

MINUTES
REPUBLIC AIRPORT COMMISSION (RAC) MEETING
7150 REPUBLIC AIRPORT, ROOM 201
EAST FARMINGDALE, NEW YORK
AUGUST 22, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Frank Nocerino at 7:01p.m. Also present were Vice-Chairman Vincent Bologna, Jr., Commission Members Stella Barbera, Robert Bodenmiller, and Richard Grant.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

No Announcements.

II. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES FROM APRIL AND JUNE 2023

Mr. Bodenmiller motioned to adopt both sets of the minutes, seconded by Mr. Grant. The motion carried unanimously.

III. CHANGES AND/OR ADOPTION OF AGENDA

No changes.

Chairman Nocerino said that NYSDOT Aviation Bureau Director Lowell Lingo sent an email about demolition of the old restaurant building and an Open House for the 5-Parcels that is scheduled for October 5th at 7:00 pm. Airport Director Anthony Ceglio said the location of the Open House has not been decided but it may be held at Hangar 7. The Chairman said a Working Group meeting for the 5 Parcels will be scheduled sometime after the Open House takes place. He said the East Farmingdale Fire Department (EFFD) sent a letter indicating the restaurant has safety issues, mold, and is a fire safety hazard.

The Chairman said he, Vice-Chairman Vincent Bologna, and Airport Manager John Lauth met with New York State Senator Monica Martinez last week to discuss the airport and the importance of filling the open RAC positions. The Chairman said that that Senator Martinez was very receptive to 2 resumes that were received. He will schedule a meeting with Assemblywoman Kimberly Jean-Pierre and other elected officials from bordering districts.

Chairman Nocerino said the 5-Parcels Working Group will have the same format as the previous group for the Sheltair project because it was successful. The same Civic associations will be involved. He would like each Civic association to submit the name of a representative to participate in the Working Group within the next 30 days. Names can be emailed to franknocerino@gmail.com or judith.zalewski@dot.ny.gov. The Working Group will also include representatives for the NYS Senators, the NYS Assembly persons, Town of Babylon, Town of Oyster Bay, and NYSDOT. Commission Member Stella Barbera will represent the RAC.

IV. REPORTS, RESOLUTIONS, & OTHER BUSINESS

A. REPORTS

1. OPERATIONS, AIRCRAFT COMPLAINTS, & FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR MAY AND JUNE 2023

Airport Manager Mr. John Lauth discussed the following:

Total Operations in May increased by 59.9% compared to the previous year. May Landings were up by 48% and Touch & Go's by 63.3%, the majority of which were attributed to single-engine aircraft. June's Total Operations fell 0.7% and Landings fell 7.6%. Touch & Go's increased by 9.9%. Passenger volume increased in both months by 31.5% in May and 33.6% in June. Total Based Aircraft increased 1.6% in May but fell 6.1% in June.

Aircraft complaints in May totaled 18 from 8 households while June complaints were 41 from 11 households. The majority of May complaints could not be identified by aircraft type or runway. There were 12 complaints in June that related to arrivals on Runway 1/19, and 15 complaints could not be identified by runway and were reported as "Unknown.". Sixteen complaints in May related to daytime operations and 37 in June. Residents living northwest of the Airport filed 17 complaints in May. In June, residents to the north and west filed 14 and 18 complaints respectively. The majority of complaints in both May and June were attributed to transient and "Unknown" aircraft.

Commission Member Stella Barbera referred to the June 2023 Aircraft Complaint report's "Type of Aircraft" section and asked if it was unusual to receive so many complaints about Multi/Single-engine aircraft. Mr. Lauth responded that it is common because they are doing "pattern work". When the weather is nicer, people are outside and notice it more. Also, Runway 14/32 was closed in June and all traffic flew on Runway 1/19.

Mr. Lauth reported that May Revenue was favorable for Landings and License Fees. Rent was unfavorable due to the old Molloy building remaining vacant. Miscellaneous Income was unfavorable due to the lack of film shoots caused by ongoing strikes in the entertainment industry. For Expenses, Labor was unfavorable due to a 5-week payroll period. Employee Expenses were unfavorable due to ARFF training and the purchase of ARFF Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Airport Maintenance was unfavorable due to the Main Terminal's boiler replacement and the purchase of airfield paint. Utilities Expense was favorable due to less than anticipated consumption, and Professional Services was favorable because there was no need for specialist or engineering services.

June Revenue saw favorable variances for Landings and Tie-down Fees, but was unfavorable for Rent, Miscellaneous Income, and Fuel Flowage Fees due to fewer fuel deliveries at Atlantic Aviation. June Expenses were favorable for Labor due to vacant positions in Operations and Accounting. Insurance was favorable due to a lower than anticipated premium. Vehicle Maintenance was favorable as all vehicles are in good working condition. Data Processing was favorable due to a pending review of flight tracking software. There were lower than anticipated expenses for Airport Maintenance and Utilities.

