

Norwood Airport Commission
September 20, 2023
Meeting Minutes

APPROVED
10 / 19 / 2023

PRESENT

Mark Ryan, Chair
Michael Sheehan, Vice Chair
John Corcoran

Mark Raymond, Airport Manager

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM

Meeting being recorded by NCM, Norwood Record (Matt MacDonald), Boston Executive Helicopters (Christopher Donovan Jr.)

PROJECTS

AIP Project Update: DuBois & King

Mark Goodrich from DuBois & King provided updates on the ongoing projects on Taxiway C (soon to be Taxiway B), the airfield, and the parking lot. DuBois & King had a meeting discussing a future project to reconstruct Runway 1028, hoping to start the project at the beginning of October.

Mr. Ryan clarified with Mr. Goodrich on whether or not Runway 1028 would be closed for the duration of the reconstruction project. Mr. Goodrich stated that the runway would be closed. Mr. Corcoran wondered how many construction days the runway would be closed, which Mr. Goodrich stated would be 120. The goal was to complete the project by Thanksgiving. Mr. Goodrich stated if the contractor believed the project could not be completed by Thanksgiving, the project would be pushed back to Spring 2024, as they did not want to leave the airport without a runway for the winter.

Mr. Ryan and Mr. Raymond pointed out that the current Taxiway C project had required periodic closure of Runway 1028, and had not been used as much in the past few months.

NEW BUSINESS

AIP No. 3-25-0037-47-2022, FAA Payment Request No. 5, Reconstruction and Relocation of Taxiway C, \$937,775.92

Mr. Ryan stated 90% was paid by the FAA; 10% was paid by MassDOT, at no cost to the Town.

MOTION to pay Payment Voucher No. 5 made by Mr. Sheehan. Seconded by Mr. Corcoran.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Sheehan: **Yes**

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Mr. Corcoran: Yes

Mr. Ryan: Yes

Result: 3-0-0 (Approved)

AIP No. 3-25-0037-47-2022, FAA Payment Request No. 6, Reconstruction and Relocation of Taxiway C, \$2,501,060.78

Mr. Ryan stated 90% was paid by the FAA; 10% was paid by MassDOT, at no cost to the Town.

MOTION to pay Payment Voucher No. 6 made by Mr. Sheehan. Seconded by Mr. Corcoran.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Sheehan: Yes

Mr. Corcoran: Yes

Mr. Ryan: Yes

Result: 3-0-0 (Approved)

AIP No. 3-25-0037-048-2023, FAA Payment Request No. 1, Reconstruction of Runway 1028, \$166,097.37

Mr. Ryan stated 90% was paid by the FAA; 10% was paid by the Town of Norwood

MOTION to pay Payment Voucher No. 1 made by Mr. Sheehan. Seconded by Mr. Corcoran.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Sheehan: Yes

Mr. Corcoran: Yes

Mr. Ryan: Yes

Result: 3-0-0 (Approved)

MINUTES

MOTION to approve the minutes of the July 19, 2023 regular business meeting made by Mr. Corcoran. Seconded by Mr. Sheehan.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Sheehan: Yes

Mr. Corcoran: Yes

Mr. Ryan: Yes

Result: 3-0-0 (Approved)

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OLD BUSINESS

Aircraft overflights in the Winfield St./Rock St. neighborhood

Ms. Whiffin, 30 Winfield Street, stated that she counted 120 overflights on Sunday, September 17th, and 60 overflights on Monday. She wondered if flights over the neighborhood would continue until reconstruction of Runway 1028 began.

Mr. Ryan explained that use of the runways was dictated by the wind, and for safety reasons, pilots take off against the wind. He stressed the efforts of the airport to get pilots to abide by the noise abatement, but it was only a suggestion and not mandated. Mr. Ryan also stated that the Norwood Airport was a public use airport, and the stormy weather on Saturday, September 16th prevented pilots from flying, making Sunday and Monday busy days. Mr. Ryan also pointed out that numbers at the airport have dropped over the years, with Runway 1028 historically having 35% of use throughout the year. Mr. Corcoran added that Runway 1028 was only to be used during the day.

Ms. Folan, 74 Winfield Street, noted her correspondence with an FAA employee, and stated that she was told through email correspondence with the FAA employee that flight numbers were to be controlled by the airport.

