

DeKalb County Airport Advisory Board (AAB) Minutes

The DeKalb County Airport Advisory Board met on Monday, November 8th, 2021 at 5:30 PM via Zoom Video Conference call.

Members Present: Larry Scheinpflug (AAB Chair), Christopher Richard (AAB Vice Chair), Kevin Fowler, Reuben Jones, Mike Reeves, Doug Miller and Eugene Henry

Members Absent: Dan Zanger

Others Present: Airport Director Mario Evans, Deputy Airport Director Hunter Hines, and Noise and Environmental Analyst Korey Barnes

The meeting was called to order at 5:40p.m. by AAB Chair, Larry Scheinpflug.

- I. Approval of Minutes: **Motion to approve the October 2021 minutes was made by Mike Reeves and seconded by Board Member Doug Miller. Motion passed.**
- II. Information/Old Business
 - A. **Airport Director's Report (Mario Evans):**
 1. Evans introduced the county IT Director, John Matelski who has been serving as Zoom Director. Mr. Matelski gave an overview of Zoom rules for this meeting.
 2. Atlanta Gas Light – Ms. Jodie Hart from AGL presented. AGL is in talks with the Airport about their regulator stations on the airport regarding concerns from community. Working to schedule another field exercise.
 3. Jim Duguay of Baker International updated on Master Plan. Submitted to GDOT, currently under review. Does not have a timeline yet on feedback from GDOT. Did submit a new aerospace obstruction survey as part of the Master Plan asking the FAA to return minimums to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. The FAA did change the Minimums from $\frac{7}{8}$ of a mile back to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile.
 4. Incident that happened on November 4th: small Cessna left PDK on way to Warner Robbins. Went down on North Decatur Road. Gentleman was by himself and walked away. This landing which was 6 miles south of the airport is under investigation by the FAA and the NTSB as to why he had to make an emergency landing.
 5. Piston Aircraft Maintenance at PDK: Request from several tenants on the airport to discuss. Maintenance of small piston aircraft at PDK. Board specifically received information about Bob Fullard who is doing maintenance within another tenant's T-hangar. AAB Chair Scheinpflug forwarded documentation to Board members prior to the meeting. Evans stated every tenant on the field that has a t-hanger or tie down can have any mechanic come to their space to work only on their aircraft. T-hangars and tiedowns are not meant to have mechanics running a business out of them maintaining other aircraft. Airport does not have insurance for this. Airport only has insurance for mobile mechanic. Airport Administration is asking that Bob Fullard rent a hangar. He has been asked to cease and desist conducting maintenance in another tenant's hangar.
 - AAB Chair Scheinpflug asked if there are any plans to build space that Bob can get into? Evans responded that the Master Plan has proposed some hangars to build for maintenance for small pistons. It would not be at the same cost as a t-hangar intended for aircraft storage. Bob is filling a void of what larger maintenance shops have left. There are other mechanics on the field as well. Airport Staff has put out an RFP for the vacant land on the west ramp for this build. The winner of the RFP was just presented at the BOC. The winner has four bays that he is looking to lease to mechanics. They are looking to break ground after the first of the year.
 - AAB Vice Chair Chris Richard followed up: 1. Is it permissible for others with a tiedown or hangar to do their own maintenance? Evans confirmed that a pilot can only work on their own aircraft assigned to that hangar or tiedown. 2. How did this topic get sparked? Evans answered that it was found out that Bob Fullard was doing business in the airport county T hangars. It is not allowed in the airport lease or ordinance.
 - Member of Public Mr. Jim Breen, public: pilot and lawyer. Bases his single engine piston plane at PDK. Says what we need is a community with the resources to enable them to fly safely and

effectively, i.e., an experienced piston mechanic. Mr. Breen spoke highly about Bob Fullard's experience. Suggests that Bob Fullard needs a designated space to perform his maintenance. Every lease is subordinate to the FAA requirements. Safety is #1. Going around on the ramp to conduct maintenance is not the safest way for Bob Fullard as an independent mechanic. If you run Bob off it's going to damage safety at PDK. What is the rate that single engine piston mechanics should be paying to the airport? We have to let Bob keep working until another viable solution is implemented. He requests that the Board not disrupt these mechanics until then. Evans answered: there was a proposal put on the table some time ago to allow Bob to continue what he is doing in the T hangars. Evans proposed a rate to Bob, Bob said it was too much (\$4 to \$5K a month). Airport is conducting a rate report to ascertain what other local airports are charging. Rates and charges have been reviewed by the FAA. Evans just following the letter of the law at this time.