2. RECENT / CURRENT EVENTS

Airport Manager John Lauth reported on the following:

- a. **Annual FAA Part 139 Inspection, July 26-28:** We did well overall, only a few

discrepancies that are being addressed.

- b. **Revised Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan Review (SWPPP), Aug 10:** Airport management met with Tenants to review the revised plan and it was posted on the Airport website.
- c. **Security System RFP:** was published for a contract to maintain the Airport's security cameras and vehicle/pedestrian gates. A review of proposals is in progress.
- d. **106th Rescue Wing Point of Contact Meet & Greet:** The Unit provided their current contact information so we can work together if a rescue is needed or in the event of a weather emergency.
- e. **Ventura Office Fire Clean-Up Underway:** The affected area in the hangar is being cleared of debris and damaged furnishings.
- f. **Annual Wildlife Hazard Plan Review, August 2:** Airport tenants and representatives from Town of Babylon and the cemeteries were invited to discuss issues with wildlife on the Airport. Starlings are a minor issue but no problems with deer or geese.

B. OTHER NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BUSINESS

Airport Director Anthony Ceglio reported on the following:

1. **Alpha Taxiway Project:** Rehabilitation project Has been underway since April and is still on time and on budget. We expect completion by the end of November. He added that Runway 14/32 will be closed Sept 22-Oct 22 to work on 4 taxiway stubs.
2. **5-Parcel Development Project:** Previously discussed.
3. **Runway 1/19 Pavement Design Survey:** An updated survey was completed. Alternatives are currently being reviewed for the rehabilitation method to be used.. Construction may begin in 2024 if funding is favorable.
4. **Breslau Development/Hangar 85:** Plans for Modern Aviation's 5th hangar are being reviewed by NYSDOT and comments are close to being finalized. Construction is expected to start within the next few months.

- C. **Noise Analysis Presentation:** Mr. Lauth presented Republic Airport's 2018-2022 Operations and Noise Review on a PowerPoint slide show.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Six (6) individuals commented.

Chairman Nocerino adjourned the meeting at 8:42pm.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS
REPUBLIC AIRPORT COMMISSION
August 22, 2023

Ms. Jessica Santangelo of the Woodland Civic Association, referred to an email from Lowell Lingo sent to the civic groups on August 2nd and said there was no attachment. She asked to know the format of the Open House. Airport Director Anthony Ceglie responded that there would be a follow-up email about the location and format.

Ms. Nancy Cypser of the Woodland Civic Association asked to know which civics were involved in the Sheltair Working Group so that her association can contact them. Chairman Nocerino replied that all were invited but not everyone participated. The Group was small but they got a lot done. We will not have the Working Group meet until after the October 5th Open House so that the Group can make a list of questions.

Ms. Cypser asked if they can request the format of the Open House meeting to be an informational overview and then the Civics can address questions to them. Mr. Ceglie responded that the idea can be proposed. Chairman Nocerino said the questions can also be saved for the Working Group meeting so all questions are part of a package.

Mr. James Keane, and Echo tenant, asked if the ILS will be active during the closure of Runway 14/32 in September and October. Mr. Ceglie said it will be turned off and a NOTAM will be issued.

Mr. Mark Goldberg, and Echo tenant, asked to know the status and timeframe of the Echo ramp “eviction” and the loss of Delta ramp. Mr. Ceglie said there is no schedule yet. Mr. Goldberg said he and other pilots are concerned about the loss of available tie-down space and the pricing. Currently the State’s price is \$140/month for a single-engine aircraft but Republic Jet Center is supposedly charging \$416/month. It’s a lot of money. Mr. Goldberg said General Aviation (GA) aircraft would be lost because of the pricing, and Stratosphere did an Environmental study but nobody ever did a financial study. The Chairman asked Mr. Goldberg to provide the pricing information he received from Republic Jet Center. Mr. Goldberg added that the State basically created a tie-down monopoly and now he cannot go anywhere. He spoke with Modern Aviation and the Alpha ramp is not being expanded, and there is no space available in other areas. I don’t want to move my aircraft to another airport. Mr. Ceglie asked if Republic Jet Center is providing additional services for the \$416 price. Mr. Goldberg answered they will provide electric, water, and hangar facilities for maintenance on a quarterly basis. I don’t need those services. I just need an economical place to park my airplane. Chairman Nocerino said an option for parking without additional services should be offered, and that the Commission will look into it.

