

**BURLINGTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
BOARD OF AIRPORT COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF MEETING
December 2, 2020**

APPROVED – 1/12/21

[Note: Meeting held by teleconference.]

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Munger
Bill Keogh
Jeff Schulman
Tim George
MEMBERS ABSENT: Helen Riehle
BTV STAFF PRESENT: Gene Richards, Director of Aviation
Nic Longo, Deputy Director of Aviation, Operations
Marie Friedman, Director of Finance
Shelby Losier, Director of Ground Operations
Larry Lackey, Director of Engineering & Environmental Compliance
Hannah Lumbra, Administrative Assistant
OTHERS PRESENT: Channel 17
Karen Paul, Burlington City Council
Eileen Blackwood, Burlington City Attorney
Kristine Lott, Mayor of Winooski

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Airport Commission Chair, Jeff Munger, called the teleconference meeting to order at 4:07 PM on December 2, 2020.

2.0 AGENDA

2.01 Approve/Adopt Agenda

MOTION by Bill Keogh, SECOND by Tim George, to approve the agenda as presented. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

3.0 PUBLIC FORUM

There were no comments from the public.

4.0 CONSENT AGENDA

4.01 Minutes: October 21, 2020

4.02 Enplanements

MOTION by Bill Keogh, SECOND by Jeff Schulman, to approve the consent agenda and place the information on file. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

5.0 ACTION ITEMS

5.01 Proposed City of Burlington Charter Change: Add City of Winooski Seat to Airport Commission

MOTION by Jeff Schulman, SECOND by Tim George, to recommend that City Council approve the charter change to add a seat for the City of Winooski and an additional seat for a Burlington taxpayer on the Airport Commission.

DISCUSSION:

- **City Attorney, Eileen Blackwood, gave a brief history and reason for adding a seat for the City of Winooski on the Airport Commission. The language of the proposed charter change was reviewed. It was noted the MOU between the City of Burlington, the City of South Burlington, and the City of Winooski is complete and local match funding for noise mitigation has been found. The City of Burlington charter change is necessary to allow the Airport Commission to have seven members including one from South Burlington and one from Winooski. City Council will vote to place the charter change on the ballot at town meeting, and if the voters approve the charter change then the matter will be sent to the state legislature and then the Governor for action.**
- **Bill Keogh observed the charter change to add a Burlington taxpayer and a Winooski seat on the Airport Commission for a total of seven members is significantly different that what was discussed before. The matter has been pending for a week yet the Airport Commission only just received it. City Attorney Blackwood said the language is the same as the City Council resolution from December 2019.**
- **Jeff Munger said according to a memo, dated 1/1/20, Section F says airport staff recommended not changing the current structure of the Airport Commission and encouraged substantial exploration to avoid disrupting the airport's current successful trends. City Attorney Blackwood said the memo pertained to the issue of regionalization. Adding a Burlington rep and a Winooski rep is not seen as changing the governance. Jeff Munger said he would like to know the pros and cons before going further.**
- **Bill Keogh expressed appreciation to the City Attorney and staff for the work done on the governance document. Mr. Keogh posed the following questions to Winooski Mayor, Kristine Lott:**
 - **What does Winooski bring to the table of the Airport Commission if the Winooski seat is approved? Answer by Mayor Lott – The City of Winooski and the airport will be working together for decades through the noise mitigation program. Having a formal relationship to make sure there is collaboration for years into the future is important. The advisory seat sets up Winooski to make sure there is an established, reoccurring connection and easy entrance to collaboration. It ensures should airport leadership change or Winooski leadership change or Airport Commission members change that relationships are not needing to be rebuilt because there is a formal connection going forward. If there are other changes at the airport that impact Winooski, then Winooski is able to have a voice in the discussion**

to make sure concerns are heard and citizens have bought into changes that are made because they were able to participate in the process.

