

City of Clearwater

*Main Library - Council Chambers
100 N. Osceola Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33755*



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 4, 2022

3:00 PM

Main Library - Council Chambers

Airpark Advisory Board

Roll Call

Present 4 - Chair Kelli O'Donnell, Board Member George Davis, Board Member John Renton – arrived 3:04 p.m., Board Member Roger Schulman, and Ex Officio Bruce Brock

Absent 1 - Board Member Ray McNeil

Also Present – Eric Gandy - Marine & Aviation Director, Michael MacDonald - Marine & Aviation Operations Manager, Patricia O. Sullivan – Board Reporter

Awaiting approval

1. Call To Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. at the Main Library.

To provide continuity for research, items are in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approval of November 3, 2021, Airpark Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Member Davis moved to approve minutes of the November 3, 2021 Airpark Advisory Board meeting as submitted in written summation. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda: None.

4. New Business Items

4.1 Introduction of new Marine & Aviation Director

Marine & Aviation Director Eric Gandy introduced himself.

4.2 Fixed-Base Operator's Verbal Quarterly Update

FBO (Fixed Base Operator) representative and Airpark Manager Barbara Cooper reported on tenant levels and visitors. She said March and April were the busiest months in a while and the hangar waitlist continued to grow. She said a fall date for the Open House was being considered. Spots were being painted for pilots to line up their nose wheels when parking. She said fuel prices were volatile. In response to a concern re lower fuel rates at Arcadia Airport, she said that airport's fuel was self-service. She said the Airpark tried to provide the lowest fuel rate within 50 miles, excluding self-service providers.

In response to questions, Ms. Cooper said the Airpark had outgrown its parking lot. She said the Airpark helped the Coast Guard during aerial searches. She said the Coast Guard has not approached the Airpark to establish a Coast Guard Auxiliary. She said the Airpark lacked office space.

4.3 Elect 2022 Chair and Vice Chair

Member Schulman moved to reappoint Kelli O'Donnell as Chair. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

Member Davis moved to appoint John Renton as Vice Chair. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

5. Old Business Items: None.

6. Director's Report

Mr. Gandy said the City Council will be requested to amend the FDOT (Florida Department of Transportation) grant for security. He was evaluating all Airpark safety issues and its operational readiness.

Mr. Gandy said the FBO lease expires in November. A draft market analysis was underway. City management was reviewing options. If the City decides against running the Airpark, a RFP (Request for Proposals) will be released.

It was stated the Board wanted to be involved in the lease process re golf course changes; the Airpark Master Plan referenced the golf course for expansion. Concern was expressed the City Council had gone to referendum to change the golf course to a light industry use without consulting the Board.

Mr. Gandy said current Airpark capacity maximized the surrounding neighborhoods' tolerance for activity. The CIP (Capital Improvement Project) for a new hangar may require additional funding due to inflation. The City leased the Airpark to the FBO. Staff can relay Board concerns to the FBO.

It was stated the Board wanted to help and it was requested that Mr. Gandy take advantage of members' background and experience. Mr. Gandy said Board input will be welcome once the market rate study is completed.

In response to a request that Mr. Gandy report to the Board all good and bad Airpark correspondence, he said with hundreds of Marina and Airpark tenants, he would share any significant concerns. He said Airpark complaints were significantly reduced.

Concern was expressed that the Board had not seen a basic layout of the new hangar and Board input could have improved practical details re its design such as the grounding points, which should be under the engines rather than at the current unusable locations next to the metal structure. It was stated the best information on usability came from stakeholders.

It was commented that hearing about a market rate study was intimidating to tenants as it implied rents were too low. Marine & Aviation Operations

Manager Michael MacDonald said rates were where they should be based on the study done 3 years ago. The market analysis will inform the City on every aspect of the Airpark.

In response to questions, Ms. Cooper said very small jets occasionally use the Airpark. In response to a concern that jet engines could suck in debris from the tarmac, she said a foreign object check was done every morning. She said a visitor pilot who had not followed the landing pattern was tossed a bit by rotor wash from a helicopter.

7. Board Members to be Heard

Chair O'Donnell discussed the Board's presentation to the City Council and expressed concern the Board was not as involved as it could be. She said the City Council had said they wanted to hear Board opinions or suggestions for the Master Plan. She said a Councilmember had requested the Board review ways to incorporate Greenprint at the Airpark. She suggested solar panels may be feasible as long as there are no reflection issues.

Ms. Cooper said LEDs were used for hangar light replacements. She said a study indicated replacing runway lights with LEDs would be expensive.

Mr. Gandy said it may be possible to integrate solar into a new terminal building or other large projects. Solar panels were impractical for the current terminal but will be calculated into all future building projects. Enterprise fund budget constraints must be balanced with Greenprint goals. It was recommended that Greenprint be calculated into the new lease agreement.

Discussion ensued regarding fuel. Final EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) rules were anticipated next year. Ms. Cooper said infrastructure would be needed before a new fuel type could be offered. She said the Airpark was waiting for the supplier which is testing fuels; fuels must be compatible with airplanes.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Attest:

Chair, Airpark Advisory Board

Board Reporter