

**VERMONT AVIATION ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
DILL BUILDING  
2178 AIRPORT ROAD  
BARRE, VT 05641  
May 21, 2024**

**\*Hybrid meeting**

**COUNCIL MEMBER ATTENDEES:**

Bill Hanf  
Cliff Coy FSO  
Bob Flint  
Steve Dolgin  
Thomas Spencer

**OTHER ATTENDEES:**

Joe Flynn, VTrans	Hehir, John
Dan Delabruere, VTrans	Christopher Reece
Kyle Wells, VTrans	Schaefer, Bob
Rollin Tebbetts, VTrans	Larry Perry
David Tillberg, VTrans	Schuyler Lamoureux
Paul Libby, VTrans	John Fitzgerald
Amy Messier, VTrans	Mark Manley, VTrans
Costa Pappis, VTrans	Cody Miller
Chris Betzel, VTrans	John Nummy, VTrans
Guy Tapper, VTrans	Patrick Sharrow
Renee Layton, VTrans	Richard A. Lasdin
Mark Fitzgerald, VTrans	Sean O'Connor
Robert J. Luchini, VTrans	Jack Sims
Kyle Wells, VTrans	Mark Walker, VTrans
Sasa Dejan, VTrans	Jen Ricciardi
Garrett Organek	

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**1. CALL TO ORDER and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dan Delabruere called the hybrid meeting to order at 1:19 PM, due to technical difficulties. Introductions were done.

**2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

(November 14, 2023 & February 20, 2024)  
Could not be approved due to lack of a Quorum.

**3. STATEWIDE MASTER PERMITTING UPDATE**

- Robert Lucini VTrans consultant working for MacFarland Johnson spoke about the airport Act 250 permitting at Hartness State airport requesting additional information that was supplied to them May 13, 2023. This should provide Act 250 what they need to move forward with that which would get us the partial finance.
- At William H Morris State Airport, we are in the trenches still with the water and wastewater permit with the unique location in the high-water table, after much back and

forth between parties the last round of requests from December are being replied to and is ready for ACT 250 submission.

- A Map was shown of all airports and their current status.

#### 4. PROJECT UPDATES, INCLUDING MASTER PLAN UPDATES

Dan mentioned that one project that we have on our list is Franklin County Airport. Rob Luchini just referenced one of the things that we have been working on as part of the project and that is the MOU for the entire airport.

Joe Flynn is given the floor to discuss the MOU and how it relates to the map shown. Everybody's been patient, especially our partners at Franklin County, but aviators in general have been patient on how this will impact, if at all, general aviation. I hope you'll see that this doesn't change what aviators have been doing at Franklin County Airport for the last 20 or 30 years, it requires a state to take some extra measures. But as far as your use enjoyment and general recreation, plus as far as potential growth opportunities. On page one of the MOU, it talks about how long, how many acres, the runway length and whatnot. That is just historical information. Page two, the top part is the same, but as you read on it speaks to the habitat loss due to construction requiring mitigation, that's where the meat and potatoes of the agreement start to come into play. What this says is that.

Permitting requires a 2 to 1 mitigation ratio for disturbing endangered or threatened species. The calculation at Franklin County Airport or impacted areas is 37.6 acres 2 to 1 arithmetic that they work on is 74.9 acres. Basically, we didn't have 74.9 acres that we could play with there because of a couple things we are not putting any of the land east of Airport Rd into this agreement, which means that the parcel that the Franklin County Field Days is on and is free to develop outside of this going forward. And what we've done is we've calculated the area that you see in blue. So, you see them listed A-F. We've calculated these areas in blue to get us to their two to one arithmetic formula. What we're also doing is we've agreed to pay \$40,000. Stipulation because we want to take the northeast portion where the future taxiway will go off the table regarding having to come back and negotiate with Fish and Wildlife again.