- **What elements of airport operation interest Winooski (i.e. automobile traffic generated by the airport, flight patterns, commercial and military operations, noise issue from non-military or commercial aircraft)? Answer by Mayor Lott – Automobile traffic has not been an issue up to this point. Winooski does sit under the flight path so all commercial and military activity is something Winooski would like to have a voice in. (Bill Keogh noted the Airport Commission has no role in flight patterns.) Commercial and military operations are of interest to Winooski because of where Winooski sits adjacent to the airport. Winooski wants to be a part of the discussion of noise issues from non-military and commercial aircraft.**
- **There are occasions when Burlington taxpayers are financially liable for some airport improvements either through a direct tax or shared responsibility for bond issues. Winooski as an Airport Commission member would vote on this. Would Winooski be willing to share Burlington's financial responsibility? Answer by Mayor Lott – Winooski is not willing to share financial responsibility because Winooski is not receiving any financial benefits. The airport operates as an enterprise fund separate from the municipal finances of the City of Burlington.**
- **Has Winooski been affected economically by the operation of the airport, and if so, how? Answer by Mayor Lott – Winooski as well as any community that sits in the flight path has lower property values than the surrounding area.**
- **On East Allen Street in Winooski there are major housing developments that received building permits from the City of Winooski and are right in the flight path. The buildings are well occupied so how are property values reduced? Answer by Mayor Lott – The home values in Winooski are lower than in Burlington and other areas not impacted by the noise. People still want to live in Winooski, but home values are lower.**
- **Does Winooski see anything wrong with the management of the airport and how the airport operates? Answer by Mayor Lott – Specifics have not been heard beyond wanting to have a formal communication and collaboration ensured into the future.**
- **In November 2019 Winooski City Council passed a resolution seeking in essence a change in management of the airport transferring ownership to a proposed regional commission. Response by Mayor Lott – There was passed advocacy for a regional governance structure, but Winooski is no longer seeking that and is seeking a seat on the advisory Airport Commission.**

- **Burlington, South Burlington, and Winooski have been working for a long time on an MOU with three elements including change in governance of the airport, a seat on the Airport Commission for Winooski, and working with the three communities to provide local match money to federal money for noise mitigation. What is the status now? Answer by Mayor Lott – In March there was an agenda item for the Airport Commission to review and provide feedback on the MOU, but the meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic. Mayor Weinberger, Commissioner Riehle, and myself (Lott) were pleased with the document and ready to move it forward.**
- **Are you aware of the financial elements of the MOU? Answer by Mayor Lott – No financial obligations are involved.**
- **Bill Keogh read the following statement:**
 - **It appears Winooski wants to see a movie, but does not want to buy a ticket. Winooski would like to have a seat on the Airport Commission only because it wants to and apparently so does Mayor Weinberger. If this issue passes soon to follow may be Williston, Richmond, Colchester, and so on. This move by Mayor Weinberger is a political one and I am not sure why. The Director of Aviation, Gene Richards, and his very capable staff are doing an excellent job running the airport, COVID-19 notwithstanding. We have to remember the Airport Commission is only advisory. It has been a long while since the Airport Commission has been asked for its viewpoint. The Airport Commission was not asked nor would it have a say in the removal of 200 homes in South Burlington. The Airport Commission was not asked nor would it have a say in any operation of the Vermont Air Guard. The Airport Commission was not asked about the design of the planned hotel at the airport or the viability of the COVID-19 test site at the airport. The proposed issue before the Airport Commission would add another vote to change the governance of the airport. South Burlington has had a seat and Burlington's relationship with that city has been great until recently. At one time the Chair of the Airport Commission was the member from South Burlington. Now the relationship is modified somewhat. The airport is the largest taxpayer in South Burlington yet the City of South Burlington brought the airport into court challenging the airport property assessment that cost both parties thousands of dollars in court costs. Today it is abundantly clear that South Burlington would wrest ownership of the airport from Burlington through a regional commission. If Winooski is added to the Airport Commission probably South Burlington would get a companion vote to take away our valuable Burlington asset, our airport. The airport does an**

excellent job running the airport, benefiting the adjoining communities, the county, and the state. I hope we defeat this proposal. Winooski wants to see the movie, but does not want to buy the ticket.

