

**MINUTES**  
**REPUBLIC AIRPORT COMMISSION (RAC) MEETING**  
**7150 REPUBLIC AIRPORT, ROOM 201**  
**EAST FARMINGDALE, NEW YORK**  
**OCTOBER 1, 2024**

The meeting was called to order by Commission Member Robert Bodenmiller at 7:03p.m. Vice Chairman Vincent Bologna, Jr, and Commissioners Stella Barbera and Richard Grant were present.

**I. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Bodenmiller asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of Chairman Frank Nocerino who passed away on August 23, 2024. Mr. Bodenmiller said the Commission will resend its letter opposing cargo to the State that was sent some years back, and the RAC will propose another resolution opposing cargo if necessary. Airport Director Anthony Ceglio added that, in response to similar concerns expressed at the Working Group meeting on September 19th, roadway realignments at Parcels A and B were not designed in anticipation of cargo operations, and the State has no desire to have cargo operations at the Airport.

**II. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 2024**

A vote was not held due to lack of a quorum.

**III. CHANGES AND/OR ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

An adoption of the Agenda was not held due to lack of a quorum.

**IV. REPORTS, RESOLUTIONS, & OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. REPORTS**

**1. OPERATIONS, AIRCRAFT COMPLAINTS, and FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR JULY and AUGUST 2024**

Airport Manager Mr. John Lauth discussed the Operations Reports:

- July Total Operations decreased 20% and Landings increased by 4.5% when compared to the previous year. Single-engine aircraft operations increased 2.9% and jet operations were down 1%. Single-engine Touch & Go's were up 8.1%. Passenger volume fell 15.3%. Based aircraft fell 2.7%.
- August Total Operations decreased 9.6% but Landings increased 15.7% when compared to the previous year. Single-engine aircraft operations increased 18.2% and jet operations were up 14.8%. Single-engine Touch & Go's were up 17.8%. Passenger volume fell 12.4%. Based aircraft fell 2%.

Mr. Lauth discussed the Aircraft Complaint Reports:

- In July, 22 complaints were filed, compared to 156 complaints last year. Most related to daytime operations and an unknown aircraft type. The majority of complaints came from areas north and west of the Airport and most could not be identified by runway. Eighteen of the 22 complaints could not be attributed to Based or Transient aircraft and were reported as 'Unknown'.
- In August, 26 complaints were filed, compared to 103 complaints last year. Most related to daytime operations and an unknown aircraft type. The majority of complaints came from areas north and northwest of the Airport. Most complaints could not be identified by runway, however 2 complaints were attributed to Runway 32, and 3 complaints were attributed to Touch & Go operations on Runway 32. Two of the 26 complaints related to Based aircraft, 7 to Transient aircraft, and 17 were reported as 'Unknown'.

Ms. Barbera asked for clarification on what area is considered west of the Airport and why 'Unknowns' on the Aircraft Complaint Reports outnumber the other categories. Mr. Lauth said that Farmingdale's residential area

lies west of the Airport, and 'Unknowns' are complaints that were submitted without sufficient data to assign them to a specific category.

Mr. Lauth discussed the Financial Reports:

- July Revenue was favorable for Landing Fees due to higher than forecasted landings. Rental revenue was favorable due to a CPI adjustment, and Utilities were favorable due to higher than anticipated water usage. Unfavorable variances were seen in License Fees due to lower than anticipated Commercial Operating Permits, in Fuel Flowage Fees due to fewer fuel deliveries than expected, in Miscellaneous revenue due to a lack of film shoots, and in fees for Tie-Downs due to lower than anticipated Echo tie-downs. July Expenses saw favorable variances for Data Processing and Professional Services due to no expenditures for software support or appraisals. Expenses for Vehicle and Airport Maintenance were also favorable. There were unfavorable variances in Labor Expense due to payment for an employee's accrued time, in Utilities due to higher consumption than forecasted, and in Communication due to preventative maintenance costs for phones and radios.
- August Revenue was favorable for Landing Fees due to higher than forecasted landings. There were unfavorable variances in License Fees due to lower than expected terminal usage and Commercial Operating Permit fees, in Miscellaneous revenue again due to lack of film shoots, and in Tie-Down Fees due to lower than anticipated Echo tie-downs. August Expenses were favorable overall, including Labor due to vacant positions for Assistant Manager and in Operations, Communications, Janitorial Services, Insurance, Professional Services, Vehicle Maintenance and Airport Maintenance expenses were all favorable. Unfavorable variances were seen for Office Supplies due to replenishing the postage machine, and for Utilities due to higher than anticipated consumption.

