

# KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

## Special Meeting

Thursday – June 4, 2020 – 4:30 P.M.

The Special Meeting of the Knox County Commission was held on Thursday, June 4, 2020, at 4:30 P.M., via a teleconference call.

Commissioners present were: Dorothy G. Meriwether, Commissioner District #1 and Sharyn L. Pohlman, Commissioner District #3.

County staff present at the teleconference call included: County Administrator Andrew Hart, Sheriff Tim Carroll, Airport Manager Jeremy Shaw, and HR Consultant Laurie Bouchard.

APAC members present were: Dick Witherspoon, Kate Shaw, Ken Wexler, Roger Peabody, Bill Packard, Jan Gaudio, Ron Vanosdol, Vivian Newman, Maynard Curtis, and Kevin Waters.

Business Committee member: Kathy Allain

Absent: Administrative Richard L. Parent, Jr., Commissioner District #2., Assistant Wendy Galvin, APAC Member Adam Philbrook, and APAC Member Greg Peet.

## Special Meeting – Agenda

Thursday – June 4, 2020 – 4:30 P.M.

I. 4:30 Meeting Called To Order

II. 4:31 Work Session with APAC

III. Adjourn

I. Meeting Called to Order

Commissioner Pohlman called the Special Meeting of the Knox County Commission to order at 4:30 P.M.

II. Work Session – APAC: (General discussion about the items on the list.)

## KNOX COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT (RKD) SUMMARY OF PRIORITIZED PROPOSED AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS As of May 4, 2020

Priority	Description & Reference	Type	Timing	Planning Level Cost Opinion
1	Construct Hangar for Lease to Part 135 Operator	Development	Complete in 2020	\$1,910,000
2	Acquire Airport Maintenance Equipment	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$2,162,000
3	Electric Vehicle Charging Stations for Terminal	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$300,000
4	HVAC Upgrade for Terminal Building	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$500,000
5	Security System Upgrade for Terminal Building	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$125,000
6	Crack Sealing and Pavement Markings	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$330,000
7	Pavement Management Program	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$55,000
8	Airspace Survey for Obstruction Removal	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$100,000
9	Convert Existing Airfield Lighting to LED	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$350,000
10	Obstruction Removal	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$250,000
11	Renovate Airport Owned Crew House	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2020	\$500,000
12	Construct 2 MW Solar Installation	Development	Complete in 2021	\$2,000,000
13	Rehabilitate Terminal Apron - Phase 1	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2021	\$1,831,000
14	Overlay Runway 3-21	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2021	\$1,881,000
15	Replace Airport Security Gates & Wood Screening Fence	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2021	\$625,000
16	Runway 11 Safety Area Grading	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2021	\$255,000
17	Rehabilitate Taxiway C and Flying Club Area	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2021	\$1,550,000
18	Construct Hangar Taxiway - Phase 2	Development	Complete in 2021*	\$800,000
19	Overlay Aircraft Parking Apron	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2022	\$1,887,000
20	Construct Drainage Improvements	Operation & Maintenance	Complete in 2022**	\$1,000,000

\*To be funded with FY 2021 AIP Entitlement Funds

\*\*To be funded with FY 2022 AIP Entitlement Funds

CARES Act Op Grant	\$2,067,000
CARES Act Dev Grant	\$13,883,825
AIP Entitlements (3 yr)	\$3,300,000
Airport Revenue (2 yr)	\$1,300,000

