

# Habersham County Airport Commission

## Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

Executive Conference Room

Habersham County Administration Building

130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523

The Habersham County Airport Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Executive conference room in the Habersham County Administration Building located at 130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA, 30523.

**Members Present:** D. Higgins, Andy Anderson, Justin Schapansky, Ken Schubring, Chris Limbach (via telephone)

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** County Staff, Members of the Public and Media.

**Call to Order:** Ken Schubring called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

**Invocation and Pledge:** D. Higgins gave the invocation and led the pledge of allegiance.

**Adoption of Agenda:** Motion by D. Higgins to amend the agenda to remove "Election of Officers for 2024" from new business. Motion was seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted unanimously. Motion by D. Higgins, seconded by Andy Anderson, and voted unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.

**Public Comment:** None

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion by Andy Anderson, seconded by D. Higgins, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2023 Regular Meeting.

**Financials:** Habersham County Airport Financials dated December 31, 2023, were presented by County Manager Alicia Vaughn. Year to date represented 50% of the fiscal year, therefore expenditures should be less than or equal to 50% and revenue should be at 50% minimum. The actual revenues that were collected were 20% of what was budgeted, and the actual expenses were 15% of what was budgeted. The bank account balance is \$125,564. Total revenues, less expenses, equals \$63,952.

**Approval of Financials:** Motion by D. Higgins, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted unanimously to approve the December 31, 2023 financials as presented.

### Reports:

**Fuel Sales and Airport Revenues:** In the month of December 2023, the airport sold 3,924.5 gallons of Low Lead fuel and 3,780 gallons of Jet Fuel, for a total of 7,704.5 gallons of fuel sold. Current inventory is 13,391 gallons of jet fuel and 8,992.2 gallons of low lead. Additional revenues for the month of December for oil sales, facility fees, overnight and tie down fees, and call-out fees totaled \$1,600.82. Current full-serve fuel prices are \$5.66 for Jet A and \$6.20 for Low Lead. Self-serve Low Lead is \$5.70 per gallon.

**Airport Manager Update:** Airport Manager Bill Harden gave the update. The new LED windsock has been installed and it is very bright and visible. The tree removal is complete, and it improved the views of the mountains from the airport. The new taxiway lighting and tie-downs are being installed this week. Painting will be done in the

next week, weather permitting. Bill and Josh have been discussing the need for a GPU (ground power unit), especially with the number of jets that they are seeing at the airport. They have gotten some quotes for battery pack and diesel/battery units. They have found one that does multiple things – you can ride on it, tow jets with it, it has a jump start unit, etc. It is a Lektro 8650. The price is around \$57,000 which is a stand-up, two-person completely electric diesel unit that will accommodate up to a large Challenger 350 jet. They have looked at used equipment, but it is very difficult to find, and pricing is close to what a new one would cost. Chris Limbach said that the average rental cost of a GPU is \$100 per hour, so that would bring additional revenue. Josh suggested giving a discount for the use of the GPU with large fuel purchases, which would also bring more revenue. Alicia said we would need to bid it out or purchase it under state contract and asked Bill to provide the specifications to the county Finance department. She also explained the difference between a bid and RFP and the board agreed that an RFP would be better. Alicia will ask Tim to work on an RFP to be reviewed at the February meeting. D. Higgins asked about the gate. Josh reached out to the person who used to service the gate to get a recommendation for a new company. In the meantime, Josh has done several things to try to fix it, including contacting tech support. Ken Schubring said he would give Josh the contact information for the company who works on Fieldale's gates. Charles Ladd has agreed to pay for the Cherokee and will have it picked up by February. Josh asked what documentation or paperwork would be needed to transfer ownership from the county to Mr. Ladd. Ken advised him to fill out a bill of sale. D. Higgins asked about the other plane and Josh advised that he has verified there are no liens on the plane, and it will be picked up soon.

**Airport Update:** Lead Edge Design Group – Phil Eberly gave the update. Phil has a 45-minute presentation that he would like to share with the new commission members that will soon be appointed. The apron portion of the ROFA project is almost complete, with electrical signs and lighting wrapping up this week. The markings will be refreshed soon and will only take a couple of hours of closure to complete. The runway closure is scheduled for the week of January 29<sup>th</sup> and will hopefully only be necessary for a couple of days rather than the whole week. The tie-down anchor holes will be drilled this week. There will be 6 tie-downs in that area. Phase one grading has 4-6 weeks until completion. The old windsock sat on high ground and the new windsock was moved to a lower position for now. Phil said if we have another project such as airfield electrical, which hopefully will be approved this summer, it can be moved to the cleared area at that time. The old windsock can be reused with a new foundation. The runway rehab will be sometime in late spring, weather permitting. D. asked about the row of trees in front of the new windsock. Phil said they will ask Wilcorp for a price to remove them since their removal is not included in the project.