Mr. Ceglio added that the New York State Economic Impact Study for Republic Airport was released 2 weeks ago which outlines the Airport's economic benefits to the local area. The Study will be posted on the Airport's website at <http://republicairport.net/>.

## **2. RECENT / CURRENT EVENTS**

Airport Manager John Lauth reported on the following:

- a. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Gateway, Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>:** TSA checkpoint was set up in the Main Terminal to screen helicopter flights to Manhattan for the UNGA event.
- b. Runway Safety Action Team, (RSAT) Meeting Hosted by FAA, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>:** FAA held a discussion with Airport Management and Key tenants on improving runway safety.
- c. Annual Wildlife Hazard Management Plan Review, Aug. 14<sup>th</sup>:** Attended by Airport Operations and Maintenance staff.
- d. Transportation Security & Emergency Preparedness (TSEP) Training, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>:** NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) held training for Airport staff and Key tenants to increase security awareness and active shooter preparedness.
- e. Roof Replacement at NY State Police (NYSP) Troop L Headquarters:** The project is ongoing.
- f. SUNY and Vaughn College Students/Fall Internship Program, Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>:** Three aviation students began a 90-day internship program with the Airport.
- g. 'Girls in Aviation Day' Event, Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>:** Airport staff will attend this event for school-age girls and young people to introduce them to the aviation industry and various aviation careers.

Ms. Barbera asked who will be paying for the new roof at NYSP Headquarters. Mr. Lauth said the cost will be incurred by the State Police.

## OTHER NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BUSINESS

Airport Director Anthony Ceglio reported on the following:

1. **5-Parcel Development Project:** The Working Group held meetings on September 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> regarding the Tenant Alteration Applications (TAA's) for road realignment projects at Parcels A and B. The September 19<sup>th</sup> meeting included a bus tour to both sites. Working Group comments and questions were submitted to NYSDOT on September 24<sup>th</sup> and are being consolidated with other questions from NYSDOT. All questions/comments will be sent to Stratosphere for review and resolution. There will be no construction until after the Open House is held, which is scheduled for October 24<sup>th</sup>. Notifications will be sent to the civic groups and Airport tenants when the time and location are confirmed.
2. **Runway 1/19 Pavement Design Project:** The 90% plans review meeting was held September 18<sup>th</sup> and the bid is expected to go out in late-Spring or early-Summer of 2025, which will push the construction start to 2026.
3. **Modern/Breslau Project:** Modern received the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) for Hangar 85 on September 12<sup>th</sup>. A tenant is expected to occupy the hangar within 4-6 weeks.
4. **RAC Candidates:** There are 4 candidates applying to fill open RAC positions and their names were submitted to the State. An appointment to the RAC is not likely to happen until after the Legislature meets in January. Applicants may wish to contact their legislative representatives to emphasize the immediate need for new RAC appointments.

Mr. Bodenmiller added that a new Bill designed to simplify the RAC appointment process was submitted but was not passed. He said appointing new RAC members is a long process and he doesn't expect any appointments to be made until possibly May 2025.

