

RICHLAND-LEXINGTON AIRPORT DISTRICT
Commission Meeting
January 29, 2024 @ 4:00 p.m. Carolina Room

Attendance

Carol Fowler, Chair; Anton Gunn, Vice Chair; Dan Bell (Zoom); Duane Cooper (Zoom); Breon Walker; Pat Smith; Hank Jibaja (Zoom); Jim Wellman; LaJoia Broughton; John Folsom; Chappelle Broome-Stevenson (Zoom); Tripp Jones

Staff

Mike Gula; Gregg Hornsby; Frank Murray; Ryan Kreulen; Kim Crafton; Lindsay Copelan; Daniel Ruggiero; Shanda Lucky; Roger Allen; Jessica Foster; John Fisher (Airport Attorney) (Zoom); Lynne Douglas (Commission Secretary)

Guests

Stephanie Ward, Rob Sims, Stephanie Green, Chris Lee (Mead & Hunt); Joseph Barkevich, Terry Macaluso (WK Dickson); Dave Carpenter, Jon Queen, Adam Wilhelm (Foth); John Dickerson (Columbia Aviation); Herbert & Sandra Sims (Carolina Concessions); Lee Thomas (Eagle Aviation); Ron Harvey (Global Core)

A. Call to Order and Introductions

1. Determination of a Quorum

Chair Fowler welcomed everyone and determined that a quorum was present.

2. Approve Order and Contents of the Overall Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

B. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of the January 2, 2024 Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Wellman made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chair Fowler shared that John Fisher's brother had passed away on Sunday and that Mr. Fisher is in Florida. He called in on Zoom as he had advised that there were contractual matters that needed to be discussed in Executive Session. Commissioner Wellman made a motion to enter Executive Session. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried. Upon coming out of Executive Session, there was no action taken.

C. Committee Reports

1. Finance, Contracts & Planning Committee Report

a. Hotel Development

Committee Chair Wellman reported that the committee met prior to the Commission Meeting. The committee received a presentation from Alia Bostaji, with Colliers, regarding a hotel development opportunity for the airport. He put forth the committee's recommendation to accept the concept as presented by Ms. Bostaji and for Colliers to pursue the appropriate hotel. The Commission approved the committee's recommendation. Commissioner Folsom recused himself from the vote.

b. Lobbyist Contract

Committee Chair Wellman reported that the committee received a recommendation from staff to hire Lobbyist services to represent the interests of the Airport. He put forth the committee's recommendation to approve contracts with both Adams and Reese LLP and The Campbell Consulting Group to provide Lobbyist services. The Commission approved the committee's recommendation.

2. Labor and Personnel Committee Report

a. Diversity Consultant RFP

Committee Chair Walker advised there was no report at this time but she hopes to have one following the committee's February meeting.

D. Information/Announcements/Staff Reports/Correspondence

1. Concession Opportunities

Mr. Murray provided a presentation regarding this topic and highlighted a proposed airport lounge opportunity. As part of the checkpoint renovation/expansion, the airside area just past the checkpoint on the right would provide a nice space for a lounge area to include the potential for a concession. Mr. Murray explained that this concession space would go out as a RFP and would be an opportunity for the current concessionaires to pursue. It would also be open to outside companies to bid. He showed renderings of the proposed space as well. He concluded by saying he wanted to bring the concept before the Commission as an opportunity for future discussion and direction.

2. Master Plan Update

Mr. Murray introduced Stephanie Ward, with Mead & Hunt. Ms. Ward provided a presentation on the progress and next steps of the Master Plan project.

3. December 2023 Financial Report

Mr. Hornsby presented the monthly financial report to include the enplanements update as detailed in the Commission packet. Following a few comments and questions regarding the DBE report included in the information, Commissioner Broughton thanked Mr. Hornsby and his staff for their detailed work on the DBE report.

4. Commission Chair's Report

Chair Fowler commended Public Safety and Airport Operations on their coordination of the President's and First Lady's recent arrival/departure through CAE. She received very nice comments from members of their staff expressing how well all had gone at the airport and expressing their appreciation for the professionalism and cooperation shown by these CAE departments.

Chair Fowler reminded the Commission about the tour by Mrs. Sims (Carolina Concessions) of their renovated facilities following the adjournment of the meeting.

5. President & CEO's Report

Mr. Gula explained that the airport has had a contract with Ailevon Aviation Consulting for air service development. This year, he would like to venture out and work with Volaire Aviation so as to get a different perspective and work with Ailevon on a case by case basis. He is in the process of finalizing the contract with Volaire.

Mr. Gula, Ms. Crafton, and Ms. Foster are working on plans to host a breakfast for the Legislative Delegations and the Columbia City Council. The breakfast will be held at the airport and staff will provide airport updates to the Delegations and City Council members.

Mr. Gula received six nominations to attend the Riley Institute's Diversity Leaders Initiative program. He attended orientation last week and said that the class limit is 40. He went on to say that the group represents a diverse group of business professionals. They will meet one day per month for five months for an all-day retreat. He said he is looking forward to this opportunity and will update the Commission as he goes through the program.

When attending a recent Irmo Chamber meeting, Mr. Gula was advised that the USC Band has been invited to perform at the Macy's Day Thanksgiving Parade. He will be talking with the airlines to request additional capacity as large numbers are expected to travel to New York for the event.

Mr. Gula reported that he had a follow-up call with United Airlines today. They are not planning any schedule changes at CAE for 2024 but will keep us plugged in for 2025.

Commissioner Broughton followed up on an ask prior to the holidays regarding an update on CAE's marketing sponsorship with USC. She also asked about the response to CAE's new FlyMyAirport booking tool on the website. Ms. Crafton shared a one-page update summary about the FlyMyAirport program. She said the program launched, with a press release, on November 8 and had gone live the week prior. Since November 8, 150 round-trip airline tickets have been booked through the website as well as 30 car rental bookings. She said the new program has been well received. The ability to book one-way tickets is now available on the site. Ms. Crafton said that she works with the FlyMyAirport team on a monthly basis to optimize the website and to make changes as needed.

Vice Chair Gunn commended Mr. Gula on his recent interview on 107.5 The Game during half-time at the Women's basketball game. He said that Mr. Gula provided an airport update and did a phenomenal job.

Mr. Gula referenced the copies of the 2023 Annual Report at each Commissioner's place. He said that copies will be provided to the Delegations and to the Columbia City Council.

E. Discussion/Suggestions

1. Comments from the Public

There were none.

F. Adjournment

Commissioner Wellman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lynne Douglas, Commission Secretary