

**Commonwealth Of Massachusetts
County Of Dukes County, S.S.
MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT COMMISSION MEETING**

**February 28, 2007 5:30PM
Martha's Vineyard Airport**

Notice of Such Meeting having been Posted as Required by Law.

Present: Airport Commissioners: Chair Norman Perry, John Alley,
John Coskie, Connie Teixeira

Airport Staff: Sean Flynn - Manager,
Deborah Potter - Assistant Manager,
Geoffrey Freeman, Elaine Graves, Eric Hatt

Others: Marni Lipke - Recorder

* Late arrival or early departure (see * in text)

The first part of the meeting lacked quorum and was informational only. Quorum was present and the meeting called to order at 5:40PM.

2. Employee Introduction

In the first of an ongoing series Airport Manager Mr. Sean Flynn introduced three Airport staff to the Martha's Vineyard Airport Commission (MVAC). The MVAC introduced themselves.

• Geoffrey Freeman

Geoff Freeman had been in aviation since he was 16 years old starting as a summer employee with Providence Boston Airlines (PBA). He had held jobs from Ramp Agent to operations to ticketing. Due to airline buyouts and mergers he worked with other Airlines including Eastern Express, Continental Express and all their feeder companies. This included temporary duties at other Airports including: Logan, LaGuardia, Manchester, and other Cape and Island airports. He had originally wanted to be a pilot but had dropped the idea in favor of ground operations, eventually becoming a trainings officer. Eventually Continental went into bankruptcy and in 1995 Mr. Freeman transferred to Cape Air, along with becoming a part time MV Airport Fueler. As a transfer from airline staff he was able to bring customer support skills to the Airport which at that time had minimal customer service. At first he was in airline service and then became Operations Specialist / Fire Fighter. In 2002 he became an Operations Supervisor which including oversight of staff, paperwork, etc. Essentially he and Eric Hatt ran the airfield side of the Airport in liaison with Mr. Flynn and Assistant Airport Manager Ms. Deborah Potter. Mr. Freeman was a Captain of the Edgartown Fire Department and was married with one child and one on the way. He enjoyed his current job and being outside.

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• Eric Hatt

Mr. Hatt started in 1983 working seasonally for PBA at the MV Airport as a Ramp Agent. He chose to stay with the airline business rather than go back for further schooling. He worked at a number of city airports including: Logan, Newark International as a duty manager, W. Palm Beach and Miami Florida, Scranton, Pennsylvania as a Station Manager for Continental Express, Bangor, Maine in dispatch for Eastern Airlines, He worked with Mr. Freeman (and Mr. Weibrecht) at Manchester, New Hampshire before ending up at Cape Air for seven years as MV Airport Station Supervisor. In 1999 he liked the direction the Airport was taking and transferred from Cape Air to the Airport bringing customer service experience to the job. He made Operation Supervisor two years ago. He was married and lived in Oak Bluffs.

• Elaine Graves

Ms. Graves did not have the same aviation experience as Mr. Freeman and Mr. Graves. She graduated from Martha's Vineyard Regional High School and then obtained a degree in communications. She spent some years in Vermont teaching children with special needs before returning to the Island in 2004 and working at the Airport as an Operations Clerk. Mr. Flynn had taught her a lot about the Airport, finances, administration, Business Park and aviation. She was now Financial Administrator. She recently married, had a son and was building a house. She enjoy her job and kept busy.

- Chair Norman Perry commended the team and thanked the staff for their attendance.

*Mr. John Coskie entered the meeting at 5:40PM.

1. Minutes.

The minutes were awaiting review by Mr. Flynn.

2. Preliminary Approval of Landing Fees and Ramp Fees

All the Airport Commissioners had talked to Management about the proposal to update Landing and Ramp fees (see 2/7/07 Minutes p. 4). Mr. Flynn gave further explanations and examples of the changes.

• Single engine planes were hard to police and therefore exempt from landing fees and would only be charged ramp fees at midnight for the night. (Larger aircraft were easier to police, here for longer periods, and had crews that checked in to the office.)

• Any single or multi-engine plane under 3,000 lbs stopping for no longer than 2 hours was exempt from ramp fees (see 2/7/07 Minutes p.4).

• Example: A new jet (6,000 lb.) stopped at the Airport for not more than 2 hours fairly frequently (every 2 weeks off-season and at least once a week in the summer) and never purchased fuel.

- Previously the customer would pay a \$47 landing fee only.

- The new rates would be a \$75 landing fee and a \$150 ramp fee (as soon as the wheels touched the tarmac.)

- The \$150 ramp fee would be waived with a \$200 fuel purchase.