## V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Seven (7) individuals commented.

A motion to adjourn carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

These minutes are respectfully submitted by:  
**Anthony C. Ceglio on behalf of Executive Secretary**  
**Republic Airport Commission**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**  
**REPUBLIC AIRPORT COMMISSION**  
**October 1, 2024**

Ms. Tina Diamond, President of Concerned Citizens Association of Farmingdale, stated that this process has taken a long time and it is not right for everything to move forward when there isn't proper representation on the RAC. Nothing should happen until the Commission is restored. Mr. Bodenmiller agreed but said that delaying the projects is beyond the Commission's abilities. He urged Ms. Diamond to contact her NYS Senator to express that concern. Mr. Ceglie added that the Stratosphere project has been in development since 2016. The project has been vetted and approved and it will have a positive economic impact for the community and Airport and jobs created and revenue to help meet FAA goals for sustainability. Currently, because sufficient hangar space is not available, some aircraft will drop off passengers at Republic then leave to go to another airport, like Teterboro, where they can park in a hangar. Then they return to Republic to pick up passengers and depart again. Without new hangars, you may end up with twice as many takeoffs and landings. Ms. Diamond said if it were only a couple of hangars it would not be a concern but what we're seeing is beyond that.

Ms. Nancy Cypser from Woodland Civic Association asked if the names and backgrounds of the RAC candidates can be shared with the communities so that they know if community representation would be balanced. She asked if the current RAC members can weigh in on the appointment decisions. Mr. Bodenmiller responded that the current Commission has no say on the appointments. Mr. Ceglie stated that the 4 candidates are all community members and no pilots or airport tenants have applied. Being that there are 5 open positions on the RAC and only 4 candidates, we may try to increase our efforts to find more candidates.

Ms. Jessica Santangelo, President of Woodland Civic Association, stated she heard the Bill to revise RAC appointments is not dead and should be signed before the end of the year. In light of the complicated residency requirements currently in place, she said it could be worthwhile for the RAC to reach out to the NYS Senators and suggest it be changed to a 5-10 mile radius from the Airport.

Mr. John Lisi, President of Daniel Street Civic Association, asked to know if the Commission has ever been fully staffed with the requisite 9 members. Mr. Bodenmiller said that he believes there were 9 members when the Commission first began. Ms. Barbera added that there were 8 members when she was appointed in 2001 and the number has dwindled since then. Mr. Lisi said the RAC has been short-handed for many years and the State has been apathetic on the matter. Their lack of action shows there is not much concern about populating the Commission.

Mr. Lisi asked Mr. Ceglie to clarify if the State has any jurisdiction to reject cargo operations on the Airport. Mr. Ceglie responded that there are no facilities on the Airport for cargo and there are no proposals from any tenant to build cargo facilities. Mr. Lisi asked if 'someone influential' had cargo warehouses located off-site, would the State have the authority to stop them from loading/un-loading cargo from an airplane to bring it to/from the warehouse? Mr. Ceglie responded that the FAA requires the Airport to be open 24/7 for all classes and types of aircraft. If a cargo company wanted to access the Airport to drive their trucks on to the airfield for loading and off-loading cargo, they would have to apply to the State for permission. The State has no desire to permit large cargo operations at Republic Airport.

Mr. Lisi commented that if Stratosphere is sincere about not wanting cargo, would they not want to have a covenant or legal document attesting to that? The community wants assurances that they will not do cargo. Ms. Barbera said that this is one of the questions the Working Group submitted to the DOT committee. Mr. Lisi added that influential people do have influence, and that is their fear. Mr. Ceglie said that the Stratosphere leases were signed in 2017 and do not have such a covenant. For any new tenants wanting to build hangars, it's possible that a clause might be added to an RFP stating the tenant would voluntarily indicate they would not promote cargo.

Ms. Santangelo asked if the civics will still be allotted space and a table for representation at the Open House on October 24<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Ceglie answered yes. Ms. Santangelo asked if there could be annual presentation to the communities on NYSDOT's overall financial goals for the Airport which might go along with the Economic Impact Study. It would be helpful to understand the 'big picture' and know what the Airport is doing to operate profitably. Mr. Ceglie said the financials discussed at this meeting are presented on a monthly cash basis. The fiscal year-to-date information presents a broader picture and better demonstrates airports financial position. We provide this information to the RAC at each meeting.

