



# SAUGEEN MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

## THE SAUGEEN MUNICIPAL AIRPORT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 20, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Airport Boardroom

**Commissioners Present:** Dan Gieruszak, Chair  
Dave Hocking, Vice Chair  
Kelani Stam, Secretary  
Moe Hanif (at 7:10 p.m.)  
Tom Hutchinson  
Bill Roseborough  
Jack Zeinstra

**Absent:** None

**Guests:** Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary  
Filomena McDonald, Airport Manager

### 1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

### 2. Approval of the Agenda

**Motion** Moved by T. Hutchinson

Seconded by K. Stam

That the agenda for October 20, 2021 be amended to add items 10 C Bookkeeping and 10 D Restaurant and that the agenda be accepted as so amended.

**Carried**

### 3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None declared.

### 4. Delegations

There were no delegations.

### 5. Approval of September 23 and 27, 2021 Minutes

**Motion** Moved by D. Hocking

Seconded by J. Zeinstra

That the minutes of the September 23 and 27, 2021 meetings of the Commission be approved as circulated.

**Carried**

### 6. Action Item Update from Minutes

Action item updates from the minutes were addressed as they arose.

### 7. Correspondence Requiring Action

Correspondence requiring action was referred to the In Camera portion of the meeting.

### 8. Public Notification

There were no public notifications.

### 9. September Reports

#### A. Financial Reports

Commissioner Hutchinson requested clarification of kitchen rental revenue as it may not have been captured in the minutes. The Airport Manager responded that all revenue for the rest of the year has been shown in the financial statements. Commissioner Hutchinson may follow up further with the Airport Manager who noted an increase in all revenues which is a positive situation. The Chair will schedule a meeting with the Airport Manager regarding the financial forecast to the end of the year.

**B. APM's Report**

Commissioner Hocking gave an update on the Airport to the Town of Hanover's Economic Development Committee and the Commission will be a delegation to the Committee in the near future. Commissioner Hocking added that the Airport could be featured in free space offered to the Mayor of Hanover in The Post newspaper. The Airport Manager has spoken to Pauline Kerr at the Walkerton Herald Times who will do a monthly update as well as with other media outlets.

**C. COPA 54 Update**

Commissioner Zeinstra reported that COPA 54 held a meeting on Saturday, October 16, 2021. The approvals for the frequencies related to the flight information system have been received. COPA 54 believes that COPA National has not been sufficiently responsive and it is looking to connect with an organization more aligned with promoting aviation at the Saugeen Municipal Airport such as the Recreational Aircraft Association (RAA), which would be more "grass roots", or the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA). COPA 54 will be having presentations from both of these organizations. COPA National will drop a local organization if it has less than 10 members and seems to focus on those with larger, more expensive aircraft. COPA 54 is having its licensed Christmas event on November 18, 2021.

Commissioner Hanif joined the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

**Motion** Moved by D. Hocking

Seconded by K. Stam

That the Commission accept the Financial Reports, the APM's Report and the COPA 54 Update as presented.

**Carried**

**10. New Business**

**A. Current and Future Hangar Build Updates**

The Airport manager reported that the current builds are coming along although one is behind schedule due to weather. There is a question as to whether there will be enough natural gas for two new hangars and the Manager has asked Enbridge what it would cost to bring in more natural gas. In the meantime, propane is being used as a backup. It is important for the new hangars to have heating to ensure water pipes do not freeze. One of the new hangars will have in floor heating, so will need natural gas.

The Airport Manager reported that paving scheduled to be done this year will be done next year instead, which is good for the budget. One of the new owners will be putting in concrete which requires digging and once the gas line is in, paving will be done, with three major companies in the area doing quotes. She added that there will be 10 feet between the new hangars, with each owner responsible for five feet, and there is good communication between the owners. There is strong interest in future builds and of course owners want heat, so the Airport is waiting on the answer from Enbridge as to the gas supply. The cost of increasing the gas supply has to be factored into the cost of future builds, and can be "ball parked" if necessary in order to keep the interest of future hangar owners.

The Airport Manager noted that the Transport Canada base inspection is scheduled to be done soon.

