

Macon County Airport Authority
Minutes of the Regular Meeting Held on January 27th, 2015

The Macon County Airport Authority holds its regularly scheduled meeting on January 27th, 2015 in its office at the Macon County Airport. All members with the exception of Member Rhodes, who is excused from the meeting, are present. Also present are: Joe Collins, Legal Counsel; Jimmy Luther, Project Engineer; Greg Kershaw, engineer; Dan Rogers; pilot, concerned citizen; David Phillips, pilot, concerned citizen; R. Joel Johnson, Joel Johnson Surveying Inc.; Bentley L. Robinson, Joel Johnson Land Surveying, Inc. ; Lori Hall, Macon County Finance Director; Teresa McDowell, MCAA Clerk; and FBO Neil Hoppe and Peggy Milton. Chair Gregory welcomes everyone, and calls the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 25TH, 2014: After a discussion, Member Schmitt makes a motion to approve the minutes as forwarded. Member Jenkins seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent.

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION: Both Mr. Rogers and Mr. Phillips are present in order to inform the MCAA of their concerns regarding system failures at the Macon County Airport. Mr. Rogers states that currently the AWOS system is non-functioning, which is a safety issue when approaching the airport, particularly in connection to an approach with a cloud deck. He states that this is partially because the barometric pressure being sent out is incorrect, and is set too low. He continues by stating that the system has been down “off & on” for five (5) months. Mr. Rogers also states that the runway lights are not working, and that a pilot should normally be allowed to key the lights on upon approach, but that they are no longer able to do this. Mr. Rogers also states that the beacon light is inoperable, and that the obstruction lights on the surrounding ridges are also not working. He states that these lights have stopped working “one at a time” over a period of time. Mr. Rogers continues by stating that the Fuel Farm Jet A fueling system is not working, in that the reel used for the hose does not work properly. Mr. Rogers states that in his opinion, this is a safety issue in that the fuel could possibly get contaminated while dragging the hose along the ground in order to reach the aircraft. Mr. Rogers continues by stating that in dealing with the FAA, he understands that the “squeaky wheel gets the grease”, so he has filed an official, written complaint, with the FAA. Mr. Rogers continues by stating that these are all safety issues for pilots, and asks the MCAA whether there is a timeline for repair available. Chair Gregory thanks Mr. Rogers and Mr. Phillips for attending the meeting and for taking the time to voice their concerns to both the MCAA and to the FAA. Chair Gregory continues by stating that, as this is information that is being submitted by involved pilots who regularly utilize the airport, the complaint may help the MCAA obtain the necessary funding from the DOA, in order to address these issues. Chair Gregory further explains that the circuit board necessary for the runway lights to work properly has been ordered and will be installed by Barnes & Powell Electrical Company, Inc. immediately upon receipt, and that the MCAA has been informed that there is a two (2) to three (3) week wait time on receiving the board from the manufacturer. Chair Gregory also states that Casey Jennings, is currently doing a review of the obstruction lighting in order to determine the process needed to repair them. Chair Gregory asks Ms. McDowell, the MCAA Clerk, to review these needed repairs in connection to the current grant status. Ms. McDowell states that the MCAA is in the process of acquiring a new grant which will address most of these issues. She states that a piece of the grant, which has been awarded, and approved for the match by the Macon County Commissioners is available for use, and has been designated to cover the following relevant projects: Rotating Beacon Replacement, AWOS Replacement

and Obstruction Lighting replacement. She states that the available, approved funding will cover the rotating beacon and AWOS system replacement completely, while a portion has been designated for the obstruction lighting repair. The amount budgeted may cover the obstruction lighting repairs, but bids for repair and equipment must be acquired in order to know the total cost involved. Ms. McDowell continues by explaining the process for grant awarding by the DOA, and states that the Division of Aviation will usually award grant money for a particular project, and that they have allowed the MCAA to utilize the grant referenced above for these less costly, but important projects, because these grant funds are designated as Non-Primary Entitlement funds and the DOA will normally allow a little more leeway in utilizing these type funds. Ms. McDowell continues by stating that all documentation has been submitted to the DOA in order to get the funding in place, so as to move forward with these projects.

