

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
AIRPORT COMMISSION MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 4, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Council President Aidee Nieves, Chair; Ken Flatto, Finance Director
Stratford Mayor Laura Hoydick; City Clerk Lydia Martinez

STAFF: Michelle Muoio, Airport Manager; Michael Jankovsky, City Attorney's
Office; Daniel Roach, Craig Nadrizny, Public Facilities Director

OTHERS: Robert Christoph, Bruce Jackson, Windsock Inn; Lauren Daley, Shawn
Rose, Representative Joe Gresko, Mark Corvino, Connecticut Air and
Space Center; Thomas's iPhone, 203-218-8688; 203-231-3222; 203-314-
2036; 203-339-2206; 203-375-5795; 203-414-0712; 203-569-7600; 617-
620-8771; 860-292-2030

This meeting was held via teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Nieves called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Mr. Bruce Jackson, representing the Windsock Inn, said that he would like the Commission to consider a long-term lease extension.

State Representative Joe Gresko of District 121, then spoke. He said that the Connecticut Air and Space Center had been waiting for years for the City to sign off on the negative pledge. They have been waiting patiently for the grant funding. He said that he understood the complexity, but the City should be celebrating the Connecticut Air and Space Center. It is a national monument and will enhance the airport.

Approval of Lease Renewal Hangars 1-4 with Immediate Utility Repairs Required by Stratford Army Engine Plant Remediation Project

**** MS. MARTINEZ MOVED THE ITEM.**

**** MR. FLATTO SECONDED.**

Mayor Hoydick asked for confirmation on the item, which she received. She noted that the lease does not indicate who the leaser was.

Mr. Flatto said that he had reviewed the details and wished to confirm that this would not be an impediment to the potential plans. Ms. Muoio said that it would not be an impediment and that they had received a letter of support from the CAA supporting this renewal.

**** MR. FLATTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE LEASE RENEWAL HANGARS 1-4 WITH IMMEDIATE UTILITY REPAIRS REQUIRED BY STRATFORD ARMY ENGINE PLANT REMEDIATION PROJECT UNDER THE TERMS NEGOTIATED AND PRESENTED TO THE COMMISSION.**

**** MAYOR HOYDICK SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CONNECTICUT AIR AND SPACE CENTER (CASC) UPDATE

Mr. Corvino said that they had been unable to find out what the status was of the estoppel. He said that the length of the agreement was based on the completion of the Curtis Hanger. The Connecticut Air and Space Restoration shop has been closed as a result. He has spent a great deal of time on this project along with several other people, but everything is stalled. He said that he has heard about the Master Plan for the Airport, but doesn't know where the Museum fits in.

Council President Nieves said that there was supposed to be a meeting in September. Ms. Muoio said that she also had a grant that was being held up, also. She said that she would give him whatever information she had. There were two items that the City had issues within the estoppel. Atty. Jankovsky gave a quick update on the issues and stated that the City had to certify that the Museum had paid all their taxes.

Mr. Corvino said that he had spoken with Senator Kevin Kelly, who claimed that they had not heard from Bridgeport yet. He asked how one would go about certifying the taxes. He noted that the original funding had been awarded in 2018, but now it was 2022 and there was still nothing done. He asked for an in-person meeting with the legal representatives.

Mr. Flatto asked Atty. Jankovsky and Ms. Muoio to contact the DECD along with Kevin Kelly. Mayor Hoydick said that the delay was unacceptable.

Ms. Martinez said that she had been working on this and recognized the amount of work that has gone into this.

Council President Nieves said that in the meeting minutes, it noted that they would be getting an update. She said that they had received a letter from the CAA supporting the Atlantic lease. She said that it looks like they were just stringing this item along and it needs to be moved forward. When she became a Commissioner, the Museum was one of the first things that was on the agenda. By the next meeting, she would like to have some information available about this. She requested that Atty. Jankovsky to schedule the meeting and that there not be a negative report. Discussion followed.

APPROVAL OF INTERIM LEASE EXTENSION
(between 1 and 3 years) for the Windsock Inn

Ms. Muoio said that the Windsock has been operating under a short-term lease that had the option to extend if the area was not required for aeronautical use. She said that in light of the discussions regarding the potential transfer of ownership of the airport, she felt that it would be best to consider a shorter extension period and let the CAA properly evaluate if the area was required for aeronautical use. She discussed this with the Windsock Inn, who want as long of a term as possible. The CAA has indicated that they would prefer a 1 year lease extension, pending the transfer of ownership.

She then spoke about the significance of aeronautical versus non-aeronautical uses of property at a Federally obligated airport. By approval of a long-term lease extension, the Commission would essentially be making a determination that this property is not needed for aeronautical use. She said that the Master Plan did not call for the removal of the business, but added that there was a documented need for additional aircraft storage at the airport. Her recommendation for a 1 year lease extension was consistent with the CAA's opinion.

Mayor Hoydick said that it was ironic that the use of the space was an issue but it wasn't before. She asked when the transfer of the airport to the CAA would be along with a number of other details. She requested that the lease extension be at least three years.

**** MAYOR HOYDICK MOVED TO APPROVE THE EXTENSION OF LEASE FOR THREE YEARS TO FIVE YEARS.**

**** MR. FLATTO SECONDED FOR THE PURPOSES OF DISCUSSION.**

Mr. Flatto said that three years was too long but would feel better with two years. He said that they were a good tenant, but nothing would be resolved until the potential transfer of the airport is decided. Discussion followed.

Council President Nieves said that she had not seen a timeline on the transfer of the property because they were still in talks about it. She noted that a year in a restaurant business was different than a year in a retail store. She also said that the discussions about the transfer have moved along slowly but would feel better with three years. The owner is most likely recovering from the closure from COVID. A longer lease will give the owner time to figure out where they are going to go next. It will most likely be the CAA that will be deciding what they want to do with the space once the transfer is completed.

Mr. Flatto asked about the rent amount, which Ms. Muoio reviewed with him. Mr. Flatto said that he was nervous about going to three years.

A discussion followed regarding whether this was a renewal or an extension.

**** MAYOR HOYDICK MOVED TO APPROVE THE EXTENSION OF THE EXISTING 2019 LEASE FOR THREE YEARS WITH THE TERMS DEFINED IN THE EXISTING AGREEMENT.**

**** MR. FLATTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council President Nieves announced that there was an item that needed to be added to the agenda.

**** MS. MARTINEZ MOVED TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA.**

**** MR. FLATTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council President Nieves said that the Commission needed to approve the minutes from the September 6, 2022 meeting.

**** MS. MARTINEZ MOVED THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 MEETING.**

**** MR. FLATTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** MAYOR HOYDICK MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. FLATTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services