Revenue Total	\$22,550,825
Projects Total	\$20,291,000
Contingency	\$2,259,825



- First Administrator Hart wanted to explain that our HR Consultant, Laurie Bouchard will be facilitating the meeting to help keep everyone on track.
- One discussion item is the HVAC system at the Airport, and has been working with Siemens as they are the provider for the Courthouse, Public Safety Building and now the Jail. So far we do have a price from them for the Controls and the equipment portion of the HVAC. The FAA did tell us that the system was installed with Federal funds when the Terminal building was built, so we cannot remove the entire system. We are currently working with Siemens to get some updated figures, and explain what would be left of the original system. Commissioners need to have input in making the decision on the HVAC. The approximate figure for that item was \$120,000.
- Airport Manager Shaw stated there is \$35,000 - \$37,000 set aside to update the cameras, computer software and take the Security Cage out of the Sheriff's Office and move it to the data room
- On Friday, the FAA issued guidance on the layout of the projects. They need the Airports to decide on developmental projects such as the Solar Development, construction of a Hangar for lease, and other projects that are maintenance and operational related. Basically the FAA wants the Airport to amend their original plan; they want the Airport to carve out their developmental projects. This way we will be able to apply for it out of the lump sum so we don't have to itemize \$17.9 million dollars worth of projects all at once. Laurie assisted by developing a survey to identify the projects that we wanted to do for "developmental". We only had three (3) and one of them was for an AIP Project. So really there were two (2) Projects with one being that we wanted the opportunity to develop a Solar Development, as that would pay for all the County's electric costs. The other one was the development of the construction of a Hangar for lease, which both of those scored very high.
- HR Consultant Bouchard stated that the survey was rolled out to nineteen (19) participants and eleven (11) responded. A reminder was sent to all. So the participation was a little disappointing. In the cover email that went out with the survey as well as a summary of the top five (5) projects and the bottom five (5) projects, although it ended up being seven (7) because of the Solar Farm preference and the top two (2) favorite Community Projects. I thought we could take those one at a time and talk about the top five (5) Projects first. Then see if there is anyone else who would like to comment on any other Projects that you think should be in the top five (5) list. The one that runs the most votes (*9 to be exact*) is the "Construct Hangar for Lease to Part 135 Operator". Number two (2) was to acquire Airport Maintenance equipment (*6 votes*), HVAC upgrade for the Terminal building got six (6) votes, and the overlay runway 3-21 got four (4) votes.
- Ron Vanosdol wants to know if there is any way to get a more prioritized list on the equipment.
- Airport Manager Shaw said absolutely. He said he would like to prioritize a small sized excavator so they can keep up with the beavers and a utility vehicle for the future. Those are the two things that are really needed most right now for the Airport. Also the Maintenance Department rents certain pieces of equipment on a regular basis from Union Farm Equipment, but having access to those pieces all the time would really enhance our capabilities on the Airfield. So Ron, I am willing to scrap 8% of that list just for two (2) pieces of important equipment for the Airport.
- Airport Manager Shaw stated that the Airport has six (6) pieces of snow removal equipment right now, and there are two (2) operators. Our intent early in the year was to hire an additional Part Time staff member to help out.
- Administrator Hart asks is it really worth buying our own equipment vs. renting. You need to think of the liability, maintenance down the road, what's the insurance going to cost, so there are a lot of factors going into this decision. I think we just need to evaluate before making a decision.
- Ken Wexler stated that he feels there's a reason why so many people "rent" equipment. That way you're not worried about the maintenance and ensuring the replacement when it comes time. I'm glad to hear you're not going out and buying that stuff willy-nilly and before you know it you'll have a whole lot more expenses to go with it. I applaud the decision not to buy anything more than a couple of pieces.
- HR Consultant Bouchard reiterated that they are reviewing the survey results of the top five (5) projects. She invites anybody to comment at this time.