- **Jeff Schulman expressed appreciation for the thoroughness of Bill Keogh's statement and concerns, but said he does not share the concerns in the same way. The airport is an important asset to the City of Burlington. The City has invested a lot for many, many years. Jeff Schulman said he is not supportive of the regionalization effort, but does not think the addition of a Winooski seat on the Airport Commission particularly if accompanied by a Burlington seat is a threat to Burlington's control. It is understandable that Winooski wants a seat to be a part of the conversation. It sounds like there has been lots of discussion at the mayoral level and the administrative level in the communities about this. Mr. Schulman said he does support the charter change and asked if the Airport Commission taking a position on the matter has any impact. City Attorney Blackwood said City Council wants to know what the Airport Commission thinks about the proposal, but the charter change could go through without Airport Commission support.**
- **Tim George recalled the agenda for the February meeting (item 5.01) asked the City Attorney to affirm that the Airport Commission is satisfied with the current form of governance, oppose any efforts from the Vermont legislature to change the governance or ownership of the airport, and continue to support efforts for Burlington to work with neighboring municipalities. The MOU was underway so then there was consideration of Winooski gaining a seat. The document noted was in reference to regionalization, but Winooski wanting a seat was well known at that time so there is question as to why in February there was a document saying oppose any efforts of change in governance knowing Winooski was seeking a seat and in December the document is being set aside and consideration is being given to Winooski having a seat. What changed? City Attorney Blackwood said nothing changed. The memo talked about the idea of regionalization of the governance and a different governance and ownership structure of the airport. The issue of Winooski having a seat had already been dealt with by the Airport Commission. Staff should probably have flagged this differently to avoid confusion. Tim George agreed it was confusing because the document was at the same meeting where discussion of adding a Winooski seat to the Airport Commission was held.**
- **Tim George asked how it was decided that Winooski merited consideration for a seat and not any of the other neighboring municipalities that are also impacted by the operation of the airport? Answer by City Attorney Blackwood – Winooski is impacted much more directly by the operations of the airport and has, in particular in**

relation to the current noise maps, a great deal of interest in what is happening with the airport around not only noise issues, but as a result of the larger operations. In addition, Winooski requested to have a seat on the Airport Commission. Inquires into other communities having a seat were made and there was no interest at that time in having a representative on the Airport Commission. It was felt Winooski had a much more direct impact from the airport than the other surrounding communities. Gene Richards added there were informal conversations with the other communities. The Williston government has changed since then so their opinion then may not be their opinion today. A lot has happened. The F-35s are here. The reality of them is here so it may be a completely different discussion today.

- Tim George asked if another municipality expresses interest in joining the Airport Commission, if Winooski is granted a seat this could compel other communities to also express interest in joining the Airport Commission, what would the city's position be, receptive or saying the other communities are not as impacted so the city is not interested in granting a seat? Answer by City Attorney Blackwood – The City of Burlington has not made a determination on that issue. The option has been discussed and people are saying maybe have a lesser advisory committee with those municipalities or other affected groups. They have been invited to join airport committees that already exist. The committees are not necessarily formal with decision making authority, but involved in things like noise mitigation study. The city at the moment is comfortable with the current status with the communities. There has not been a broad discussion or decision one way or another about that issue. It is a possibility the inquiries will come in, and if this occurred then there would have to be further discussion. Tim George expressed concern that this has not been thought through, noting he is not aware of other conversations with the other municipalities.
- Tim George noted Winooski representatives have attended Airport Commission meetings for the last two years and asked what would be different if Winooski attended the meetings as a voting member? Mayor Lott said she does not recall a majority of the past meeting contents especially with the lengthy break that occurred over the summer. No votes come to mind that would have had a different outcome. There has been some useful information in hearing about the progress on the hotel, changes to airport operations, changes to taxis. The biggest concern is around the noise map and noise mitigation which communities will be engaging together on for years to come. Tim George pointed out the Airport Commission has not discussed these matters as a commission. The communities are more served in the broader community discussions that happen (i.e. TAC, RAC).