- Evanthis Papastathis – owner of Skybound aviation. Does not believe that Bob and other companies should be able to do what they are doing. Skybound has been on the field since 2003, business started in 2016. They have their own maintenance department that take care of their 15 aircraft plus others. She pays a hefty price for hangar space in order to work legally. Not fair for the other two companies operating on the field to not do that. Suggests there are ways for Bob to work on the field, not sneaking planes into a hangar. Why is it fair for them and not fair for me?

- Mr. Gianoli: he has a maintenance facility working on the field. Gave examples of the perils of doing piston maintenance on the ramp. If there's not maintenance on the field to provide, pilots might try to fly off to go elsewhere for maintenance. It is not safe to do that work on the ramp.

- Mr. Elvis White: What do you do with all the planes that crash? Evans answered: they go to an aircraft recovery yard.

- Brent Messerschmidt: piston pilot with a hangar at PDK. Concurs 100% with what Mr. Breen said. Bob Fullard is an asset to the community. Most maintenance at PDK is geared toward turbine aircraft, this pays more to the owners of the facilities. Piston maintenance may bring less revenue, but it is important. Suggests that the only reasonable and timely option is for the county to work a deal with Bob Fullard. If Bob gets 'kicked', it is going to cause a serious problem at PDK.

- AAB Vice Chair Chris Richard wants to clarify: is there a mechanism where a mechanic can work out of a T-hangar and pay their fair share back to the airport, would that be an acceptable solution? Scheinpflug agrees that some type of fair arrangement should be worked out. Evans clarified that there is a large number of people on the T-hangar waiting list, they have to come first. Evans said he is discussing with legal department to see if something can be created for Bob to work. Scheinpflug stated that surveying people on a waiting list to see if they want to give up some hangars for maintenance, might not be in the best of safety.

- Chris Richard: This is a bigger issue than one mechanic. Being a single piston engine owner for a long time, he feels this is really about making the airport equitable for not just jet owners but piston owners.

- Evanthis Papastathis: Regarding the row 5, three T-hangars possibly for Bob: She also put in a bid on these hangars for her maintenance. She has been on the field for a while. Regarding safety, yes, all want to be safe. She has been working on engines on her ramp for years. Never had an issue with safety on maintenance whether on ramp or in a hangar. Has had mechanics not want to work in cold or wet weather however on the ramp.

- Mr. Breen: concurred with Chris Richard. This is going to take a team approach. Bob is not a flight school. He needs somebody like Bob, an independent piston mechanic. Appreciates the opportunity to participate in the resolution.

- Doug Miller: suggests a survey of the people who are using the t-hangars, single engine piston users. Get some analytical data from people on the field on how to address this issue. Evans agrees with this. Evans said he does a lot of work behind the scenes on this topic. He gets requests constantly to knock down the small T hangars so corporate jet facilities can be built. He pushes back against this. We will bring this issue back to the Board.

Noise and Environmental Analyst Report:

Scheinpflug suggested to table the October 2021 Noise Report until it was completed and reviewed during next month's meeting.

- Korey announced that in the second week of October, the noise monitoring data company had an issue with

storing information. They weren't able to upload flight tracking for PDK's operations. This affected over 50 airports. They are in the process of reloading this data. It takes 3x as long to reload this data. They should have it done by the end of the week. Some information is therefore missing from this report.

- Board member Doug Miller asked: Why are we getting more complaints during non-curfew times? Barnes answered: More people work from home. Doug also commented that complaints during curfew times have gone down. Evans added that there was a surge event when the Braves were in the World Series with flights leaving after midnight.

B. **Other:**

Scheinpflug added as suggested by Jaime Dutro: While BOC has Master Plan draft for review, he encourages all Board members to reach out to their county commissioners to see if they have any questions. Evans agrees with suggestion.

III. **New Business:**

Doug Miller brought up Cessna email regarding fuel. Scheinpflug suggested we table this until next month's call.

IV. **Public Comments:**

- Victorino: owns a sightseeing business on the field. Provided support to Bob Fullard. With respect to Minimums standard documents for PDK: How much commercial operator input is included in these decisions? Victorino would like to be included in weighing in on fees. Suggests using airports that are similar in makeup to PDK for comparable fees, as opposed to just nearby airports. Jim Duguay of Baker International responded: Yes, the tenants should be involved in reviewing any changes to minimums standards.

- Jamie Dutro: The Master Plan that is available on the website, especially for the ALP, Chapter 6, is very low resolution. Can a bigger file be posted so it is legible? Duguay said: Yes.

- Robert Patrick, county commissioner: Thanks for this meeting! Appreciates the civility in the meeting!

Motion to adjourn was made by Chris Richard and seconded by Doug Miller. Motion passed at 6:57 p.m.

Submitted by:

Lori Bell

Lori Bell (Secretary)

Approved as Submitted:

Larry Scheinpflug

Larry Scheinpflug (AAB Chair)