**Airport Management Advisory Committee**

**Minutes of Meeting –October 29, 2015 at Town Hall**

Arthur Malman, Chairman of Town of East Hampton’s Airport Management Advisory Committee (“AMAC”), called the meeting to order at 9 AM.

The following members of the AMAC were present: voting members- Bonnie Krupinski, Peter Wadsworth, David Gruber, Pat Trunzo III, Gene Oshrin, Charles Ehren, Munir Saltoun, Cindy Herbst and Arthur Malman and non-voting ex officio members- Kathee Burke-Gonzalez, Councilwoman and Board liaison for the AMAC, Len Bernard, the Town’s Chief Budget Officer and Jemille Charlton, Airport Director.

Attending by telephone was Mike Waibel of Baker Engineering and Ron Price of QED.

Arthur Malman invited all members of the public to join the discussion.

The attached agenda had been previously distributed.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as drafted.

The next meeting was scheduled for 9 AM on Friday, November 20.

Since Kathee Burke-Gonzalez would need to leave for a call during the meeting, Arthur Malman asked Jemille Charlton to update the meeting on the collection of noise data. Jemille Charlton indicated that the needed data was now being collected and integrated as needed for analysis and had been given to the noise consultants. A remaining problem was limited ability to monitor flights more than about 15 miles from the airport—which limits the ability to coordinate with North Fork and Montauk complaints as well as further west into Southampton. One aspect of this is the difficulty of identifying overflights not headed to HTO but rather to other airports. He hoped that this problem could be fixed for next season by some additional equipment and software.

David Gruber and Peter Wadsworth repeated their request to review the underlying flight/complaint data that is being given to the consultant and, each indicated that they would be willing to sign confidentiality agreements if needed. An issue was raised about the data indicating specific street addresses that could be used to identify individuals . Pat Trunzo III and others felt that this issue could be overcome by simply providing data for review with general street identification—e.g the 200 blocks of a street or the 100 blocks of the same street. This alternative seemed workable.

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez then gave a general update on the procedural status of the various items of airport litigation.

Jemille Charlton had distributed a proposal for about $15,000 for an outside consultant to assist the Town on paid parking rather than having the Airport Director responsible for design and implementation. Kathee Burke-Gonzalez indicated that the current thinking was to limit the consultants to the design and planning stage only which would be closer to about $10,000 and then have the Airport Director in charge of implementation. Peter Wadsworth reiterated the committee’s concern that the paid parking be operational in early 2016 so that any problems could be worked out before the start of the season. Arthur Malman indicated that the Town Board should adopt soon the needed resolutions on no parking on Daniel’s Hole Road and fines. Kathee Burke-Gonzalez indicated that work was already underway on the resolutions.

Noting that it was applicable both to paid parking and curfew violations, Peter Wadsworth (and others) said that they understood that the Justice Court normally retains fines and asked Len Bernard about whether he had made the necessary arrangements and system modifications for the airport receive the proceeds, especially since the FAA could have a problem if the potential airport revenues were not retained for airport use. Len Bernard indicated that procedures could be worked out to get the airport a portion of fines. A discussion ensued on this issue and other costs by the Town for increased police involvement on ticketing. Len Bernard indicated that the 2016 budget for the police reflected the new ticketing responsibilities for airport parking violations and there would need to be an adjustment to the overall charges of the Town to the airport to cover these charges.

Arthur Malman thanked Michael Waibel for sending the updated projects chart. With respect to the pavement analysis, Michael Waibel indicated that the field work had been completed and the data analysis is beginning, with a first draft report expected in mid-January. A short discussion ensued on various paving issues.

Jemille Charlton reported that no meeting date had been set with the FAA for discussions on the tree cutting and deer fence. Mike Waibel indicated that the time lapse seemed longer than usual and he would follow up with one of his associates who worked closely with an FAA group in NYC. Arthur Malman suggested that the Town contact Congressman Zeldin to help move this along. Kathee Burke-Gonzalez agreed that the Town’s request was being ignored and indicated that such an approach was already underway.

In response to the question if any new leases for airport industrial properties had been signed in 2015, Kathee Burke-Gonzalez indicated that no new leases had been signed. Arthur Malman reiterated the committee’s prior recommendations that a commercial broker be engaged to move the process forward professionally. Committee members who have experience with real estate reiterated the benefits of a broker to keep the process moving to a closing and Kathee Burke-Gonzalez indicated that work was proceeding on an RFP for a broker.

Arthur Malman asked when Baker would get the committee a preliminary fuel farm layout so that alternative locations could be discussed. Michael Waibel explained that its work order for the fuel farm had not yet been approved. Kathee Burke-Gonzalez indicated that the Town had felt that the Baker proposal was too high and was seeking an alternative engineering proposal for the fuel farm which was expected shortly.

Arthur Malman asked about the responses to the Fuel RFP. Kathee Burke-Gonzalez indicated that it had not been technically an RFP but a request for bids and, since the only bid received had included many conditions, the Town was recirculating the request to several vendors. Munir Saltoun indicated that he had been in contact with Eastern, a possible bidder who had not seen the prior request when originally circulated, and they confirmed that they had received a copy this time and were reviewing it.

Cindy Herbst was asked where the FBO’s were on a term sheet to take over direct fuel purchases from the town with the town operating the fuel farm. She indicated that they would work on it. Kathee Burke-Gonzalez thought that there was no sense in moving on this until a new fuel farm was built so that the needed data outputs would be obtainable. Arthur Malman pointed out that the critical data outputs for the FBO’s to inventory their own fuel in a common farm were already obtainable under the present system. Jemille Charlton reviewed the data now already being obtained which, although sometimes manually produced, was the same data that would be provided automatically by a new fuel farm installation.

Arthur Malman indicated that, although going forward with bidding on fuel supply costs as required by law, he thought that the Supervisor was supportive of the FBO’s buying fuel directly from suppliers. Len Bernard indicated that from a cash flow basis, if the present system of the Town buying fuel and running the farm were continued, he would expect that the FBO’s would be asked to put up an advance deposit for expected fuel purchases rather than having the town finance the inventory --but that other than this change, the Town would be willing to continue to operate as now. Cindy Herbst strongly supported a change now, with the present farm, so that the FBO’s would buy fuel directly from suppliers and have more responsibility for farm operation. Arthur Malman indicated that this issue was really one for resolution between the FBO’s and the Town rather than the committee which had taken the issue as far needed to make the alternatives clear.

With respect to the status of the committee’s repeated requests to review the new aeronautical lease form and a non-aeronautical lease form before they are used, Kathee Burke-Gonzalez reiterated that the attorneys did not want the committee to see the lease forms because of the pending litigation. Charles Ehren, Pat Trunzo III and other committee members could not understand this position. David Gruber suggested he should be able to get the forms more easily with a simple FOIL request where someone would need to explain a basis for not turning them over. Arthur Malman asked if the Town would find such a FOIL request objectionable. Hearing no objections, David Gruber was asked to proceed with the FOIL request.

Len Bernard reported on the progress on the work accomplished by the new town attorney assigned to airport and other leases.

Jemille Charlton reported that the final acceptance by the FAA of the AWOS was now ahead of schedule and it might be finally certified early next year.

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Jemille Charlton reported that he was still working on getting the missing sections of the existing deer fence replaced. David Gruber reiterated that we should try to reuse as much of the old fence as possible. Arthur Malman pointed out that the old fence was only 8 feet high and Jemille Charlton had seen a deer jump it—with the resulting recommendation that a new fence would have its top 2 foot section angled outward. It was recommended that Jemille Charlton have a fence contractor inspect the condition of the old fencing and see if it has not deteriorated too much to be effective and to see if a top 2 foot section angled could be added. Assuming it had not deteriorated too much, an initial approach should reuse sections of the old fence that were reasonably located as part of the “new fence” and then evaluate whether these sections were effective or need to be modified or replaced.

Arthur Malman asked whether the working group of Jemille Charlton, Bonnie Krupinski and Cindy Herbst had finalized locations for the deer fencing and a lower passenger control fence and gates around the terminal. Cindy Herbst reported that there had recently been break ins and thefts of aircraft components which might require some rethinking of fencing. A discussion ensued on the efficacy of fencing and better cameras. Jemille Charlton reported that the existing cameras were mostly broken and those still working were so old and their pictures so grainy that they provided little of use when pictures were being reviewed by law enforcement. Bonnie Krupinski explained advances in cameras that have made them more cost effective. Jemille Charlton was asked to come back with a security camera proposal as soon as possible.

Gene Oshrin said he heard that the small abandoned hangar had been rented and wanted to know why none of the local pilots had been informed about the possibility to rent it since the local pilots and their association had repeatedly asked to be given notice of this opportunity and had been assured that they would be. Here none of the pilots knew of what was going on.

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez said that the opportunity had been officially noticed as required by law and was surprised that none of the pilots had expressed any interest—and in fact only one person responded and he was awarded the lease.

Gene Oshrin indicated that it was disingenuous to expect local people to scrutinize every legal notice published in the papers and was disappointed at this process. Moreover he and others been told repeatedly that the airport wanted this area for the storage of equipment and some felt they had been purposely misled.

Arthur Malman indicated that he had discussed this lease with the Supervisor and Kathee Burke-Gonzalez after the award had been announced. During that discussion the Supervisor had been surprised that the attorneys who drafted the RFP put in a fixed rental (based on older lease rates) rather than have interested parties bid up the lease to fair market values as he had experienced with the Sea Breeze cottages that the village had been renting for many years at rents lower than active bidding produced. The Supervisor indicated that the Law Department should be consulted about whether the bid could be rejected and a new RFP circulated. Arthur Malman noted since nothing was redone apparently, after discussions with the legal department in which he did not participate, it was determined that such flexibility no longer existed.

Bonnie Krupinski and Cindy Herbst also stressed that where airport facilities were to be offered to the public, the Town should at least notify existing airport stakeholders of the potential opportunities and the process followed here had been unfair. Members indicated once again that this type of unfortunate situation might be avoided in the future if draft copies of proposed RFP’s were shared with the committee or, at the very least, members of the committee and airport stakeholders routinely get copies of RFP’s, bid requests and the like as soon as they are publically available.

Bonnie Krupinski pointed to the need to protect airport equipment from deterioration from the elements and that the Town had consistently failed to do this. Jemille Charlton agreed, stating that airport management had repeatedly raised this issue but that meanwhile lighting systems left outside for several years have deteriorated so significantly that are probably not worth fixing. Arthur Malman noted that the prior airport finance committee had discussed this situation of neglect and that this committee’s first interim report specifically recommended an equipment shed be added.

A short discussion ensued on the usefulness of an IDA financing or real estate tax incentives to make leasing land at the airport more attractive. It did not seem that the mortgage recording tax savings on relatively small projects would outweigh the cost of an IDA involvement and loss of revenue to the Town. Bonnie Krupinski did not think that a small marginal savings in real estate tax savings would have a meaningful impact on the decision to rent airport land and the Town has not previously used payments in lieu of tax agreements.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30

Respectfully submitted

Arthur Malman