- **Mayor Lott asked what primary topics are the Airport Commission responsibility? Tim George said the Airport Commission is principally an advisory commission. There is nothing about the operations of the airport on the agenda that is a very common agenda item for any Airport Commission meeting. Mayor Lott said the current agenda has an item about noise complaint reporting. Tim George said the Airport Commission can ask for statistics, but cannot change the policy as to what may be generating that noise in the first place.**
- **Tim George commented this is a challenging issue because Winooski is impacted and as an airport commissioner, he wants to see a way to have voices heard, but this may not be the best way to do it. The Airport Commission is largely symbolic and is advisory. The addition of the Winooski seat is a symbolic gesture to add a seat to a symbolic body. The same was said back in February. Tim George said he does not oppose the seat, but feels the addition of a seat is not going to generate the result the citizens of Winooski hope will result by adding a seat to the Airport Commission. The policies and overall operations of the airport are not going to be changed by adding Winooski to the Airport Commission.**
- **Mayor Lott said Winooski is well aware the Airport Commission is an advisory body. The objective is not to change policies necessarily, but to be a part of the conversation, have our voices heard, maybe hear something leadership takes in and makes a policy adjustment on their own. South Burlington gives their update every meeting. There could be a Winooski update where we could inform. Winooski discusses enplanements. Perhaps some commentary is possible on how Winooski is being impacted. Winooski constituents wants their voices heard and to be a part of the discussion. They are not asking for a guaranteed outcome which is why the request for a seat is different from a regional governance structure. Winooski wants to be a part of the discussion and is not asking to be a part of the governing decision-making body.**
- **Jeff Munger said policy at the airport is driven by the FAA. The Airport Commission is advisory. It is not certain that all that Winooski wants cannot be done without becoming a member. Jeff Munger said he would like to see more discussion and the pros and cons.**
- **Burlington city councilor, Karen Paul, said Winooski having a seat at the table was part of the strategic planning process six years ago. The MOU had to be done first (and it is) before the charter change went before the voters. The Airport Commission had opportunity to weigh in. City Council relies on commissions and board to do the ‘on-the-ground’ work. It is hoped the Airport Commission realizes all the work that has gone into the process and supports the seat which was part of the strategic plan. It is a decision whose time has come. It is**

understandable why Winooski wants a seat. They know there are many things they cannot control, like the F-35s, and when the City of Burlington appoints a commissioner the goal of the commissioner is to support the airport, scrutinize the financials, offer an opinion, and be there when decisions are made. Airport staff looks to the Airport Commission for this input. Commissioners need to have a general feeling of support for the health and welfare and stability of the airport. Winooski having a seat is positive. There has been rancor between South Burlington and Burlington and Winooski and Burlington, but finally they are working together in a very collaborative way. This is a positive. The seat must be given a chance. There is a big difference with regionalization where if you do not have skin in the game then you should not have a seat at the table. It is not that way with a seat on the Airport Commission.

- Mayor Lott said Winooski agrees the rep should support the airport. The goal is always to move forward even if there are decisions made that are not ideal for Winooski. Winooski can at least share ways to tweak the decision or bring the decision back to the community proactively to get ahead of the issues. Also, the current Winooski City Council with the F-35s specifically are focused on moving forward with noise mitigation with a seat on the Airport Commission and no longer being in a position of constantly battling.
- Gene Richards said people have put a lot of time into this. It is about collaboration, understanding, compassion. Working with Mayor Lott has been rewarding. Winooski City Council is tough, but fair. They have shown what could be to have a fair representative. They have been extremely supportive of the airport in every way they could be. They are realistic about what is going on and understanding of how important the asset is to the region. They do have direct impact from the airport. The example of collaboration that Mayor Lott is speaking of has been very beneficial. The Mayor has put considerable hours into the relationship which was not good at all and is fantastic today. Today there are fair discussions. Commissioner Riehle is trying to represent her community in a better and more fair way, more collaborative way. This is not as much political as it is fair to impacts people are having. You can have a voice by attending meetings, but it feels better to be a part of the conversation. The Mayor is looking to have everyone at the table, having discussion, feeling involved, feeling a part of it. Gene Richards stressed he is not in favor of regionalization. The City has worked hard and spent 100 years building the airport which is amazing for a community the size of Burlington. There have been comments that the push for regionalization will come again and that is disappointing that someone wants to steal the airport from the City of Burlington. That is unacceptable. The City has worked for years on this. It is not unacceptable to think about the airport's neighbors. The first flight

flew over Winooski. Flights still fly over Winooski. Mayor Lott has shown an example of what could be with the consideration and fairness and leading the way to the possibilities.

- Gene Richards asked if granting a seat to Winooski impairs Burlington's position on regionalization. City Attorney Blackwood said the seat helps the argument that governance remains with the City of Burlington, but the City is willing to hear voices from impacted communities and involve them closely in what is going on without giving up governance authority.
- Bill Keogh noted Nic Longo and Gene Richards have reached out through the noise mitigation program to make sure Winooski and other communities are on the TAC. Winooski has been well represented and has had plenty of input on noise mitigation. Airport staff has done a great job in reaching out. Winooski has had a representative at the last several Airport Commission meetings and been involved in a lot of the decision-making processes that committees have been involved in with noise mitigation input.

VOTING by rollcall: Tim George – aye, Jeff Schulman – aye, Bill Keogh – nay, Jeff Munger – nay (2-2); motion does not carry.