So basically what you've got here, and I realize there's 5 pages and I'm breezing through it quickly. But what you've got here is acreage that well basically supports the birds that have been there for 30 years, but we're adding acreage, as you can see, especially fence E is not FSBO owned property, but obviously it abuts it. And we've decided to put that into play as far as mitigation to get to a point where we could succeed. And so that is the former, a portion of the former handy parcel and obviously the blue section within fence F is existing airport property. This agreement also allows necessary mowing up until June 1st. It allows mowing after August 15th, but it does allow mowing along the edge of the runway, mowing it in sections, mowing around the AWOS, mowing along the fence line for inspection as needed throughout. What this agreement also says is that nobody can change the agreement unless both secretaries agree in both secretaries sign so staff or even a future secretary who doesn't like it can't change it unless a potential future other Secretary agrees with that. Working with the Agency of Natural Resources was not an option and I want to give credit to the Secretary and Commissioner for their work with us.

The question was raised by Cliff Coy as to whether the FAA has signed off on this plan yet, and the answer is not yet but we are expecting it will be. One thing I omitted, which

is very important and there is no agreement by the Agency of Transportation to mitigate or take action or provide habitat for birds at any other airport, that's key. And I sorry, I overlook that that was a concern both in the letter I received from FAA, and I know it's a concern and other aviators, Hartness had been mentioned early on in this back and forth with Agency of Natural Resources that is completely off the table. So, I think that that's a win as well.

Kyle Wells, project manager for the Rail and Aviation Bureau gave update on improvement projects at the Franklin County State Airport. The project that's going on this summer, which is 1000-foot Runway extension, 1000-foot taxiway extension and some geometry changes to the airfield along with three cutting and moving a segmented circle. The state of Vermont's hired ECI to cut 13 acres of obstruction so those are trees that would have been an obstruction when we put the 1000 feet of runway extension in. We're clearing that before we pave and put the actual runway in. We had a lot of discussions with our sister Agency of Natural Resources regarding the wetland permitting. All the tree cutting is completed. We've had a licensed surveyor shoot the approach. All the trees are down that need to be down.

Beginning April 15th ECI started on more of the airfield inside the fence construction. They started on all the drainage work inside we've done a significant amount of drainage pipe and different structures in the airfield to get the water off the airport. The largest concern we had was in the spring thaw when all the snow melts and it used the airport as a pass through from abutting properties. Since we're extending the runway, we must get all that water out of there.

All the drainage work in the infield is completed. Now ECI starting to work on the runway safety area, getting that all prepped so that they can have that work out of the way when they when we move into our closure of the runway later this week on Thursday, we're going to be upsizing at culvert that passes underneath Airport Rd, which is an access Road the state owns. We're upsizing that to meet hydraulic passage, now at the airfield has all the drainage to accept all that water. We're going to increase the flow and not have it bottle up on the other side of the road.

That'll take place Thursday with alternating traffic. We have a traffic control plan and it'll be alternating one lane. The runway closure is still anticipated to start June 17th and go to August 15th and that is Phases 2 and three on this little table below. Here and the project construction schedule, but the contractor decided to kind of put the 45-day closure along with the 14-day closure back to back and it is going to do all they can to do that work faster than that if they can, we all know how construction works. There's lots of variables, so they are a good contractor and they've done a good job last year and they are prepared and organized to facilitate the work this year and then when we complete everything, the anticipated project completion will be in October of 2024.

Draft horses were used through a subcontractor ECI hired to get through some permitting conditions and the varying weather in Vermont. We all know it's never guaranteed the ground will fully freeze, so they proposed using draft horses and the agency natural resources allowed that. They did a great job pulling all those logs out and getting those logs up there you can see that pile to the right.

As for Fish and Wildlife concerns, we have wetlands in Vermont that are protected. So, there are state permitting regulations we are required to follow as a transportation facility.