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- Example: A Hawker aircraft that often stayed as long as a week.
- Previously the customer paid a ramp fee of \$18 per midnight.
- Now it would pay a ramp fee of \$100 per midnight,
- The new schedule would clarify ramp fees by calendar days with some discretion; for example there could be another fee for late night arrival or departure.
- Light twin engines were likely to field the most complaints on the rate change since previously they paid no fee if their stay was under two hours would now have to pay \$30 in landing fees. About 85% of these aircraft were commercial operations (with single engines the reverse was true and 85% were for private use).
- MV Airport hangars will identify their aircraft which would be exempt from fees (the airport indirectly recovered costs through hangar rent); but this did not include non-identified or multiple aircraft; i.e. a friend could not park a plane near a tenant's hangar and claim exemption.
- In a similar vein the Airport sold specific General Aviation spaces (\$600/yr.) and year round transient tie-downs (guaranteed a spot that is not specified \$490/yr.) and these planes would also be exempt from landing fees provided they were under 6,000 lbs over which landing fees were levied.
- Cape Air and US Air were also exempt from landing fees. When the new terminal was being built the MVAC chose to enter into agreements waiving landing fees in return for emplanement fees (85¢ per passenger). These were likely to be revisited in the near future.
- De-icing was a separate fee.
- In terms of waiving fees for fuel purchase: the \$150 ramp fee was waived with a \$200 fuel purchase: per single aircraft: single engine planes (0-3000 lb.) 16 gallons were required, and light twin engine planes (3001-6000 lb.) 26 gallons required. It was noted that the Airport would make greater profit from a fuel sale than it would from a ramp fee. The pilot on the other hand would balance fuel purchase outlay versus ramp fees so fuel prices should be kept competitive.

Although these increases were significant they should not be a surprise to customers as they brought the Airport in line with standard industry pricing (some airports charged by service –a form of ala carte). The rate change was not likely to scare away regular customers but the Airport might lose some marginal business. Previously, as a very low service airport Management did not feel comfortable charging standard rates but now the Airport provided full service including such things as ground power, an electro to move aircrafts; meeting all flights; vans, buses and golf carts to move customers and guests; full service attention to baggage; rental cars, ice, coffee, newspapers, etc. It should also be noted that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) mandated that Airports be as self supporting as possible so that the rates, while being competitive, should also be set, as much as possible, to cover expenses.

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- The industry was notorious for individuals trying to get around the system. Enforcement and fee tracking were handled in a number of ways.
 - The staff person that parked the airplane told the pilot to check into the desk where information was taken, an invoice was opened and their card was swiped.
 - Often Management knew the airplanes that were coming and going.
 - Some customers hated to check in but had given the Airport permission to charge to their credit cards so that staff was alerted to check the tail number and enter the fee charges.
 - The Airport monitored the Unicom, the ground traffic and the Company radio.
 - Once outside of the gate customers could not return to the airfield without checking in at the desk.
 - Return customer information was captured as much as possible.
 - When traffic was very busy Management watched the field and collared people leaving without checking out.
 - If a plane took off without paying for fuel a letter was sent stating criminal and civil charges and/or a lien on the aircraft. If landing and ramp fees only were involved the letter was less severe.
- **MR. ALLEY MOVED TO PRELIMINARILY ADOPT AND PUT OUT FOR PUBLICATION THE LANDING AND RAMP FEE RATE CHANGES AS RECOMMENDED BY AIRPORT MANAGEMENT AND THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE; MS. TEIXEIRA SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**
- The new schedule would be mass mailed for a 30 day period of public comment, and would likely be picked up by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), the National Air Transit Association (NATA), the National Business Aircraft Association (NBAA), frequent visitors and regular customers, hangar tenants and owners, etc.

4. Old Business

FAA Proposal

The information on the cost allocation was received and analyzed by FAA Representative Donna Witte and sent on to Washington, DC. An informal conversation with Ms. Witte implied that the land use proposal had been accepted with the caveat of the interest. In general progress had been made since all proposals and data were in FAA hands and the FAA was focused on the issue. There would be no grants until resolution of the issue(s).

6. Airport Manager's Update

The National Air Transportation Association (NATA) and Association of Airport and Aviation Executives (AAAE) were giving a one day symposium in Florida to get airports and Fixed Base Operators (FBO's) together. Mr. Flynn hoped to attend for business development and to advocate for the few airports that worked well as both airport and FBO. The MVAC briefly explored breaking out FBO finances through a separate fund. This would be similar to the current structure of the wastewater fees. Eventually the Airport might separate and track various costs using the General Fund as a transfer fund.

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- Chair Norman Perry again praised the team of staff people.

7. Executive Session

MR. PERRY MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 6:46PM NOT RECONVENE TO PUBLIC SESSION UNDER MASS. GENERAL LAW CHAPTER 39 SECTION 23 NO. NO. (3), -- I.E. FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO LITIGATION AND TO INVITE AIRPORT MANAGER MR. SEAN FLYNN AND AIRPORT ASSISTANT MANAGER MS. DEBORAH POTTER AND RECORDER MS. MARNI LIPKE TO BE PRESENT THROUGHOUT; MR. ALLEY SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: MR. COSKIE AYE, MS. TEIXEIRA AYE, MR. ALLEY AYE, MR. PERRY AYE.

8. Adjournment

MR. ALLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 6:51PM; MS. TEIXEIRA SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: MR. COSKIE AYE, MS. TEIXEIRA AYE, MR. ALLEY AYE, MR. PERRY AYE.

Documents on file:

Agenda 2/28/07

From 2/7/07 Minutes Documents on file

Landing Fees Ramp Fees (2 p.)

Landing Fees Ramp Fees (12 p.)