There was discussion of reconsidering the matter when Helen Riehle who is in support of the seat is in attendance. Bill Keogh said the matter has been voted already and should be closed. Jeff Schulman said the tie vote (defeat of the issue) does not represent the position of the majority of the Airport Commission because Helen Riehle would have voted in support. City Attorney Blackwood said she will convey the entire conversation on the matter to City Council. Written comments can be submitted to City Council.

5.02 Contract Amendment: Champlin UIC Contract

MOTION by Bill Keogh, SECOND by Tim George, to recommend City Council and the Board of Finance approve the contract amendment to the Champlin UIC contract.

DISCUSSION:

- Larry Lackey explained the contract amendment will assist with managing the UIC system.

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

5.03 Window Washing Service Contract: Home Window and Maintenance

MOTION by Bill Keogh, SECOND by Tim George, to recommend City Council and the Board of Finance approve the contract with Home Window and Maintenance for window washing services.

DISCUSSION:

- Shelby Losier explained the bid from Home Window and Maintenance was the most qualified bid received. The contract term is five years and includes some contingency.

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

6.0 COMMUNICATIONS and DISCUSSION**6.01 Finance Package**

Marie Friedman highlighted the \$1.66 million in CARES Act money is being expended to help cover bills and meet the debt coverage score year-to-date. The debt coverage score for the airport is 1.52. Year-to-date revenues are \$2.464 million without the CARES money which is lower by \$3.4 million from last year so there is a significant impact with fewer people flying. Rental, concessions, CFCs, and landing fees are experiencing a decrease in revenues. Expenses year-to-date are just under \$3 million for the first three months of the fiscal year. Staff continues to work to control expenses where possible without impacting safety or maintenance. There is \$13.4 million in the operating account to cover expenses.

Tim George asked if the CARES Act funds will last through the fiscal year. Marie Friedman said the money will likely only support the airport into the springtime. Gene Richards said staff is working with the City on refinancing the airport's debt so the airport is in a stronger financial position.

MOTION by Bill Keogh, SECOND by Jeff Munger, to accept the financial report and place the information on file. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

6.02 Audit Report

Marie Friedman said the auditors were able to issue a clean audit report for FY2020 and gave no recommendations. The airport met the debt coverage score agreement despite the difficult times and despite parking revenue being down 26% from the previous year, car rental revenue being down 14%, and overall operating revenues being down. The audit will be posted on the website.

MOTION by Bill Keogh, SECOND by Tim George, to accept the 2020 audit report and place the information on file. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

6.03 Construction Update

Larry Lacky gave a brief update on the following projects:

- Airport apron rehab - Phase 6 is complete.
- QTA - complete. Waiting for certificate of occupancy to be issued by South Burlington.
- Taxiway Golf - ready to open which will provide the airport with a full parallel taxiway.
- Stormwater infrastructure and fencing- coming to a close.
- Airport Master Plan – consultant working on the final documents.
- Hotel – per the South Burlington DRB decision the hotel must contribute to the airport's landscape master plan.
- TIP – contractor selected to do the terminal integration project. A response to the grant application for the project is expected.
- New security system – work will begin in two weeks.
- In-line baggage system – will move forward after TSA review of proposal is complete.

- Chamberlin School HVAC system – design is done.
- Noise monitory grant – application submitted to FAA.
- Stormwater and UIC permit compliance RFP – proposals finalized in next few weeks.

MOTION by Bill Keogh, SECOND by Jeff Munger, to accept the construction update report and place the information on file. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

7.0 SOUTH BURLINGTON SEAT UPDATE

No report.

8.0 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Gene Richards reported there are many good happenings at the airport including the north hangar being almost completely renovated by Beta Technology and the area on airport property known as “the pit” being ready for development.

9.0 COMMISSIONER ITEMS

9.01 Google Alerts

Airport commissioners can use Google Alerts to get airport updates.

9.02 Noise Complaint Report

MOTION by Bill Keogh, SECOND by Tim George, to accept the proposal that the noise complaint report showing individuals who submit complaints about noise be sent to the Airport Commission.

DISCUSSION:

- Nic Longo said the report shows complaints received by the airport only, not those received by the Air Guard.

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

Staff will provide a draft report next month.

10.0 NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting

January 20, 2021

Adjournment

MOTION by Bill Keogh, SECOND by Tim George, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:14 PM.

RScty by tape: MERiordan