**B. Snow Removal Airport Road and Fire Route Road**

The Airport Manager reported good news in that the Airport is in fact covered by its insurance when plowing snow and can ensure winter access to hangars and runways. This arose as a result of the Manager contacting Gregory Furtney, Director of Operations for the Municipality of Brockton, who said that Brockton would not clear the snow. Previously, SMA had been advised by its insurance broker that its insurance did not cover snow plowing on Airport Road which is an important access to hangars and runways. Once the underwriters understood the significance of plowing Saugeen Airport Road, they approved the extension of the Airport's snow plowing coverage.

### C. Bookkeeping

The Chair noted that the Town of Hanover has given notice that after doing the Airport's books for two years, it felt that Brockton or West Grey should take on this responsibility. Brockton is not able to do so, due to staff turnover and West Grey does not have the staff resources. Commissioner Hocking reported that Chris Walker, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer for the Town of Hanover, indicated in an email that the work takes approximately 380 hours per year, and at a rate of \$30 – 45 per hour depending on the pay scale, the fee would range from \$11,400 to \$17,100. Brian Tocheri, CAO of the Town, informed Commissioner Hocking that the Town is willing to do the bookkeeping for \$11,000. It was proposed that the fee should increase 2% per year if the arrangement continues, and Hanover may have to hire a part-time employee to do the work. Commissioner Hocking noted that keeping the work with Hanover avoids the inconvenience of having to transition to another organization. The Chair expressed surprise at the cost given the relatively small number of transactions per month.

The Chair raised the question of how the purchasing policy, which requires quotes and RFPs, would apply to this situation. It was noted that efforts were made to obtain quotes, without success, and the Chair concluded that options regarding obtaining quotes were explored, thus meeting the requirements of the purchasing policy.

The Airport Manager raised the question of the cost of audit services. Discussion focused on the fact that SMA could get another audit firm, but it is much more convenient to have the same auditor year after year. Commissioner Hocking noted that a tender would have to be issued to find another auditor and it is advantageous for the bookkeeping to be done by a municipality. Commissioner Roseborough noted that advice is also available from Hanover staff in addition to the bookkeeping services.

The Chair reminded Commissioners of the municipal contributions to the airport, noting that this will require asking for \$11,000 more, and legal fees will have to be increased for next year as well, all of which means that options need to be developed to increase revenue and decrease expenses. Commissioner Roseborough added that work needs to focus on promoting the benefits of the airport in moving forward.

**Motion** Moved by M. Hanif

Seconded by J. Zeinstra

That the Commission enter into an agreement for bookkeeping services with the Town of Hanover for an annual fee of \$11,000, with an annual increase of 2%, and that the Commission provide three months' notice to the Town if it decides to retain another bookkeeping service.

**Carried**

### D. Restaurant

Commissioner Hocking noted that the Town of Hanover's Economic Development Committee meets prior to Commission meetings and as a member of the Committee, he provides updates on the Airport. He reported that the Committee has suggested more intensive marketing of the restaurant, which could be done by "booster" ads on Facebook. The Director of the Launch Pad in Hanover can provide more information on this if necessary. The Chair noted that the Commission had previously approved spending \$300 to promote the restaurant. A marquee sign was suggested, but will apparently cost more than \$300. The Airport Manager noted that she has been finding additional ways to promote the restaurant, and it has been added to the Snowmobile Club Trail, and she will activate the Facebook booster ads. Commissioner Hocking also suggested that the Airport Manager could give an advertising item to the Hanover Chamber of Commerce which can promote the restaurant, and the Chair suggested contacting Bluewater Radio to explore placing an ad. Commissioner Zeinstra added that the community radio station in Mount Forest has supported COPA 54 and other community minded organizations, so would be worth contacting. Commissioner Hutchinson said that the restaurant should focus on a weekly feature and Commissioner Hanif noted that he recently heard a business presentation stating that about 2,000 cars per day travel on Highway 4, and perhaps a sign there would generate business. The Airport Manager said that she will be approaching Brockton to determine its sign by-law requirements, and the Chair noted that these include

