutral – that just puts our crap in someone else's yard. If we want it, we have to own it. Dan added that would be a good point to bring up with the consultants when they come out – how does the offset program work globally.
    - Rick and Jacque stated they would like to submit some questions to the consultants, as they are international experts.
7. Build New Terminal
  - Promotion of health and environmental ethics – best practice/values including recycling
    - Meg asked how will these be included in the RFP and will they be given the Common Ground Recommendations as a reference. Dan answered that they would be used as a reference and the RFP would need to ask questions like how they would use recycling programs, or how would they electrify the airport.
8. Enhance the traveler and staff experience
  - Architecture both memorable and outstanding that reflects our unique history and vision for the future
    - Valerie stated that the two terminals should complement each other (FBO and commercial terminal)
9. Open Air Jetways (Does not apply)
10. Provide and design 6 to 8 gates with comfortable waiting spaces (Does not apply)
11. Flexible gates (Does not apply)
12. Replace the current ADGIII ALP with improved ADGIII ALP that accommodates aircraft that meet community goals
  - Negotiate with the airlines & the FAA to achieve agreements with the County that ASE will be served by aircraft with the following characteristics
    - GHG and other emissions that are significantly less than CRJ700
    - Quieter than CRJ700

- Weight limit of 140,000 MTOW
  - Retain and strengthen the voluntary noise restrictions
  - Separate the runway from the taxiway by 400' between centerlines
  - Widen the runway to 150'
- 13. Leave the runway where it is
  - Requires future relocation of tower
  - GA parking on the west side will be required to maintain the same number of GA/Air Taxi parking spaces
- 14. Construction Phasing
  - Minimize community disruptions while considering terminal, airside, and landside improvements
- 15. Common Ground Recommendations Map: There are things on this map that have a lot to do with the new FBO. If we shift the runway and take up some of their real estate, where do we give them in-kind space?
  - Rick asked if it is at our discretion to offer more ramp space. Dan replied that it is but we have to be very transparent about it.
  - Howie – We have a fixed amount of acreage, with the present size of the FBO 6,000 Sqft and the airplanes getting bigger, does not that automatically create more pressure. You may not have the same amount of parking spaces – do we have an obligation to provide what we have today -- or even more. Dan replied there is not an obligation but we have to offer them enough space that they can operate.
  - Rick asked if there has been a safety analysis on having parking spaces across from the FBO and Dan answered, it would be an FAA safety process that will be evaluated during the ALP.

**Questions:**

- Valerie asked if there has been an update on the efficacy of the E75. Dan replied that there has not been any additional information.
- Valerie also asked if the airport is still planning to make parking spaces for the in the new ALP and Dan answered yes. (4 spaces)
- c. Airport Hot Topics
  - Mask Mandate Rescinded
    - Rick asked if the County can enforce the wearing of masks in their buildings and Dan replied yes, but not on the airplanes
  - Commercial versus GA Aircraft Avionics and weather minimums.
    - Howie asked if CRJs could be up graded.
      - A avionics tend to be newer
      - Some airline approaches can get lower than FAA procedures
      - Airlines are not going to invest in significant upgrades to older aircraft.
    - Howie asked if they did make the upgrades how many more flight would get in & out and Dan answered, there is no way to know it depends on weather.

-Howie asked how do we know the GA pilots are qualified to use the avionics. Dan responded that the airport has no control over that – only the FAA.

-Bruce added the FAA is designing the standards & minimums. This terrain is going to limit those minimums which sounds like if you get a new aircraft you can get in all the time – this is not true.

-Dan also added that you could hire a consultant to design an approach for you that will maximize those avionics and get FAA approval.

-Bruce stated that all of this requires special training and Dan agreed.

- Passenger Enplanement Numbers
  - YTD 248436
  - 2019 246334
  - Trending up 9% (more passengers on planes)

VIII. Next Meeting May 19 - Meeting Adjourned 5:00pm