- Ken Wexler hopes that at some point we can start some Environmental Projects like landscaping and that type of thing. This is not listed anywhere and Jeremy says that we're going to have some money left over. I would like to see it as a dedicated project
- Kate Shaw gave her opinion on the Hangar Project. She stated she's carefully watching the increase of passengers travelling as it effects her job. So I think that building another Hangar will be an asset to the County & Airport as it could be rented to jets that arrive. The County can use that as an asset that would be low risk.
- Roger Peabody (*talking about equipment*) stated that if we purchased equipment we'd have to get the longest extended warranty because if we keep it too long it will start costing us money.
- Ron Vanosdol talked about the HVAC system.
- HR Consultant Bouchard stated that would be three (3) votes for the HVAC. That's the reality of it, if we had more people complete the survey the outcome might be different than three (3) votes. The security system upgrade for the Terminal building which Andy addressed earlier will probably be a prioritized Project, Pavement Management Program got three (3) votes, converting existing Airfield lighting to LED got three (3) votes, rebuild the County-owned Crew House got three (3) votes and believes that's it. So there is quite a few three (3) way ties if anyone wants to comment on any of those that might be in the top five (5) list if we move the HVAC off of there.
- Kate Shaw said that personally, she thinks the Crew House needs to be higher on the list because it's in pretty sad shape. She thinks that would be a higher priority due to the state of the existing Crew House.
- Commissioner Pohlman stated that she agrees with Kate on moving up the priority of the Crew House. She had an opportunity to tour the Airport with Airport Manager Shaw on Monday, and saw firsthand how badly in need of renovation, if not tear down and start over.
- Jan Gaudio stated that he would like to add his thumbs up on that too. He toured the building and think it's a "teardown" now. He would move it up to the top of the list, to him that would be a high priority based on the current state of the existing Crew House.
- Roger Peabody agreed with what Jan, Kate and Commissioner Pohlman said. He also looked at it this afternoon and stated it is in very poor condition
- HR Consultant thanked everyone for their input on the top priorities. She would like to switch gears and quickly visit the bottom five (5) projects. The bottom five (5) are as follows: construct the parking garage, add a second floor to the Terminal building, car wash for the rental car operators, purchase Museum Hangers, construct automatic parking system and construct an office building with a car wash.
- Dick Witherspoon wanted to go back to the Crew House. He stated it is in terrible shape and thinks it should be torn down and a nice prefab house constructed.
- HR Consultant Bouchard stated that one question that was not asked was there any projects anyone feels should be looked at that are not on the list. There were a few responses of the feasibility of incorporating North Haven, Vinalhaven and Matinicus Airports into the County Airport plan to help them with services and upgrades. The second comment was about North Haven & Vinalhaven as well as their runways.
- Kate Shaw spoke about purchasing the Museum Hangers. These are located behind where Down East Maine Hangers are, and she doesn't think they are in great shape or if they would be considered a liability. She thinks if the Hanger or Hangers were purchased it give them room to expand within their own footprint. She did not bring this up to make it a priority she just wanted people to know about the possibilities and to help them make an informed decision.
- HR Consultant Bouchard asked if there were any other comments before she moved the discussion on the Solar Farm. No one had any other comments. Airport Manager Shaw had previously explained that this would be carved out as one of the Development Projects. Some comments were provided and some needed more information. More information will be provided. The two (2) Megawatt Project received the most votes.
- Airport Manager Shaw stated that this is in the press and was contact by the Town of Camden. Town of Camden said if you guys are going to do a Solar Development, can we buy 2 million kilowatt hours of electricity. So the opportunity is there because the revenue alone would be about



\$720,000 a year as extra Airport Revenue. Maybe we could see it to all the Municipalities in Knox County. Maybe we make \$500,000 a year, but we pay for the entire electrical cost for everybody within our County. When he started his original projection, looking into this just a Megawatt Solar Development, would pay for the entire energy for the Airport, Courthouse and Public Safety Building for 6/10 of a megawatt. That's A LOT of power and we use a lot of power! You would want everyone to lock in their average usage, and that's something you could really do with this type of system. It would really be beneficial if we need 6/10 of a megawatt for the entire County. The taxpayers wouldn't have to pay a penny for power as a benefit of this Care Act money. The way you do it is the Airport develops the Solar and then we're able to accommodate our communities. That's the best way to give back to the community, and taking some of the burden away from the taxpayers. This would really allow the growth the Airport needs. This benefits everyone and that's why it's an important Developmental Project.