Mr. Corcoran stated that the control factor was in regards to the noise abatement, which he stressed was only a suggestion. Ms. Folan wondered if Norwood had any control over the number of flights coming in and out of the airport. Mr. Corcoran stated that the airport was a public, 24/7 year-round operation, and as long as the airport was able to handle the aircraft, the Town could not control the amount of aircraft taking off and landing. In regards to a further question from Ms. Folan regarding airport volume, Mr. Corcoran added that controlling the volume would be controlling interstate commerce. He stressed that they could only suggest a noise abatement not to fly over certain neighborhoods.

Mina Makarious, airport counsel who was present at the meeting via speakerphone, confirmed the fact that airports of any size cannot control the number of flights coming in and out of the airport. He stated that since 1992, there had been an act of Congress permitting the FAA in some circumstances to allow flight rules on the local level, but in the 30 years the act had been in place, they had approved 0 local flight rules.

Mr. Ryan stressed again that the airport could not place any restrictions on the local level, but were doing their best to work with the neighbors and pilots.

Ms. Folan wondered if the airport was aware of where the high volume of flights was coming from. Mr. Ryan stated that a combination of construction shutting down the runway periodically, bad weather at the end of the week, and winds over Runway 1028 had led to the high volume of flights on Sunday and Monday. Ms. Folan wondered what exactly the flights were doing, whether they were flight schools or commerce. Mr. Raymond stated that they did not track exactly what the purpose of flights were. Mr. Corcoran explained exactly who controlled what factors of the airport, and ultimately the FAA controlled the airspace.

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Vincent Amato, 80 Oliver Street, stated that private jets were flying and landing right over his house. Mr. Corcoran explained that jets needed to come into a stabilized approach when landing, which required them to start miles out. He also stated that jets did not need to follow the noise abatement. Mr. Ryan added that many corporate aircraft land at the airport before Patriots games.

Mr. Costello, 152 Rock Street, wondered if the flight schools ran full days on Saturday and Sunday. Mr. Raymond stated that the flight schools ran seven days a week. Mr. Corcoran stressed that when there is a period of multiple rainy days, it was typical to have an uptick in volume over the following nice day. Mr. Costello added that he had noticed an uptick in flights over the Rock Street neighborhood. Mr. Ryan and Mr. Raymond agreed that Mr. Raymond would reach out to tenants again in regards to the noise abatement.

Ms. Folan expressed concern for the amount of flights taking off, and stated she believed it was unreasonable to have 120 overflights because of good weather. Mr. Corcoran pointed out that there was currently a pilot shortage, adding to the number of classes at flight schools. Mr. Ryan added that mostly all local airports were facing the same issues as Norwood. Ms. Folan wished to see a breakdown of exactly what the flights taking off and landing at the airport were doing. Mr. Ryan stated that Mr. Raymond would reach out to the control tower to see if they were able to gather that information.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from Mark Raymond, airport manager, to Christopher Donovan, Boston Executive Helicopters

Re: Airport regulation violations- August 3, 2023

Email from David Groh to Mark Raymond, airport manager, re: MassDOT Airport Economic Impact Study- August 15, 2023

Email from Denise Garcia, Assistant Director, MassDOT Aeronautics Division to David Groh re: MassDOT Airport Economic Impact Study- August 16, 2023

MOTION to place the correspondence on file made by Mr. Sheehan. Seconded by Mr. Corcoran.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Sheehan: Yes

Mr. Corcoran: Yes

Mr. Ryan: Yes

Result: 3-0-0 (Approved)

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Purpose 3 for executive session (M.G.L. c. 30A, §21 (a) (3)) - To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the Norwood Airport Commission: Boston Executive Helicopters, LLC v. Town of Norwood et al., U.S. District Court- Massachusetts Civil Action No. 1:15-cv-13647-RGS and state court litigation involving BEH and FlightLevel.

MOTION to enter executive session made by Mr. Sheehan. Seconded by Mr. Corcoran.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Sheehan: Yes

Mr. Corcoran: Yes

Mr. Ryan: Yes

Result: 3-0-0 (Approved)

The Executive Session was entered at 4:35 PM. Both the public meeting and executive session were to be adjourned at the end of the Executive Session.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Emily Manning.