Mr. Jeffrey Chippetine, an Echo tenant, stated that dust from the taxiway construction site and the restaurant demolition has been noticeable and the effort to control it has been minimal at best. He asked the Airport to address the issue with the construction crews. Mr. Lauth said a discussion about the demolition was just held and water trucks are on site to spray down the areas. Mr. Ceglie asked Mr. Chippetine to notify Airport Operations if he observes dust near the ramp areas.

Ms. Cypser spoke about answers to questions at the March 2nd, 2017 Airport meeting regarding rents. She said that NYSDOT would ensure that there would not be fewer tie-downs than what is currently in use, and the DOT would work with the developer to maintain similar terms to the current arrangement. Ms. Cypser referred to the final Environmental Assessment (EA) which stated that growth of the airport over the next 5 years was based on 210,000 annual operations, but that operations in 2022 were already at 280,000. She said the EA did not have an accurate diagram reflecting the new hangars at Modern Aviation. She asked if there is anything that prevents an FBO or tenant from utilizing adjacent property for airport purposes. An example, if the Wal-Mart property becomes vacant, can

anyone buy the property and put hangars on it? Mr. Ceglie responded that the buyer would need approval for a "through-the-fence" operation which is not a simple process. Ms. Cypser asked if there are any plans that prevent that from happening. Chairman Nocerino said he cannot see that happening. Ms. Cypser asked who owns the parcel that the State Police building is on. Mr. Lauth said the property is controlled by DOT.

Ms. Jessica Santangelo from Woodland Civic Association stated that she submitted a FOIL request 2 months ago for the leases that were awarded to Stratosphere and she has not received them yet. She referred to Mr. Goldberg's comment about losing GA aircraft, and she is concerned that if the pilots get priced out, the airport would be operating as a private-use airport and not as a public-use airport. Mr. Ceglie stated that the airport is public-use, and if it were to operate as private-use, we would have to return all previous FAA grant funds. We have accepted funds for 20 years. I don't think the State would consider paying it back. Ms. Santangelo asked if there is a certain number of operations must happen for GA use as opposed to private jets to ensure the airport maintains a public-use status. Mr. Ceglie asked Ms. Santangelo if her concern is that the airport will become all jets and no small airplanes. She said yes. Mr. Ceglie referred to the Operations reports read by Mr. Lauth and he noted that approximately 80% of the operations were small planes. Mr. Lauth said that it has been like that for the last 35-40 years. It would be highly unlikely the numbers would swing the other way. Ms. Santangelo asked to know what impact or changes to the existing proposed plan could come out of the Working Group, because it kind of feels like everything is already set. Chairman Nocerino replied that Stratosphere is going to make a presentation about what their intentions are. I don't think anything is set in stone.

Ms. Cypser again questioned the total number of operations reported in the Operations reports and that they calculate out to about 280,000 per year. Mr. Lauth explained that the numbers reported by FAA are different than total landings reported by Airport Operations because the FAA collects information on aircraft that are passing through the Airport's airspace and sometimes the aircraft that are moving on the ground, so their number is higher. They have their own way of tallying that information which is why the Operations report shows both numbers. The number of landings is the true number of aircraft landing at the airport.

Ms. Cypser referred to the 2018-2022 Operations and Noise Review presentation and asked to know how the decibel levels were determined. Assistant Airport Manager Michael Clow explained that each airport operation taking place within a 24-hour period is assigned a decibel value. Operations that take place at night between 11pm and 6am receive a higher rating. It's a weighted average and it receives an extra 10 decibels because of its impact. All the values for an entire year are added together and you get one value. The study was done in compliance with FAR Part 150 Airport Noise Compatibility Planning regulations. Ms. Cypser commented that the residential areas are never over 65 decibels so there is no noise issue according to the FAA. And even if the number of flights doubled, there still would be no noise issue and any noise complaints are basically ignored. Is that what we can infer from this? Mr. Lauth responded that the airport is doing a good job of communicating noise abatement procedures to the pilots. It has helped keep the decibel levels from going out over the community. He thanked Johnson Chang-Fong from Avports LLC for helping to explain some of the data presented in the Operations and Noise Review.

Mr. Keane asked Ms. Cypser what her expectations are from submitting noise complaints. Ms. Cypser responded that it should be on the record that we are complaining. When we don't complain we are told there are no complaints, and that is not an accurate measure. To say that because we live outside of the 65 decibels it's ok. It isn't ok. The 5-Parcels project is only going to make it harder for the residents and the Airport to live compatibly. Chairman Nocerino commented that he has looked at noise reviews for 25 years and they were a horror in the beginning. But as the planes got newer, they got quieter and more efficient.