

ZEPHYRHILLS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING

A Regular Airport Advisory Board meeting was held on Monday August 17th, 2015 at 5 p.m. in the Robert H. Johnson Council Chambers of the Municipal Building. Vice Chairperson Dan Evans called the meeting to order. Members present were Dan Evans, Buzz Hohmann, David Ruffell and Rachel Nash. Bill Castle and Ron Miller were absent. Mark Frank arrived one minute after roll call.

APPROVAL/CORRECTION OF MINUTES – Buzz Hohmann moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on July 20th, 2015. David Ruffell seconded the motion. All were in a favor and the motion passed.

BUSINESS ITEMS –

1. Outside operations at Zephyrhills Airport.

Mr. T.K. Hayes of 38801 Feathering Way, Zephyrhills, addressed the board. Mr. Hayes is the manager of Skydive City which operates under a lease with the City of Zephyrhills Airport. He told the board about their concerns regarding a competing skydive company (Jump Florida) that has been using the airport for their skydive operations recently. He explained that under their lease agreement with the City, Skydive City must adhere to the published Zephyrhills Airport Minimum Standards for Airport Commercial Operations. Jump Florida does not adhere to these same minimum standards and this is not a fair situation in his opinion. They are certainly not against any competition but they believe that there should be clarification regarding the application of said Minimum Standards. Mr. Hayes said he could not find anything in the Minimum Standards stating that they only apply to lease holders. He went on to share with the board many of the requirements their company must meet in order to operate their business: insurances, infrastructure, etc., and they truly feel, in their opinion that allowing this competing company to use the airport causes an economic discrimination. He realizes that there will be no answer to the problem today, but his desire is to open up a dialog regarding this situation.

Mr. Coleman apologized to Mr. Hayes and to the board regarding a paper that Skydive City had written up for the board to review, referencing many of the things he had just spoken of. Mr. Coleman explained that the Airport Office had lost their computers due to a recent lightning strike and unfortunately there was no access to emails at this time.

Board member David Ruffell said he was going to abstain from any discussion regarding this issue as he has direct involvement with Skydive City.

Board Member Dan Evans asked how often Jump Florida had been using the Airport. The answer was eleven (11) times at this point.

Airport Manager Nathan Coleman at this time clarified the definition of the Minimum Standards as defined by the FAA. He said that Jump Florida is a casual user so the Minimum Standards do not apply. Jump Florida is paying the airport the established daily usage fee. He compared them to a Flight 41 flight school that uses the airport for training or a passenger jet picking up and dropping off passengers. The Zephyrhills Airport is a public use airport which takes FAA and

FDOT grant money. This makes us accountable to all required Grant Assurances. At this time he cannot see anything anyone can do to stop Jump Florida from using the airport as a casual user.

Dan Evans wanted to make sure there was an understanding between a "casual user" of the airport and someone actually operating their business. If Jump Florida will only be using the airport periodically due to weather conditions, paying the established daily user fee and purchasing fuel then ok. But if they will be using it multiple times a month then he would certainly understand Mr. Hayes' concerns and a new set of standards would need to apply.

Nathan Coleman said the Jump Florida is not operating their business from the airport and that the Minimum Standards do not apply to them in any way. He said that the airport has to be careful when they talk about preventing or prohibiting a potential user of the airport. This would be a direct violation of the FAA and FDOT Grant Assurances. He emphasized that we cannot discriminate against the type of user that chooses to utilize our airport or the number of times they use it.

Board Member Rachel Nash asked what the Airport requires at this time for a casual user. Mr. Coleman said they are required to provide One Million dollars of Limited Liability Insurance coverage to the City of Zephyrhills and Zephyrhills Airport noted as additionally insured. (This has been provided by Jump Florida.) They are also required to pay the \$75.00 per day user fee. Mr. Coleman added that he required Jump Florida to purchase fuel here as well.

Board Member Buzz Hohmann asked if Jump Florida was using Zephyrhills airport because of flooding at their airport (Blackwater Airport). The answer is yes. Mr. Hohmann feels that it does not appear Jump Florida is trying to increase their activities by using this airport, but that they are operating here out of necessity simply because of an Act of God.

Board Member Mark Frank noted that with a \$75.00 per day user fee it would be reasonably possible for someone to actually run their operation out of the airport. Mr. Coleman explained that in order for them to be considered an operation they would have to be advertising from the airport, have an office located here and (referring to Skydiving in particular), landing their skydivers on the airfield. It was then clarified to everyone that Jump Florida is just using the runway to take their skydivers up, but the jumpers are landing back at the Blackwater airport.

At this time Pasqual Rodriguez of 18000 Cyrshire Blvd, Land O' Lakes Florida addressed the Board. He shared with the board his years of experience as a skydiver and how their small skydiving operation has grown in the past 4 years to over 10,000 tandem jumps per year. He said that unfortunately he pays over \$2500.00 per month to use an airport with no facilities and a flooded runway. He understands how Mr. Hayes must feel, but at the same time he believes that Mr. Hayes is very blessed to be able to operate his business out of the Zephyrhills Airport. It is the perfect spot for Skydiving operations and that if Skydive City did not operate their business here, there would certainly be another skydiving operation to take their place. He also agrees with the point of view of T.K. and Nathan that things should be handled fairly. They are trying to build a new run way but it will take some time to do so. At this time they just need to

be able to stay in business and Zephyrhills is the only place they can operate during this time that their runway is flooded. He explained how difficult it has been having to transport their customers over to Zephyrhills. They have lost much business because they can only book approximately 60 people per day instead of about 150 because of the transportation issue. This is a very inconvenient situation for everyone and they do not like to have to do it. He told the board that Jump Florida has purchased approximately \$53,000 dollars of fuel at the Zephyrhills Airport since they have been in business. There was some discussion about what the requirements would be if Jump Florida would be inclined to bring their business over to Zephyrhills Airport. Mr. Rodriguez also pointed out that their customers come from out of town. Most drive here from several hours away and sometimes even from out of state. Because there are no facilities in the Blackwater area, these folks come to Zephyrhills to stay in hotels, to eat, etc. Therefore Jump Florida's business also brings a financial benefit to the City.

Board Member Rachel Nash said that the board was in support of how Mr. Coleman had been handling the situation and that there did not seem to be a need to make any type of motion regarding the issue. The rest of the board agreed with her assessment and there was no more discussion.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS –

- Fuel sales were reviewed
- Mr. Coleman informed the board that he recently supplied space in the AeroCenter for a new tenant. TKM Aviation. They are paying a little more than the established fee rate. This company would like to build a maintenance facility at the airport and are moving forward with Site Plans. Nathan will provide the board with more information as it come along.

MEETING ADJOURNED