MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA AERONAUTICS COMMISSION
Teleconference
April 9, 2020

Commission Members in Attendance
Delphin A. Gantt, Jr., Chairman
David Anderson, District 2
Skeets Cooper, District 3
Lara Kaufmann, District 4
Doug Barnes, District 5
Marco Cavazzoni, District 6
Chris Bethea, District 7

Aeronautics Staff in Attendance
James Stephens, Executive Director
Ericka Thomas, Commission Secretary
Melody Mikell, Finance Director
Gary Siegfried, Program Manager

Absent Commission Members
District 1, Vacant

Visitors
Bud Coward, Commissioner of Emeritus
Terry Connorton, Spartanburg Dwtn Airport/Simpson Field
Amanda Hill, MaesAwyr, LLC
Wayne Corley, MaesAwyr, LLC

Olha Karikh, MaesAwyr, LLC
Dobie Hiers, Hampton County
Rose Dobson Elliott, Hampton County
Brenna Hancock, Hampton County

Welcome & Call to Order
Chairman Gantt called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., welcomed everyone, announced a quorum in attendance, and Commissioner Cavazzoni gave the invocation. This meeting was held via Zoom due to COVID 19 and the stay at home Executive Order by Governor McMaster.

Approval of Minutes
Chairman Gantt presented the minutes of the January 23, 2020 and February 12, 2020 Commission meetings and asked if anyone had any edits or corrections. Since none were forthcoming, the minutes were approved as written.

Financial, Budget, & Executive Director's Reports
Director Stephens presented the Operating and State Aviation Fund financials as of March 31, 2019 and reported that the State Aviation Fund's beginning balance of FY19-20 was $6,876,093.19 and had received $2,175,154.47 to date from aircraft fuel sales taxes. This amount along with the $500,000 general fund recurring appropriation, a refund of prior year expense/insurance claims of $94,786.29, and $1,000,000 allocated for projects brought the year to date total for the State Aviation Fund revenue to $13,266,947.24. Stephens also reported that after all Commitments were considered, $4,073,936.42 remained uncommitted and would set the airport development programs going into the new fiscal year.

Mr. Stephens gave the Executive Director's Report that outlined the events that have taken place since the February Commission Meeting. Mr. Stephens and the Aeronautics staff have continued the planning of the 2020 NASAO conference being held in Greenville, SC. Due to COVID 19, the call for topics and registration dates for the conference have been moved and the possibility of having the conference by a virtual platform is being discussed. Over the past several weeks Mr. Stephens has participated in webinars hosted by the South Carolina Aviation Association and the FAA concerning the impact that COVID 19 has had on the airports and what the impact of the CARES Act will be on airport funding.

Airport Development
Mr. Siegfried presented the Airport Development report to the Commission and reiterated the impacts of COVID 19 to the airports. All maintenance projects are moving forward, however, the airport development staff is not traveling to the airports for safety inspections. Airports are being encouraged that their planned work by Aeronautics contractors will be completed as planned. In addition, the SCAC website is currently going through changes related to transitioning to a .gov web address, and improvements will continue in the coming months.

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Grants for Consideration

Hampton County Airport (3J0) – Construction of a parallel taxiway, hangar taxilanes, and parking lot. The Hampton County Airport is undertaking this project to enhance airfield safety and improve aircraft storage capacity. The County has applied for a USDA grant and loan to fund the new hangars. Hampton County is requesting SCAC assistance to fund the parallel taxiway, taxilanes to the hangars and automobile parking lot. The County has designed and bid the project. *Amount requested is $797,400*

Greenville Downtown Airport (GMU) – Security Cameras and Slope Repair. The Greenville Downtown Airport is requesting funding assistance to install nine (9) security cameras at all electronic gates to enhance airport security. The airport is also requesting aid to repair a slope that was damaged as a result of the extensive rains during the winter. *Amount requested is $14,725*

Oconee County Regional Airport (CEU) – Grant Amendment Request. The Oconee County Regional Airport is requesting an amendment to Grant 19-017 to complete the west apron construction. When the project was originally bid, the FAA did not have enough money to complete the paving of the west apron, so the grant only funded site preparation. The FAA recently issued a supplemental grant to fund the paving. This amendment brings the total State grant amount to 133,521. *Amount requested is $69,755.*

Total amount of all grants requested is $881,880

Mr. Siegfried presented the Commission with information on the grants for Commission approval. Commissioner Cooper made a motion to approve the above decisions for the airport projects, and Commissioner Bethea seconded, and after discussion, all approved. Commissioner Kaufmann abstained on the Greenville Downtown Airport vote, however, the majority prevailed.

District Reports

Commissioner Anderson – Reported that he has attended meetings at the Aiken Regional Airport regarding the need for pavement rejuvenation on the abandoned runway, and the need for some ground leveling related to a hangar project that is being planned. In addition, he also gave a brief report on the slowdown at the Barnwell Regional Airport.

Commissioner Cooper – Reported that McCormick is still looking to purchase the property adjacent to the airport. The other airports in District 3 are reporting the decline in operations and fuel sales due to COVID 19.

Commissioner Kaufmann – Reported that due to COVID 19 the Greenville Spartanburg Airport has closed the terminal to businesses, and Greenville Downtown Airport terminal has limited hours. All air traffic numbers are down. Some general aviation flight schools are still operating as normal. Terry Connorton from Spartanburg also gave a brief update on the operations at the Spartanburg Downtown Memorial Airport.

Commissioner Barnes – Reported that he had visited all the airports in his district and the air traffic at the Rock Hill/York airport continues to be good even with COVID 19 restrictions.

Commissioner Cavazzoni – Thanked the Commission for their support for the Hampton County Airport grants and reported that the airports in his district were showing their resiliency.

Commissioner Bethea – Reported that most fights at Myrtle Beach International had almost all stopped due to COVID 19, and that Spirit Airlines has canceled all flights coming into Myrtle Beach International from the New York area. Florence Regional Airport has expressed the need for pavement repairs around the FBO, and Dillon County Airport is on standby for improvements that had been planned.

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New and Other Business

Chairman Gantt welcomed Lara Kaufmann to the Aeronautics Commission. Ms. Kaufmann is the first woman that has ever been appointed to the Commission, and that she was appointed as the District 4 Commissioner in February 2020. He also recognized her role as the Associate Director of Greenville Downtown Airport (GMU), and as District 4 Commissioner she will be serving Greenville and Spartanburg Counties.

Chairman Gantt discussed the current COVID 19 situation with regards to the Aeronautics Commission. Through the Executive Order from the Governor, all staff will be working remotely until further orders. All Aeronautics staff and Commission will continue to support airports and operate as normal as possible.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Gantt moved that the meeting be adjourned, Commissioner Cooper seconded, and all approved.

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Delphin Gantt, Jr.
Commission Chairman

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Doug Barnes
Commission Vice-Chairman

_____
Ericka Thomas
Commission Secretary

April 23, 2020
_____
Date