

**AIRPORT COMMITTEE
MINUTES
OCTOBER 19, 2009**

The Airport Committee met on Monday, October 19, 2009 in the Committee Room, located on the second floor of the Administration Building beginning at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Carrigg, Committee Chairman, presided.

Members Attending:

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| John W. Carrigg, Jr., Chairman | George H. Smokey Davis |
| Johnny W. Jeffcoat | Debra B. Debbie Summers |

Absent:

*James E. Kinard, Jr., V Chairman

*Mr. Kinard was not present due to a prior commitment out-of-state.

Also attending: Katherine Hubbard, County Administrator; Joe Mergo, Deputy County Administrator; Larry Porth, Finance Director/Assistant County Administrator; other staff members, citizens of the county and representatives of the media.

Others in attendance: Chuck Whipple, Economic Development Manager; Charlie Compton, Planning & GIS Director; John Fechtel, Public Works Director; Jim Starling, Public Works Engineering Associate III; Frank Chapman, Resource Development Associates President.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda was sent to radio and TV stations, newspapers, and posted on the bulletin board located in the lobby of the County Administration Building.

Lexington County Airport at Pelion - Katherine Hubbard, County Administrator - Ms. Hubbard opened by referring to the 2007 Workshop by the LPA Group and reported it set the stage for where the County is with the Airport for short- and long-term plans. She also referred to the existing Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) and said in keeping with the ACIP staff has proposed Zoning Text Amendment T09-04. Ms. Hubbard said further discussions concerning the Lexington Airport at Pelion are planned during Council's Strategic Retreat on November 2, 2009.

LPA Group - Kenneth Holt, Vice President and Andy D. Busbee, P.E., Manager of Aviation - The LPA Group, Inc. - Mr. Busbee presented a PowerPoint presentation of highlights from the 2007 Strategic Visioning Workshop. He reported that based on the economic impact study prepared in 2005 by Wilbur Smith and Associates, Lexington Airport at Pelion shows a total basic economic impact of \$500,000. The Committee asked how does the Airport create \$500,000 in economic impact and what businesses have been established in the area due to the Airport. Mr. Holt replied he would research and get this information back to the

Committee. Mr. Busbee reported airports prepare a twenty-year plan called the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) based on aviation forecasts approved by the FAA. The current ALP was prepared in 2002 when the airport was owned by the Town of Pelion and approved by the FAA in 2005. The County has been operating under this ALP since 2005. The ALP places the sponsor, the County, in a position to compete for federal funding, which is now 95%. The FAA suggests updating the ALP once every five years but it is not a requirement and can be done before then if there have been changes. Mr. Holt suggested, with the change of ownership, the County should submit another ALP and the Committee agreed. Ms. Hubbard reported at this time of year staff presents the Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) for Council's adoption and submission to the FAA, and that an update to the ALP could be a part of the capital improvement plan. The FAA contributes funds towards preparing an ALP, which is not an inexpensive venture, but would be an investment for an airport strategic plan.

Mr. Holt reported at one point in time the Pelion airport was a reliever for the Columbia Metropolitan Airport (CAE), but currently, Rock Hill and Owens Field airports are the two relievers for the CAE. He indicated the CAE is limited to expansions without significant improvements to their infrastructure. Mr. Holt to research why the change in addition to how the county can be a reliever and report his findings back to the Committee.

Mr. Busbee reported airports are classified by the type of aircraft that they serve and are classified by two characteristics, 1) approach speed and 2) size of wing span. The Airport at Pelion has an Airport Reference Code of A1 which is: Category A - approach speed of less than 105 miles per hour and Group 1- wing spans less than 49 feet. The current ALP shows an upgrade to accept larger and faster aircraft which would change the Airport Reference Code to B2 which is: Category B - approach speeds of 105-139 miles per hour and Group 2 - wing spans up to 79 feet. Mr. Busbee said the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a five-year snapshot of what the County wants to accomplish in that five-year span and referred to the CIP handout. The FY 2010-2014 CIP was prepared last November and after it was prepared the FAA said there was no money for the apron reconstruction project in 2009, now funds are available to proceed. Mr. Holt reported the County receives \$150,000 in non-primary entitlement funding from the FAA every year under the current bill created by the FAA through legislation for general aviation airports. As a member of the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), the County receives the funds every year. Mr. Busbee reported since Lexington County has had the airport, the FAA has funded slightly over \$1 million, State has funded \$122,000, and the County's share of matching funds has been about \$64,000. The Committee asked what happens to a sponsor if they want to get out of the airport business and the liability of the federal funds received by the sponsor. Mr. Holt replied the FAA will ask for reimbursement of all FAA investments for the airport. In addition, Mr. Busbee said there is a 20-year commitment from the date of the last grant acceptance and it was noted the County last accepted a grant in 2009 which would make 2029 the final commitment year.