**Airport Business Park Update:** Alicia Vaughn and Patti McLarty gave the update. The grading of pad 10 has been completed. There is a potential prospect for one of the pads in Phase II. There is a new spec building under review for pad 5, and the Higgins 40,000 square foot spec building is still unoccupied. Ken said he is impressed with the changes and improvements he has seen over the past few years in the business park.

### **Old Business:**

- Approve/Recommend Air Methods Revised Lease Agreement (tabled from December 14, 2023 meeting) – Ralph Taylor gave an update on the status of the new lease agreement. He has set the rental rate at \$650 per month. It took him some time to find the right person to speak with at Air Methods, but Ralph determined that person is David Reed. There were some questions about what to charge for the accessory building Air Methods uses for storage. The storage unit is not a problem, but we need to charge a ground lease fee for it. Phil suggested charging an extra \$100 monthly for the storage building. Ralph will set the rental rate at \$750, which will cover the hangar and the building. Ralph then asked the commission how they would like to handle the first right of refusal Air Methods is requesting. No one had an issue with granting the first right of refusal. The lease expired several months ago but they are current on their rent. Air Methods is also paying for their fuel as it is received, rather than being billed monthly. D. Higgins would like to have a rent

escalation in the lease. Motion by Andy Anderson, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted unanimously to table this item until the February meeting.

- Review/Recommend Land Lease RFP for 60' x 60' hangars (tabled from December 14, 2023 meeting) - Phil Eberly directed the commission to look at page 11, item 20b, which refers to the economic impact of a prospective lessee, which was added since last month. There are also many references to the scoring process of the RFP. D. Higgins asked why the RFP doesn't specify it is a ground lease? Phil and Alicia explained that the ground lease will be attached to the RFP. D. also asked about water and sewer not being available at the site, according to page 5, item B? He thinks it shouldn't be a problem to have water. Phil said that would be up to the hangar owners. Andy Anderson advised that restricting the availability of water and sewer would help limit the use of the hangars. D. said the county will need to provide the infrastructure for power to the hangars, but each tenant will be responsible for their own account and service. D. also referenced page 5, item C, which requests proposals from qualified businesses. He suggested that be changed to qualified individuals. He asked Ralph to clarify item 7 on page 6, which requires a workers compensation insurance policy. Ralph explained that the policy would only be required during the hangar construction. D. also asked for clarification on page 8, where it says "Due to the possibility of negotiation" – he said that seems contrary to other wording in the RFP. Alicia explained that we have the ability to negotiate with the highest scoring proposal to develop a contract. D. mentioned that on Page 14, the exhibit for the lease area needs to be defined. Phil said there is a separate page which defines the lease area that will be attached to the RFP. D. also asked about item 3 on page 15, which asks for total estimated jobs and type of business. Alicia said it isn't required for a proposer to have a business, but part of the scoring process is "economic impact" and should be considered. Ralph will re-word that item. Alicia asked about page 5, item F. Could we let the prospects propose what they want to pay and not limit that amount? Phil said it is better to set a lease amount that would be equal for all four units. Justin Schapansky asked if part of the scoring takes into consideration the value of aircraft to be able to estimate ad valorem and fuel revenue? Phil said that will be considered as part of economic impact. Do we need to mention rent escalation in the RFP? Ralph said that will be covered under the lease agreement. Alicia said her only other concern is lease transfers. Phil suggested adding elements in the ground lease that will spell out the process and requirements for lease transfers. The lease term should be changed to 25 years. Commissioner Bruce Palmer asked if it were possible to add a first right of option for the county to purchase in the event of a lease transfer request? Josh asked if there will be a grace period to replace an airplane before forfeiting a hangar? Alicia asked if we should stick with the \$360 per month ground lease fee, or should we leave it blank? Motion by D. Higgins, seconded by Andy Anderson, and voted unanimously to table this item until the February meeting.

#### **New Business:**

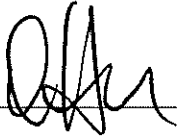
- Review/Recommend new ground lease for 60' x 60' hangars – D. Higgins said there should be some wording in the lease regarding the condition of the lease upon return to the county. Motion by D. Higgins, seconded by Andy Anderson, and voted unanimously to table this item until the February meeting.
- Review/Recommend Task Order No. 9 – Lead Edge Design Group – This task order covers the construction phase period of November 10 – December 31, 2023. Motion by D. Higgins, seconded by Andy Anderson, and voted unanimously to approve Lead Edge Design Group Task Order #9.

#### **Other Reports:**

The next meeting is Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 9 a.m. in the Executive Conference Room in the Habersham County Administration Building located at 130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA.


**Adjournment:**

Chairman Ken Schubring adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.



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Chairman



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Secretary