ENGINEERING REPORT: Mr. Jimmy Luther also spoke to the concerns of Mr. Rogers and Mr. Phillips, and states that the grant process can sometimes be a slow one but the benefit is worth the effort. He states that once the Division of Aviation issues a grant, there are required components, to include a benefit cost analysis which can take six (6) to eight (8) weeks alone. Mr. Luther continues by stating that W.K. Dickson has acquired a firm bid of \$9,800.00 for the rotating beacon, and that the MCAA is awaiting a “go ahead” by the Division of Aviation before the purchase order can be processed.

DISCUSSION OF SAFETY ISSUES: Chair Gregory continues the safety issues discussion by stating that he also gets frustrated with the funding protocol, and that he thinks that the MCAA has and continues to work hard to make the airport as safe as possible. He also states that he certainly wants the Macon County Airport to be a credible airport for Western North Carolina, and he thinks that the letter that was submitted to the FAA by Mr. Rogers is “great” and will hopefully speed up the funding process. Member Haithcock also states that there is a fueling truck owned by Macon County which was acquired through the Sheriff’s department drug enforcement unit, that might work in connection to the fueling aspect of the airport. Member Haithcock and Chair Gregory will examine this truck, and report back to the MCAA regarding its condition and potential use.

BUDGET REVIEW: Member Haithcock reviews the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. He states that currently this year’s budget is “tracking pretty good.” He continues by stating that the electricity bills have been lower this year. He reports that he has spoken with Derek Roland, Macon County Manager, about increasing the budget next year. He states that 27% of the current budget is allotted to maintenance issues. He also states that the fence line continues to require more maintenance than in years past. Member Haithcock reports that the maintenance crew of Macon County normally does the spraying of the fence line, but he is looking at the budget in terms of the years to come. He states that if the air conditioning system goes out in or if the terminal building or other building on the grounds develop a leak, then repairs could utilize the budget pretty quickly. Ms. Hall, the Macon County Finance Director is present and asks the MCAA to follow protocol regarding getting a budget adopted. She states that they need to adopt a budget ordinance for the current fiscal year, and hold a public hearing on the budget no later than March of 2015. If the budget requires changes, they can be made after the public hearing is held. Member Schmitt inquires as to whether there is funding available to paint the

hangar building. After further discussion, Member Jenkins makes a motion to accept the budget as presented by Member Haithcock. (FY 2015-2016-Attached). Member Schmitt seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent. The formal adoption of and the public hearing for the budget will be included on the agenda for the March 31st 2015 meeting agenda.

OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL UPDATE/DISCUSSION: Mr. R. Joel Johnson and Mr. Bentley L. Robison of Joel Johnson Land Surveying, Inc. are present to present a report in connection to obstruction removal from the airport approach. The surveyors and Mr. Luther report that the criteria has changed per the FAA and that a "bigger footprint" is now required. Under the new criteria the trapezoid shaped "flare" continues for a longer distance and is wider, so more obstructions are included in the area. Also, under these new guidelines, there is a house on a knoll adjacent to the airport, which would now be "marked" rather than mitigated because it is now considered a penetration. A certification to the FAA stating that the area is clear must be done, and the only choices are mitigation or marking in order to "remove" the obstructions. Some of the obstructions are due to the change in the footprint; some have grown back after being removed previously. This project is complicated, with the next step to include acquiring estimates and determining interagency specifications for both the FAA and the DOA. It is determined that Runway 7 is worse than Runway 25. Member Schmitt asks if one runway could be designated as an approach in order to lessen the scope of the project, and Mr. Luther will research this aspect. Also, a portion of the fence must be realigned. It is the consensus of the MCAA that this project needs to be undertaken, and that it is more feasible to tackle one runway end at a time. The obstruction removal ties directly into the use of the PAPI lights, which cannot be utilized until the obstruction clearing is done.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Lori Hall, Macon County Finance Director, presents the MCAA with a copy of the audit for FY2014-2015. Ms. Hall points out some details within the audit, and then states that the audit results in a clean report, and that nothing is out of order.

Member Haithcock reports that Casey Jennings of UNC has been examining the obstruction lights, and has visited four (4) sites. He will do another assessment and determine what it will take to repair them.

Ms. Hall suggests that the MCAA acquire three (3) bids for the lighting repairs.

Member Schmitt reports that he has two (2) bids available for painting the hangar building, one for \$8400.00 and one for \$7600.00.

Member Haithcock will determine a cost for fixing the hose at the fuel farm.

There being no further business, Member Jenkins makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Schmitt seconds the meeting and it passes by unanimous consent. The meeting is adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Pete Haithcock, Secretary