- Kate Shaw asked do you have to be specific with like the 2 or 5 megawatt when it comes to the FAA?
- Airport Manager Shaw stated no, you would have to specify the cost. If you went with a 2 megawatt system it would probably be three (3) million dollars, if you went with a 5 megawatt system it would probably be around ten (10) million dollars. So that's the numbers you need.
- Kate Shaw asked if you put in for ten (10) million and we only use two (2) megawatts can we dial down what you already locked in?
- Airport Manager Shaw stated no. If you applied for two (2) megawatts and then all of a sudden you want to have five (5) you would have to pay all those fees all over again. You would also have to do the Feasibility Study and the Needful Study all over again. The cost for that is around \$20,000.
- Bill Packard asked if it was important to have the Committee vote to make the application tonight or not to make the application.
- Airport Manager Shaw stated that he thinks it's very important because if there is nothing is secured on the Solar Project there are no other substations. Spending \$3,000 towards the application can be done with normal Airport Revenue and doesn't have to be with the Cares Act money.
- Bill Packard motioned for spending the \$3,000.
- Administrator Hart wanted to clarify that this is strictly a Work Session. The Commission will be taking the vote initially, so tonight we are just getting a consensus.
- Commissioner Pohlman stated yes that's correct. She thinks in this Work Session it would be great to get a consensus and be aligned on as many things as possible. She can put the Solar Project Bid on the Agenda at Tuesday's Commission Meeting.
- Administrator Hart stated the Agenda is already completed so he would have to put it on another meeting. He suggested having a Special Meeting to vote on it.
- Bill Packard said that he would make a recommendation that the Committee vote on recommending that the County Commissioners go forward and apply for the five (5) megawatts. It is his understanding that it would cost \$3,000.
- HR Consultant Bouchard stated that Bill is voting for 5, Kate is voting for 5, Nick is voting for 5, Roger is voting for 5 and Ron's voting for 5.
- Jan Gaudio said that he is voting for 5.
- Commissioner Pohlman said it's great to see such support for the Project among the group. If there is not enough time to vote on this at our meeting on Tuesday, then I would like to propose we have a Special Meeting sooner rather than later. It sounds like it would be in our best interest to get things rolling.
- Commissioner Meriwether stated that she has a question and was hoping the Airport Manager could speak to it. She is concerned about the time frames on this because we have four (4) years to complete things. We are half way through 2020 already. We are running out of Summer building time. If you're looking at applications, permitting, planning construction and implementation all within a four (4) year period. The impression I got from the FAA is that they could potentially run out of money. I just think time is of the essence.



- Airport Manager Shaw agrees with Commissioner Meriwether. The hard thing is about this whole opportunity is that it is so outside the box, and people are struggling with the social responsibility aspect of it and the long term planning and they're all valid. These are all 100% valid concerns. We should be trying to achieve to complete/do stuff this summer or next year because the window is rapidly closing on stuff that we could be able to do.
- HR Consultant Bouchard stated that all the APAC recommendations have been taken in. Airport Manager Shaw explained the sense of urgency about getting the application process going or the evaluation process going for the Solar Farm. The only other thing on the survey was the top two (2) favorite Community Projects. It's not a priority to discuss right now but we could if you want to. Ok, I think we are all in agreement that this is not a priority right now.
- Administrator Hart said that it does seem like we don't have a lot of time but that we do have three and a half (3 ½) years left. If it took us a year and we did a few things this year, small things, took a portion of next year to figure out some of the bigger items as the next steps; it would still give us two and a half (2 ½) years to complete everything. He knows this is such a big amount of money, but thinks is manageable to pick off things two (2) or three (3) at a time. The other thing is, I think we need to talk at the meeting on Tuesday. The Commission did authorize me at the May meeting to apply for Developmental Grants in consultation with the Commission. He is still wondering if he's going to produce a the letter or a document to the FAA that states we are getting the other fifteen point nine (\$15.9) million. He wants to have this documented.
- Commissioner Meriwether is responding because she's concerned, she's not sure if she understands the process correctly. The urgent matter seems like the application process and getting that in. She will feel a lot better if she can go to the meeting on Tuesday and essentially say, we listened to the APAC and we are good so then Airport Manager Shaw and Administrator Hart could work together on going the application. She is just afraid that the FAA Cares Act is simply going to run out of money if we don't get the application in soon.
- Commissioner Pohlman agrees with Commissioner Meriwether and she feels the sooner we can get in these applications the more likely we might be to see the money.
- Airport Manager Shaw stated that the only way to finish anything is to start, and that's where he's at.
- Commissioner Pohlman said that she supports whatever we do that will provide the greatest economic benefit to the greatest number of people in Knox County. This is an exciting proposition and something we definitely want to move forward with.
- Commissioner Meriwether stated that she relies on the APAC for these type of decisions and would like to hear if there's any possibility that there could be some type of consensus on the plan going forward. Does the APAC basically believe that the plan we have in place is a good one? She would really like to hear what previous Airport Manager Northgraves thinks about this.
- Jan Gaudio went through the list in some length of detail. He spent some time with the Airport Manager and took a tour of the Airport facilities. He looked at everything on the list as well. Jan thinks it's a good list that has benefits, but also a vision for a long term benefit. He likes the fact that there was talk about things that not only help the Airport but also the County. Overall he thought it was a good package, and he thinks the Airport Manager has put a lot of thought into it. Jan agrees with Commissioner Meriwether and thinks we need to move as quickly as possible on this because he fears the same thing; the money is going to run out.
- Bill Packard said that yes we should get our application in before we are told there is no more money and the County will have to pony up the cash.
- Dick Witherspoon had a question for Airport Manager Shaw. He hasn't heard anything on the Hangar. He thinks it sounds like a great idea.
- Airport Manager Shaw stated that we are asking about the cost of that now. Maine Coast Construction gave their opinion that it would probably cost about 1.7 million dollars.
- Dick Witherspoon stated so probably around two (2) million then.
- HR Consultant Bouchard had a question for the Airport Manager. She wanted to know if you put in for the five (5) megawatt Solar Farm for ten (10) million dollars and that's a Development