Inside the airfield, the picture on the left is preparing for the runway extension. Working on the safety areas so it can accept when we are in the closure on doing more of the subbase and pavement work to the right, you'll see all the equipment's flagged meeting FAA requirements inside an airport. We spent a lot of time focusing on the runway safety plan this year, structure, safety, phasing, plan. We know last year there was a long a long closure which gave all the users of brand-new runway and a wider runway. We want to shorten the closure as much as possible to eliminate any lag so the best we could do is phase this work and the work that's taking place right here in this photo, the whole airport remains open, our equipment must stay below a certain site height through what's called a 7460 and allowance from the FAA. Contractors are doing a great job doing that. Camp Precast supplied a lot of drop inlets to tie all that drainage together and this is a photo taken from our resident engineer a few weeks ago doing all the drainage work. We went with the piping idea to get a lot of the that storm high glossy runoff from on the other side of the road and prevent any type of ponding. The runway closure for the summer at Franklin we have a schedule on this June 17th to the August 15th.

John Nummy, VTrans Project manager updated on the Morrisville Stowe Fuel Farm. As we had done, three people in the last meeting, I believed that I'm not sure when that meeting was, but we have had the AVS gas fuel system operational since the beginning of March. So that is open for sale to the public. So far as I know, it's been going smoothly and there are no real issues with the system. We may have to swap a fuel filter out, but that should be very limited impact. A replacement tank we are waiting for, we received some bad news in March that there was some lack of communication between the contractor and the supplier, and it turned out that the supplier was not building the tank. So, when it came time, they were expecting to deliver, it turned out we didn't have a tank ready to be received. We are now getting word that the tank has been fabricated and is on to the builder who is now assembling. All the fittings, the pipes and the pumps, and now, they're projecting September 16th as a delivery date. However, we're a little bit ahead of schedule of what we had expected in terms of time for fabricating the tank so we're hoping that by end of summer, beginning of fall that we will have that tank on site being ready to be installed and set up to complete the system finally.

The runway rehab project down at Rutland Regional Airport is rolling. We are extending in either direction of runway 119 including intersection 13-31 and upgrading electrical and replacing all runway edge lights with LED lights. As part of this project, we're doing some corrections to the runway width and the runway profile to make that a smoother ride and a consistent 100 feet wide length to the runway. The start of construction was beginning of May, May 6th we started the closure of 1-19, which is on schedule from what the contractor was proposing and as an update of where we are. The area for the southern area of Runway 1-19 up to the intersection of 13-31 has been completed with all the paving work that needed to be done. Now, we just need to finish installing the lights and top selling and seeding the runway edges and that work Area 4 will be complete. Project updated schedule, we've had some battles with the weather so far and right now we had we had a closure ending of June 5th. We've extended that another two days to the 7th, but contractually they had 48 days, 48 calendar days for that closure. We are approaching the closure of the runway 13-31 and taxiway Bravo West, so this new proposed schedule that the contractor just gave us last week is proposing to start that closure. The three-day closure, both runways on May 28th and as I said, the weather permitting. We're looking to hopefully nail that down this week based on the forecast for next week. That closure will mean all runways and taxiways are closed during those three

days while they get that work Area 3 done which is the intersection I spoke of before then they'll move right into closing the taxiway Bravo and starting that intersection as well for another three days. But once the once the intersection of 13th, 31 and 1-19 is done, the crosswind runway 13-31 will be back open again for regular use, 1-19 will remain closed through those periods. And like I said, hoping to get that open on June 7th, the normal operations and then it'll have a nighttime closure for 12 days or 12 nights for the final grooving and marking starting July 8th after the holiday weekend. Again, all weather permitting stuff, especially when you're painting, you got to have dry condition to do that. Pike has been going through and doing the widening that you see in the top right milling out all the existing pavement there down to subgrade and in the bottom left that's the replacing that P209 subbase gravel back to the subgrade depth. Then paving that widening back in up to what is now the milled surface of the runway. The starting of the payment pavement surface course, so we've got the whole pavement train lined up here in the top left, with the material transfer machine and backup paver. The main paver and a couple of rollers set up packing the surface in that top right corner and then you could see in the bottom left that whole paving train and operation, the trucks dumping into the material transfer which then transfers that at a steady rate into the paver behind it to produce a nice smooth pavement surface. Then paving in that top surface course over the milled surface. In area 4 on the South end, they didn't have to do much of any shimming. It was kind of a replacing two existing grades and then they'll be addressing some more of the profile corrections in the other work areas towards the middle of the runway and then they'll be basically shimming it up to take out the low spot that was in the runway previously and then paving that surface course in a continuous path over the top.

