

**MACON COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY**  
**Meeting Held June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

The Macon County Airport Authority holds its regularly scheduled meeting on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at the Macon County Airport. All members are present. Also present are Paul Webb, TRC Environmental; Jimmy Luther, W.K. Dickson; Joe Collins, Legal Counsel; Karl Gillespie, County Commissioner; Lori Carpenter, Finance Director; and Teresa McDowell, Clerk. Chair Schmitt welcomes all those present and calls the order to meeting at 4:07 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING HELD MAY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2020:** After a brief discussion, Member Rhodes makes a motion to approve the minutes as forwarded. Member Horton seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent.

**PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION:** None

**APPROVAL OF THE ORDINANCE AMENDING FY2019-2020 BUDGET:** After a discussion, Member Horton makes a motion to approve the ordinance amending the FY2019-2020 budget. Member Haithcock seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent.

**APPROVAL OF FY 2020-2021 BUDGET ORDINANCE:** After a discussion, Member Horton makes a motion to approve the FY2020-2021 budget ordinance. Member Rhodes seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent.

**PRESENTATION OF ARCHEOLOY FINDINGS FORMAL REPORT:** Paul Webb of TRC Environmental is present to present a final report on the environmental mitigation in connection to the original runway extension, which report is noted as Archaeological Data Recovery Excavations at the lotla Site (31MA77) at the Macon County Airport, Macon County, North Carolina. The following interested parties participate in the report via a Zoom meeting. They include Aaron Braswell and Bernard Green, FAA; Robert Jackson, DOA; Steven Yorke, Eastern Band of Cherokees; Caleb Whitley, Division of Aviation; Tasha Benyshek, TRC; Lindsay Ferrante; Casey L. Kirby, Office of Archaeology; John Mintz; and Lisa Cooke. Chair Schmitt introduces the authority and welcomes all. Mr. Webb reports that the area sited as 31MA77 contains soil samples that indicate the soil is over ten thousand (10,000) years old, and predates human occupation. He continues by stating that beneath the removed subsoil, pits, stains, and post holes indicates different levels of occupation to include prehistoric, as well as the tribe of the Cherokee Indians. Mr. Webb continues by presenting the findings of the research, stating that the area has been occupied for 2500 years, and he reports the following: 500 BC- People in the area are digging pits and making pottery; 200AD-600AD-Many of the post holes and pits are dated during this time period; 350-370 AD-People are growing corn, and hunting deer, turkey etc. This is a booming time period; 600 AD-There was some sort of event which destroyed the population. For the next 100 years, there are small bands around the area with much less visibility; 1000-1100AD-Two small fortified villages were built 1400 AD-Continues occupation into the Qualla Phase, where there was a concentration of buildings and typical Cherokee pottery with stamps. The 1730's are considered the Ithoree stage, with references about the village being burned and crops uprooted in 1761. During 1778 through 1781, the town was burned again and there was no further occupation at that site. Mr. Webb continues by stating that there is now a detailed record for the history of this area. Mr. Webb also stated that this is one of the most important archaeological sites in North Carolina, maybe the nation. At this point, Mr. Webb

took questions from the participants, with many of the participants expressing appreciation for a thorough and detailed report.

Mr. Webb informs the authority that he will provide copies, both hard copies and digital to the SHPO, the FAA, the DOA, Lori Beckwith at the Corp. of Engineers, and the Eastern Band. He provides a hard copy to the authority which will be on file in the office of the Clerk.

The conversation continues with the status of the "new" MOA, and the progress with the different agencies involved. Mr. Braswell of the FAA states he will reach out to the state and will keep the authority informed.

The Zoom meeting ends at 4:55 p.m.

A conversation continues among the authority and Project Engineer, Jimmy Luther regarding the requirements of the "new" MOA. This document is necessary in order to proceed with projects at the airport. Mr. Luther reviews the projects that are currently located on the TIP report, which can move forward once the original MOA is "closed out" and the "new" MOA is developed. A part of the agreement would be a display at the airport including the information about the Cherokee people that was discovered during the mitigation. The authority expresses appreciation to Paul Webb for his hard work.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

The NPE grants have been approved for the new fuel farm. The DOA is experiencing a budget "hiccup" at this time, which is causing some delays.

The CARES grant in the amount of thirty thousand (\$30,000.00) dollars should be utilized for operational expenses. The authority will continue discussions on how to best utilize these funds.

There is a discussion regarding the 50/10 report from Jimmy Capps. There are several discrepancies listed, but Mr. Luther states that they are all relatively minor. He will review this list again before the next meeting. Chair Schmitt will also discuss this list with FBO David Phillips.

There being no further business to discuss, Member Rhodes makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 p.m. Member Haithcock seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted:

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Pete Haithcock, Secretary