

Charlottesville Albemarle Airport Commission Meeting Minutes,

Monday, March 17, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.-ARFF Training Room at the Airport

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:**  John Mattern (Chairman), Brian Johnson (Vice-Chairman), Pace Lochte, Roy Van Doorn, John Post, Francis Caruccio

**Members Absent:** Ben Chambers

**Staff Present:** Jason Burch: Chief Executive Officer; Penny Shifflett: Chief Financial Officer; Chris White: Chief Operating Officer; Stewart Key: Director of Air Service & Marketing; Jessica Conley: Administrative Assistant

**Others Present:** None

**Call to Order at 4:02 p.m. by Mr. Mattern**

**Consent Agenda:**

1. Minutes –January 13, 2025
2. Financial Statements –January 31, 2025 (Unaudited)
3. Airport Statistics: December 2024 and January 2025

Mr. Burch discussed highlights on the Airport Statistics and noted we are almost fully recovered from pre-Covid numbers.

Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the minutes. Mr. Caruccio seconded the motion, and the motion was accepted. Ms. Lochte abstained her vote due to her absence at the last meeting.

**Matters from the Public:** None

**Awards and Recognition:** None

**Informational Items:**

1. CEO and Staff’s Update:
   1. Preliminary 6-Year Airport Capital Improvement Plan- The Plan was distributed for review and staff will be seeking approval from the Board at the May meeting. Ms. Shifflett explained that every March the plan is reviewed by the Board to ensure there is no blasting associated with the projects according to the good neighbor policy. Mr. White explained several projects listed are for maintenance of the current terminal. Mr. Burch explained that in FY30 we would see the Air Traffic Control Tower replacement. The tower will ultimately have to be relocated but the fiscal year could change depending on funding.

Mr. Post inquired about what projects would require blasting. Mr. Burch responded that if there were any projects that required blasting, CHO would be communicating effectively with the community.

Mr. Mattern inquired about the land acquisition project. Mr. Burch responded there are currently 2 parcels of land that CHO is interested in for the future.

Ms. Lochte inquired about the $60 million item and the $100 million item. Ms. Shifflett explained the $60 million item is slated for a Bond issuance and the $100 million item was from other funding sources that staff are exploring. Mr. Burch also added that they were fillers to be figured out.

* 1. Personnel Update: Mr. Burch explained that CHO is now fully staffed with 51 employees and will be looking at hiring for an IT position soon.
  2. General Airport Operations: Mr. Burch explained that he, Mr. White, and Ms. Shifflett just returned from an airport conference in Pennsylvania where they were expecting to meet with FAA employees. Unfortunately, due to the current political situation they were unable to attend. He also attended an Airport Electrification conference in New York with Mr. White where Mr. White was a presenter at the conference.
  3. Construction and Capital Projects Update:
     1. Terminal Area Redevelopment: Mr. White explained planning is continuing and the ALP update is in process. This project is in the early planning phase and is going slowly. CHO hopes to soon have feedback from the FAA.
     2. ARFF Building Rehabilitation: The project has been awarded, and staff are waiting for permits from the County before the project can begin.
     3. Mechanical Systems Upgrade: Gas lines have been brought to the building and boilers are expected to arrive soon. Boilers will be installed in April when temperatures are consistently warmer.
     4. Baggage Belt Upgrade: This is a 290-day project set to begin in the Spring. It will shut down outbound and inbound belts for 2 weeks. The contractor will provide porters for baggage handling during that time frame. Mr. Johnson stated the complaint he heard the most is related to long waiting times for baggage. Mr. White explained the standard time airlines like to meet is 20 minutes. He also explained that the timing standard doesn’t happen all the time due to staffing shortage with the airlines. Mr. Post inquired if we would be alerting the public regarding the baggage belt project. Mr. White explained Stewart Key will keep the public informed on this project.
     5. Pavement Rehabilitation: The design phase is almost complete. The project will go out to bid in the Spring.
     6. IT Projects: This is a collective of a bunch of projects. CHO now has updated servers, firewalls, software, telephone systems, etc. The new phones have been installed at each desk, and they will be going live with these soon.
  4. Marketing & Air Service Update- Mr. Burch explained CHO just received flights from the CRJ-550. It is a spacious 50-seater aircraft that United operates. We now have 3 Chicago flights, 4 Dulles flights, and 8 Charlotte flights. The only flight CHO hasn’t gotten back from pre-covid is Philadelphia. Mr. Burch explained we are very lucky that we have the 3 legacy carriers here at CHO. Mr. Burch stated that he and Mr. White will be traveling in a few months to meet with those legacy carriers.

Ms. Lochte inquired about a rumor she heard regarding TSA employees at CHO that were given notice that this September they would be let go. Mr. Burch explained that he had not heard that rumor and Mr. White explained that TSA employees had to work without pay in the past until the government was funded. This would only happen if we experienced a government shutdown.

Mr. Johnson inquired if we are still advertising with UVA baseball. Ms. Key responded that we do advertise with UVA for the baseball season.

Mr. Van Doorn inquired about aircraft personal property tax and the high costs in our area. Mr. Burch explained that we will be working with Signature Aviation to address the county regarding making the prices more competitive with aircraft personal property tax.

Mr. Van Doorn questioned the high repair costs we are seeing with the new escalators. Mr. Burch responded that our warranty is now expired and that the new escalators are highly sensitive. The technicians that fix the escalators are coming from Richmond. Mr. White remarked CHO is looking at solutions to minimize escalator repair costs.

**Calendar of Events:** Ms. Key explained we were nominated for Best Small Airport through Newsweek. Ms. Key encouraged everyone to go on to the link on Facebook as well as the CHO website to vote daily for this contest.

**Next Scheduled Meeting:** Monday, May 12, 2025, 4:00 p.m. Location: Staybridge Suites-3060 Laurel Park Lane Charlottesville, VA 22911. Meeting date subject to change due to executives attending a conference during that time.

**Adjournment at** 4:51 p.m.