Kyle gave update on Northeast Kingdom International Airport, Coventry, Vermont. We're doing a replacement of the airport terminal building to a northern Borders Grant update from last time as we now have the active 250 land use amendment executed, we have the operational stormwater amendment permit executed. That means all environmental permits are executed. The last piece of the puzzle is finalizing the FAA Tech OPS agreement for radio-controlled outlet agreement, which is forthcoming. Basically, there's some equipment in there that is communications for pilots and talking to Atlanta, and we need to temporarily suspend that for when we tear the building down and build new one. But we're looking to advertise this project beginning in June and I'm have construction start late summer fall. My goal is that the construction and everything's in the ground so that they can start doing the inside work late fall maybe into the winter, depending on how much of a jump they get when we get awarded. There is a proposed new building, 32 feet by 56 feet, 1792 square ft.

Rollin Updated on Caledonia today did a bunch of block patching. Jason was up there. He's still there. They're almost done, but a bunch of areas really needed it. This is part of our statewide pavement maintenance grant. It was deferred work from last year that we had to move into this summer so that we could, we ran out of time last year with weather. There were six areas like this that were milled out and repaved. So some of the worst spots on the runway have now been fixed up.

## **5. Eclipse Review discussion: Dan/Rollin**

Dan - On April 8th, obviously everybody knows we had an eclipse here once, kind of once in a lifetime event in our area.

- Northeast Kingdom had 91 aircraft that were landed and parked at that airport. That is beyond what we call capacity at the airport and some of these were fairly large aircraft.
- Franklin County took reservations there and you know, they tried to give aircraft sort of a budgeted slotted time to come in, so not everybody would enter at the same time, which I thought was a good idea that they had there and they were keeping track of tail numbers as they were coming in, making sure that, you know, the people that made reservations could get in.
- Morrisville Stowe and at Caledonia we actually issued a NOTAM that we just couldn't fit any more planes on the ramp.
  
- Knapp the parking for overflow beyond the ramp and used the crosswind runway there for parking as well.

Just an amazing day. I think a lot of that was because of the planning, but it was also because of a lot of the great aviators that came and left. They did a great job, following the rules. It could have been chaos, and it really wasn't.

Joe - If I could just build on that quickly, Dan, as far as surface transportation slides that the drones showed of the exit 14 area, you saw roads like that all over the state and estimate that there were 70,000 more vehicles moving then typically at that time. So that's the number, it's not 100% exact science working with UVM, that's 196,000 people. UVM has a metric of 2.8 per vehicle, but the most incredible thing was across the state of Vermont. There were only nine reported motor vehicle crashes that day. It really says something I think about the people who came. If you're going to come from afar to witness something like this, the patience that they had to wait in those lines and to have only nine reported crashes to the Vermont State Police, there may have been some things in municipal districts that we didn't track, but it was truly an incredible day all the way around really.

Rollin - Speaking of incidents. We only had one incident. We had a ground loop at Caledonia. It was like, 8 o'clock in the morning, and it was like one of the first aircraft in. Anyway, no serious injuries, small damage to the aircraft and anyway kudos to all the pilots out there who did a great job being patient.

## 6. MAINTENANCE PROJECT UPDATES

Rollin - Hopefully snow removal is over. Does anybody have any comments on this snow season?

Bill Hanf - speaking from Middlebury, Cisco does a great job. The shortcoming is a lot of times it seems like he gets he gets pulled to backfill other airports and a lot of times that leaves us without anyone. It's great he can help out somewhere else, but that that leaves Middlebury without any attention.