Zoning Text Amendment T09-04 - Planning and GIS - Charlie Compton, Director - Mr. Compton reviewed Zoning Text Amendment T09-04 - Article 4 - Airport District, Chapter 3, Designation of Pelion Corporate Airport District. The request is an update to rename the

Chapter, bringing it into compliance with the latest master plan, and to address needed restrictions concerning surrounding property. Mr. Compton reported the primary concerns were the Overlay Zones established for the airport based on the plans from 1987 and 2005. Height Control Overlay Zones and Land Use Overlay Zones are needed to protect people and property from aircraft accidents, excessive noise and restrict certain land use activities as well as protect the safety and efficiency of air navigation. Mr. Compton reported last October the Town of Pelion gave final reading for an airport zone that covers everything for the property that falls within their jurisdiction. He reviewed the existing plans with the proposed extension of the runway. Mr. Compton reported that once T09-04 is passed there will be no building permits issued for future construction on property as outlined in Section 43.40 Land Use Overlay Zones. Ms. Hubbard said staff would hold T09-04 until Council decides on what to do with the update to the 5-year Airport Layout Plan (ALP).

Ms. Hubbard presented potential properties located around the Airport for Council's consideration. She said two properties were located east and west of the airport for a total of 190.49 acres and the only access is through the airport property. She also presented another large tract to the right of the Airport with access to Highway 302, which is the same road the Columbia Metropolitan Airport has access to. Ms. Hubbard asked if Council wants to have first right of refusal or buy part of any of these properties now and ask the FAA to include it as part of the Master plan.

Economic Development - Chuck Whipple - Mr. Whipple reported three Maintenance Repair Operations (MRO) based in the northeast looked at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport (CAE) as possible relocation sites. Of the three, West Star Aviation Inc. relocated to the CAE. During negotiations, West Star looked at the Airport at Pelion; however, the runway was not long enough for their operations and they needed larger hangar space. Mr. Whipple indicated the County could market the Airport towards MROs to tie in with CAE after further investments are made to the Airport.

Discussion of Long Term Strategies for the Lexington County Airport at Pelion - Ms. Hubbard reported Council would be reviewing the future of the airport at Council's Strategic Retreat on November 2, 2009. She reported the 2009 tax records showed \$986,247.11 for all aircraft in Lexington County and, of that, \$8,276.53 was for aircraft based at the Airport at Pelion. Mr. Mergo asked if the Town of Pelion was responsible for funds they received during 1986-2004 from the federal government or did it transfer over to the County after they bought airport. LPA to research and return with information. Ms. Hubbard asked if there were any items the Committee wanted for discussion at the retreat. The Committee's responses were: 1) what is the revenue on hangar rental space and fuel, 2) look at running the airport from a business standpoint with hangars, 3) review current waiting list for hangars for possible 10 new hangars, 4) hire a full-time or part-time airport manager, 5) the cost benefits to build hangars and hire a part-time manager. Mr. Holt said these questions could be answered in a new ALP and

suggested the County to ask the FAA to contribute to the cost of a new ALP for the next fiscal year, which could be a component in the master plan. The Committee discussed hiring an airport consultant or independent consultant to advise the County. The LPA group was asked to bring suggestions to the retreat for Council.

Old Business -Taxiway Alignment - Ms. Hubbard reported the FAA wants to move forward with the taxiway alignment at the south end of the airport. She said this is a safety issue that needs to be addressed and will be part on the agenda for October 27, 2009.

New Business - Airport Corridor Beautification Project Resolution - Ms. Summers asked for the Airport Committee's support by way of a resolution for the Airport Corridor Beautification Project. This is a joint effort for beautification improvements to the Airport Corridor along with the City of Cayce, City of West Columbia, the Town of Springdale, Richland County, and the City of Columbia.

A motion was made by Ms. Summers, seconded by Mr. Jeffcoat to approve the resolution for support of the Airport Corridor Beautification Project.

The vote in favor was unanimous.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy R. Busbee
Assistant to the Clerk

John W. Carrigg, Jr.
Chairman

Diana W. Burnett
Clerk