Project which is carved out, does that take the ten (10) million off the table for the Operational Projects.

- Airport Manager Shaw said, no it does not. So you carve it out for Developmental and then you say we decided we only wanted to do a two (2) megawatt system, and that was only three (3) million or three point five (3.5) million dollars. They would say ok, well you have an extra seven (7) million dollars you can use for Operational maintenance, so you can carve it out. This is an addendum that you have to file with them that make you go through hoops, and all the proper bidding requirements. That part really isn't bad. If you carve it out, it just says this is a Developmental Project that we're looking at. I'm in discussion with (inaudible) Burlington right now about that. He is waiting for a call from Priscilla. He sent an email asking for clarification after Friday's guidance, and what they said on Friday. They told me they do not care what we spend the money on; they want us to amend our original application, as they do not want multiple revisions. They told me to figure out what we want to do with Developmental and they will just send us the rest in Operational Maintenance cost. When they make that available, they will just send it out and probably speak with Bill or Herb at Stantec. At that point they will give us a price cost opinion on what the two (2) Projects will cost that we want for Developmental that itemized those on SF-424. The other amount would be Operational Maintenance. We have to decide if we want to do Solar or the 135 Hanger Project. Once we decide we can make the application.
- HR Consultant Bouchard asked if previous Airport Manager Jeff Northgraves would be able to join.
- Airport Manager Shaw stated that he had sent him an invitation to join. He didn't know what he was up to so he may not join.
- Airport Manager Shaw said that Vivian got kicked out of the call. There seems to be limited space on the call.
- Administrator Hart asked if Jeff would be able to email the Commission and the APAC so we have his thoughts/opinion in writing.
- Airport Manager Shaw said he would be happy to ask Jeff to write something up for the Commission Meeting to be held on Tuesday.
- Commissioner Pohlman said she had nothing else and thanked everybody that was on the call giving their input. She thought it was a very productive meeting and looked forward to moving forward.
- Ken Wexler had two things he wanted to say before the meeting ended. He thinks this has been a very well-thought-out discussion. *(Inaudible)*
- Dick Witherspoon stated he wanted to speak again about the North Haven & Vinalhaven Airports. Vinalhaven has got a pretty descent Airport and North Haven is looking for various ways to improve theirs. They are looking for a longer landing strip and they haven't been able to come up with any property. They are working on things as far as money. I just didn't want this to be forgotten.
- Commissioner Pohlman is interested in supporting the island opportunities, and wants to explore ways in which we can support and help the islands. She is very interested in helping the islands.
- HR Consultant Bouchard said she wants to pause right there and see if anybody else wants to weigh in before Commissioner Pohlman ends the meeting.
- Bill Packard said that he was pleasantly surprised that there was a lot of enthusiasm for people to come out and take the tour of the Airport. I hope they got the sense that it is a very strong, very powerful and loving Community within the Town of Owls Head. You can't appreciate that unless you are part of it.

### III. Adjourn

- *A motion was made by Commissioner Meriwether to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pohlman. A vote was taken with all in favor.*

The regular meeting adjourned at 6:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Galvin  
Administrative Assistant

**The Knox County Commission approved these minutes at the irregular meeting  
held on July 14, 2020.**