Rollin - pavement maintenance.

Paul briefly mentioned it before, this was this morning at Lyndonville, Caledonia County, we're doing the patching. We're very, very fortunate that we have this grant every year

and Jason Owen works very, very hard to make sure that each airport around the state gets some type of work where we can. So that really was in desperate need of some help.

This is the culvert under the under Runway 5-23 at Springfield and Renee's on the call, she's the project manager for Springfield. We've had problems with beavers and this end is the inflow and correct me if I'm wrong, Renee, that this is the output. Looks like a concrete wall. Yeah, that's what I thought it was. But it's just debris and a busy Beavers community piled up all that. We talked about closures and when we're closed for construction project for or for maintenance for more than the day that he put out fabric yellow X's which in aviation means closed. You'll look, for example, you'll never see a taxiway named X Ray because that means close. At Rutland we've got a maintenance project already inspected and while the runway is closed, Chris is coordinated that we repair all of this. This whole section is going to be looked at, and if it those blocks, so this is an engineered material arresting system (EMAS). It's a high-speed truck stop ramp. So, if you were landing on the other end and you for some reason you could not stop in time, you would roll on to this and the blocks collapse slowing you down. It saved a few airliners across the country in the last 10 or 15 years.

Again, with Highgate, when the airports closed and when the runway is closed down at Rutland, we use lighted X's. These X's are displayed 24/7.

We've ordered 9 brand new zero turn riding mowers for the crew, so those will be arriving soon. Everybody except Island Pond is going to get a new one.

And then one other item, the fuel farm in Caledonia is out of service. We took it out, I think probably about three weeks ago, there was a small leak with the water. The fuel was not leaking. And I want to make sure everybody understands there was no fuel leak. It was a small, small amount of water getting into the to the fuel you daily test and Chris Raymond, I was able to determine that. We decided to take it out of service, and we did. So, Lake Regions is going to try and find the leak. It's not going to be easy to find, and then we'll take it from there. So, we had to pump all the usable fuel out, that was step one. And then pump out the remaining fuel that had water in it and pumped that out, a separate pump. And now the tank is empty, and they can go in there and inspect and try to find whatever is allowing water to get in the tank, which we honestly don't know what that is. I don't know what our solution is because I really don't know what the problem is yet, but more to come on that and you know we recognize how important fuel is at these airports. This was not a schedule outage.

## 7. PUBLIC INPUT

Dan D. opened floor for brief comments.

Bill, just a couple of follow-ups from the Minutes from last meeting.

-So do we have an update on Middlebury Fuel Farm? Who's working on that?

We were looking at next calendar year, it's November, are we looking at this year or next year. But I don't think we have anything new since last time, nothing new, still design in the system. Yeah, we're still design. I'm speculating, best case scenario, end of the year.

And then Morrisville, still those tanks right now we're seeing they 8 to 10 months out. Morrisville Stowe is there any updates on FBO there?

No, nothing new to talk to the Council about. I don't know where we're headed with that Bill, but the ball is not in VTrans court right now.

- Any bites on Rutland restaurant?

I can't get into that one, but there is somebody that is interested in reopening the restaurant at Rutland and this is great news.

Bill continued with concerns of staffing for the airports going further with people retiring and taking better paying positions, and inquired whether there were any plans in the works to deal with that.

Dan - I think if you look at the amount of investment that we're putting into the infrastructure from our standpoint, and the master permitting effort, I mean we are trying a lot of different things to try to promote these airports and keep them operating efficiently. So hopefully with all this investment, it can draw some people in. You know that's what we're trying to do right now. So yeah, maybe we can talk about, you know, getting the word out for bringing people in from out of state or we can, you know, if there's other state agencies to talking about employment, you know, employment agencies that can we put the word out that there's avionics opportunities, things like that.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Next meeting will be on August 27, 2024. In-person or online.

Agenda and notification will be sent prior to that meeting.

With no further business and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 2:35 PM.