Mr. Mark Goldberg, an Echo tenant, asked to know the status of Echo ramp and the tie-down rates. Mr. Ceglie said there is no news to report on Echo because the Working Group's focus is currently on the roadway projects. The rates have not changed since 2008 and the Airport will continue to work on keeping any rate adjustments fair and reasonable.

Dr. Robert Corona, an Echo tenant, commented that the Echo ramp's uncertain status bothers its tenants. Suppose I am doing maintenance on my plane that will take several months to complete, and I receive a notice from the Airport that I have to move my plane. That's a major problem. Will we be given a grace period? The month-to-month basis makes it difficult to plan ahead. Mr. Ceglie said Echo tenants should notify the Airport when their aircraft is down for maintenance on the ramp and for how long, and we will work with you. We don't want a non-airworthy aircraft sitting on the ramp for an extended period of time, such as 6 months or longer. If an aircraft must be sent out for maintenance, again you should notify the Airport, because if we see that your parking spot is vacant for an extended period of time, we will contact you. There is a long waiting list for parking spots and we would want the spot back if it's not being used. We just ask that you communicate this with the Airport. Ms. Barbera commented that at the September 5<sup>th</sup> Working Group meeting, a question was posed about the recreational pilots and what will happen if they are displaced. Stratosphere assured us that they would have space on their parcels to accommodate the tie-downs. Mr. Bodenmiller added that they did make assurances there would be 'a tie-down for a tie-down' but what fees they will charge is still up in the air, and Airport is working on that.

Mr. Goldberg said tie-down fees are increasing from the State's \$140/month to Stratosphere's proposed fee of \$419/month, almost a 200% increase. He said he only needs some pavement and rope to tie down his plane and he should not pay more than what is considered an acceptable fee. The proposed \$419 fee is probably the breaking point for a lot of the pilots. Mr. Bodenmiller said the RAC objects to what's been proposed and will do whatever it can to make it a reasonable transition.

Ms. Cypser referred to the draft RAC minutes being posted on the Airport's website and noted that 4 months of Operations and Aircraft Complaint reports from the June 2024 meeting were missing. She asked if those reports could be posted. Mr. Lauth answered yes and the reports will be found at [http://republicairport.net/?page\\_id=1986](http://republicairport.net/?page_id=1986) . She referred to FAA's Total Operations number reported on the July Operations report and said that it is usually calculated by doubling the number of Landings by Aircraft Type, however these numbers do not come close. Mr. Lauth explained that any type of aircraft movement requiring contact with the Tower, such as aircraft transitioning through the airspace will count as an operation and be included in FAA's numbers. Ms. Cypser said she was concerned about the number of 'Unknowns' listed on the Aircraft Complaint reports and asked if the Airport is able to 'draw a conclusion' about these Unknown noise events based on where the phone calls are coming from. Mr. Lauth said that drawing conclusions would be less accurate than using data reported by the caller.

Ms. Nancy Schliwka from Woodland Civic Association asked if the time stamp of a noise complaint phone call helps to pinpoint the source of the noise event. Mr. Lauth said the time of the phone call is considered but it may be different from the actual time the aircraft was heard. We rely on information provided by the caller which may not always be enough to accurately identify the source of the noise event.

Ms. Cypser referred to the New York State Transportation Law §402 which states that the commissioner of the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) sets noise limits for aircraft at Republic Airport with advice from the Republic Airport Commission (RAC), and that the penalty for violating the noise limits is a fine of up to \$2,500. She asked if the Airport has ever charged a fine. Mr. Ceglie stated that it would be illegal to do so based on FAA regulations under the Airport Noise

and Capacity Act of 1990 which does not allow Airports to fine aircraft flying overhead. NYSDOT and the RAC have no control over the air space.

Ms. Barbera referred to the Draft Minutes from the August 2024 meeting, which mentioned a new air charter company wanting to start operations at the Main Terminal this winter. They were supposed to make a presentation to the Commission at this meeting and she asked if the plans were coming to fruition. Mr. Ceglie said unfortunately they had a change of plans and are not able to proceed at this time. They may revisit the idea next Spring.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

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