issues such as setbacks, and the road is a provincial highway. Commissioner Zeinstra said that this possibility was explored in the past and it was difficult and expensive to have a sign on the highway. Commissioner Hocking noted that Dave Schmidt investigated the possibility in the past, and found it difficult, but suggested that the Airport Manager contact him. The Chair recommended reconsidering the issue of signage on Highway 4 and the Airport Manager noted that she has a good relationship with the Airport's neighbours and will discuss the situation with them. Commissioner Stam suggested advertising with snowmobile clubs and the Airport Manager said she is working on signs for the snowmobile trail and the restaurant has been added to the restaurant map for snowmobilers. It was suggested putting signs on the side of the trails to advise snowmobilers to say off the runways as a matter of safety and the Airport Manager said that there is a signed agreement to this effect with the snowmobile club. Commissioner Stam advised that 500 people will be coming to a Bruce Power building in Chesley and the restaurant could provide takeout meals for them. Commissioner Roseborough noted that the restaurant manager has a food truck and it was agreed that this could be a big opportunity for the restaurant.

#### **E. Business Plan**

In an additional item of New Business, Commissioner Hutchinson suggested creating a sub-committee or working group of the Commission to develop a business plan. The Airport has a lot of work to do which should be captured in a business plan. He noted that Commission agendas tend to be full of issues that arise and focus needs to be directed towards a business plan. He felt that it is not necessary for all members of the Commission to participate and he added there are on-line business plan templates available. Given the uncertainty in today's environment, this is a particularly important initiative. Additional suggestions included adding others to the group to work on the business plan including the restaurant manager, the owner of the flight school, municipal Economic Development staff, as well as business people and pilots. Commissioner Roseborough encourage everyone to visit the Airport property with the Airport Manager if they have not already done so.

The Chair suggested that the Airport's strategic plan be distributed to Commissioners to start the business plan process. Commissioner Hanif suggested that this initial effort must be manageable in size and the first meeting could be a brain storming session. He also suggested ideas to generate revenue such as asking for reduced rates at local hotels to attract airport users and perhaps a golf weekend for \$1,000 which he felt would be popular with people from Toronto and the GTA.

The question of opening the business plan process to the public arose and Commissioner Hutchinson suggested that the process needs to be started first. He suggested a business plan based on "pillars" (four or some other similar number) and emphasized the need to be well prepared if the public is invited. Discussion ensued about the time frame for a strategic plan compared to a business plan, with the Chair noting that the Airport needs to increase revenue within six to 12 months, whereas a strategic plan covers a longer period. Commissioner Hutchinson said that both long and short term goals need to be worked on and the Chair agreed that there are many opportunities in the short term to be acted upon. Commissioner Hutchinson suggested a two year plan and Commissioner Zeinstra agreed that short term goals as well as longer term (two to five years) goals need to be worked on. He said that a business would need one, two and five year plans in order to, for example, get a bank loan.

It was agreed that a meeting would be held within the next two to three weeks to begin the business plan process and the Airport Manager is to canvas Commissioners as to their availability. The Chair requested that Commissioners prepare by reviewing online templates for business plans and come to the meeting with positive ideas.

Commissioner Hanif advised that he will be away for two to three months once the border to the U.S. opens up.

**11. In Camera**

**Motion** Moved by K. Stam

Seconded by J. Zeinstra

That the Commission convene in closed session at 8:27 p.m. in order to address a matter pertaining to security of property of the Saugeen Municipal Airport, a proposed or pending acquisition of land, advice that is subject to solicitor/client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose, information explicitly supplied in confident by Canada, a province or territory of a Crown agency of any of them, and a position, plan procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiation carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the Saugeen Municipal Airport.

**Carried**

The Airport Manager and the Recording Secretary remained for the in camera portion.

**Motion** Moved by D. Hocking

Seconded by B. Roseborough

That the Commission reconvene in open session at 9:47 p.m.

**Carried**

**12. Direction Coming Out of In Camera**

**Motion** Moved by D. Hocking

Seconded by J. Zeinstra

That the Saugeen Municipal Airport Commission approve direction to staff as provided in the closed session.

**Carried**

The Commission discussed the location for future meetings, noting that some attendees may participate through Zoom due to weather related issues.

**13. Adjournment**

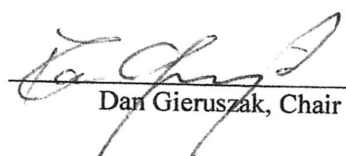
**Motion** Moved by K. Stam

Seconded by B. Roseborough

That the Commission adjourn at 9:49 p.m..

**Carried**

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., Airport Boardroom

  
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Dan Gieruszak, Chair

  
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Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary