

Airport Management Advisory Committee  
**Minutes of Meeting – May 8, 2020 at Town Hall**

Arthur Malman, Chairman of Town of East Hampton’s Airport Management Advisory Committee (“AMAC”), called the meeting to order at 10 AM via Zoom meeting

The following members of the AMAC were present: voting members: Steve Tuma, Charles Ehren, Kent Feuerring, David Gruber, Munir Saltoun and Arthur Malman, and ex-officio members Jeff Bragman, Councilperson and Board liaison for the AMAC, James Brundige, Airport Director and Len Bernard, the Town’s Chief Budget Officer.

Absent were Pat Trunzo III and Gene Oshrin, voting members and John Mak, a non-voting member.

Among others attending for all or part of the telephone meeting were Michael Wright of the Express News Group, Katherine Slye of the East Hampton Aviation Association, Max Wundschock, an aviation mechanic with MacAndrews & Forbes at HTO, John Kirrane of the Sag Harbor/Noyac Civic Association, Sherly Gold of Say No to KHTO, John Cullen a member of the Northville Civic Council and the Riverhead Noise Task Force, Teresa McCaskie of the Southold Town Helicopter Committee, Alex Gersten, Director of Airports and Ground Infrastructure for the National Business Aviation Association (“NBAA”), Jeff Smith of the Eastern Regional Helicopter Council, Ron Klausner of the Watermill/Southampton Aircraft Advisory Committee, and other residents of EH and neighboring towns who have aviation interests and/or who have been working toward helicopter and/or jet noise reduction over their homes and other members of the public and media.

The agenda had been previously distributed to members and made available to the public prior to the meeting and additional copies were distributed to attendees.

The next meetings are SCHEDULED for the following Fridays at Town Hall, at **TEN (10) AM:**

**JUNE 12, JULY 10, AUGUST 14**

Arthur Malman noted that it was likely that the June 12 meeting would be on Zoom.

The draft minutes of the April 10, 2020 meeting, as previously distributed with the correction to reflect that Charles Ehren had joined the meeting after it had started, were approved.

Steve Tuma and James Brundige reported that, other than flights of based aircraft, there were recently only about 2-3 non-HTO-based aircraft flights per day coming into HTO, which tended to be larger jets and large helicopters-- typically privately owned by substantial individuals or corporations. Steve Tuma noted that he had not seen any Blade crowd-sourced helicopters or any seaplanes in recent weeks [after the meeting a notice from Blade was circulated indicating that it would be reducing the number of seats in its traditional multi-passenger helicopters and noting other covid-related measures that it was taking].

Teresa McCaskie noted that she was still seeing many aircraft in the HTO airspace. Katherine Slye pointed out that many of these were actually not headed into or out of HTO, but rather just transecting the airspace since HTO operations were at such a low level. She also noted that several of these had been flying at altitudes beneath the voluntary recommended levels. Teresa McCaskie stated that she was still filing complaints and was trying to make sure that she attributed noisy aircraft to the appropriate airport.

James Brundige reported that, even with reduced operations at HTO, there were still noise complaints being filed (although about half came from a single resident).

John Kirrane said that while we all recognized that there were now few helicopters---which had been the most disturbing---once the worst noise of the helicopters had dissipated, residents below flight paths had now realized that there were other noisy aircraft still adversely affecting the peaceful enjoyment of their properties. He pointed out that the other aircraft noise had obviously been there all along, but while the helicopter noise had dominated, their noise was so overwhelming that the other aircraft noise had been largely drowned out.

A discussion followed on the effect of the virus shutdowns on HTO 2020 operations and revenues. Although there were fewer non based aircraft landing, those that were landing tended to be larger jets that paid higher landing fees, so James Brundige estimated that landing fee and related fuel flowage fees would probably only be reduced to about 50% of their levels in 2019. However, it was pointed out that the airport received significant revenues from rents from both aeronautical and non-aeronautical tenants that would not be so significantly reduced. Parking revenues and advertising revenues were likely to be severely reduced. Most importantly, the airport fund had significant reserves that could cover any short term operating revenue reductions as well as the ongoing costs of budgeted capital improvements and repairs.

Jeff Bragman was asked if there were any significant drop offs in rents from various non-aeronautical tenants because of the virus. He did not want to discuss possible individual tenant negotiations. However, Len Bernard indicated that overall HTO rents to date had not been substantially lower than projected levels-- but that could change once the actual May collections were evaluated. It was noted that the large Krupinski hangar was current on its rent.

James Brundige reviewed the items in his Airport Director's May report (copy attached as Exhibit A).

Since he had not been in attendance at the April meeting, James Brundige also reviewed the analysis of airport capacity that had been included in his April report, noting that there had been times when HTO had been at capacity, aircraft were landing and taking off at about 1 minute intervals and there had been occasional short ground holds. Since it was believed that there had been only a few such holds, Arthur Malman asked if James Brundige could get back to the AMAC with the actual number and length of holds that occurred in 2019.

It was also observed that, because of insufficient aircraft parking areas, aircraft had to engage in unnecessary operations (with attendant noise) to fly to some other nearby airport while waiting to re-board their passengers. David Gruber asked if James Brundige and Steve Tuma could look at data for 2019 to give us an estimate of how many of these types of needless operations occurred last summer.

Arthur Malman asked about the status of the Baker proposal for the Phase II pavement report. Len Bernard reported that Baker had indicated, in response to the letter that David Gruber and he had sent, that the essential items needed would in fact be covered. A question was raised as to the Board's interest in proceeding with the project. Len Bernard indicated that unless the Board had informally shown an interest in proceeding with the Phase II work, there would not have been the follow up letter. Therefore, the next step would be submission of a formal resolution for Board approval to proceed.

Jeff Bragman was asked the status of the 3 proposals for preliminary environmental testing. He explained that they had been sent to aviation counsel and the Board was awaiting their response.

Jeff Bragman also reported that the Board showed no interest at this time in proceeding with either a guard rail along the road where the low horizontal fence members could affect a car swerving off the road nor in engaging a traffic safety engineer to evaluate the level of threat.

Arthur Malman suggested that, especially since the fence was not particularly attractive, there might be some benefit to add a row of bushes along the road where the horizontal fence posts were. There was a question whether this addition would detract from the effectiveness of the special fence and David Gruber would check with the Cornell deer experts and Arthur Malman would check with Charlie Marder who designed the fence and had the most experience with its operations.

David Gruber pointed out that, with so few operations by non-based aircraft during this spring because of virus concerns, we could study the economic and other effects of sharply reduced operations on the airport and surrounding areas which would not otherwise be possible.

Kathryn Slye asked Jeff Bragman about the status of the recommended economic study recommended by the AMAC. Jeff Bragman explained that both he and Arthur Malman had both sent the AMAC recommendations on the economic study and on the process for all studies to the Board and that he had forwarded copies to the Town's aviation counsel. Although he advocated studies starting as soon as possible, the rest of the Board had not yet decided on this or other studies, but if and when studies were undertaken, they would most likely be commissioned by counsel at the direction of the Board.

Arthur Malman pointed out that, with new projects suspended, and with little airport activity, this would be a good time for the AMAC to revise and update, with the airport director, town code regulations and minimum standards for airport users. It appeared that the minimum standards had been drafted back in the 1980's and, among other things, minimum insurance requirements were way below modern standards. Arthur Malman said he would contact the Town's insurance consultant to get his thoughts on reasonable minimums and asked Steve Tuma to review both insurance for FBO's as well as minimum areas required for FBO and other operations.

It was suggested that the AMAC could look at what some other similar seasonal airports were now using for their minimum standards. Alex Gertsen suggested a consulting firm but the sense of the meeting was that we could first review the standards of a few other airports.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Arthur Malman

## **Exhibit A**

### **AMAC Meeting Airport Director's Update May 5, 2020**

#### **Construction and Maintenance Projects**

Baker--The runway/taxiway crack sealing and painting project still on hold. Even though airport projects are considered "essential", the contractor has asked to postpone work until NY State opens up more—maybe in June—which I have approved.

Savik and Murray--The Airfield lighting, Ramp lighting and Sound Proofing projects are with the engineer.

- Airfield Lighting will be ready for Bid package next week.
- Ramp Lighting is still being engineered and researched—solar powered vs. line voltage powered. Bid package expected within three weeks—end of May.
- Soundproofing is awaiting signed proposal and Purchase Order. It is currently in the hands of the attorneys.

#### **Environmental, Economic and Other Studies**

—No Change Jeff Bragman submitted the three Environmental proposals to the other Town Board members for consideration.

--- The Economic Study is being conducted by David Gruber and Kent Feuerring.

#### **Deer Fence-Guard Rail**

—No Change The estimated cost of installing a Guard Rail along Daniels Hole Road is \$77,000. The draft Resolution to proceed with the work has not been adopted by the Town Board.

#### **Revised Airport Regulations**

The Airport Minimum Standards document that is presumed to have been adopted by the Town in the 1980s is attached as an addendum to this report.

I have also attached a memo I sent to the Town Attorney's office and Town Board a while ago with suggestions for updating.

Minimum Standards are not required for General Aviation airports, but are recommended and represent good business practices. In order for the Minimum Standards guideline to have more clout, perhaps they should be incorporated into the Town Code. Revised Town Code must be approved by the Town Board and by the New York Department of State.

**Exhibit B**

{ALSO TO BE ATTACHED BY THE TOWN TO ITS FILE COPY OF THE FINAL MINUTES ARE THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS PRESENTED TO THE MEETING}

No other materials were presented at this meeting