

**MINUTES OF THE  
LAKEFRONT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY  
AIRPORT COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY AUGUST 17, 2021**

PRESENT: Chair Wilma Heaton  
Vice Chair Thomas Fierke  
Commissioner Renee Lapeyrolerie

ABSENT: Commissioner David Francis  
Commissioner Pat Meadowcroft

STAFF: Louis Capo – Executive Director  
David Martin, P.E. – Director of Engineering and Operations  
Bruce Martin – Airport Director  
Chris Henderson – Airport Manager  
Madison Bonaventure – Assistant to the Executive Director/Board Secretary  
Winnifred Christopher – Administrative Program Specialist A

ALSO

PRESENT: Gerard Metzger – Legal Counsel to the LMA  
Al Pappalardo – Real Estate Consultant to the LMA  
Emile “Trey” Babin – Legal Counsel to Messina Lakefront Airport, LLC  
George Groh – Kutchins and Groh  
David Halpern – Self  
Tom Long – Lake Vista Resident  
George Messina – Messina Lakefront Airport, LLC

---

The Airport Committee of the Lakefront Management Authority met on Tuesday August 17, 2021 at the New Orleans Lakefront Conference Center located at 6001 Stars and Stripes Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126 after legal notice to the media was distributed and agenda was posted.

Chair Heaton called the meeting to order at 2:32 P.M. and led in the pledge of allegiance.

Louis Capo, Executive Director, called the roll. A quorum was present.

**Opening Comments:** None

**Motion to Adopt Agenda:**

A motion was offered by Commissioner Fierke, seconded by Commissioner Lapeyrolerie, and was unanimously approved to adopt the agenda.

**Motion to Approve the Minutes:**

A motion was offered by Commissioner Fierke, seconded by Commissioner Lapeyrolerie, and was unanimously adopted to approve the minutes of July 13, 2021.

**Director's Report:**

Bruce Martin, Airport Director, explained that water pressure issues around the Airport persisted, but staff had a plan in place to alleviate the issue. He advised that David Martin, Director of Engineering and Operations, assembled a package for a request for quotes and was awaiting quotes for booster kit installation. Mr. Bruce Martin further clarified that the water pressure drops when the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) performs water utility repairs on Downman Road and Hayne Boulevard.

Chair Heaton confirmed that staff was conferring with SWBNO. Mr. Bruce Martin confirmed they were, and when the Airport experiences a reduction in water pressure they contact them.

Commissioner Fierke asked who had the most critical water need on the Airport. Mr. Bruce Martin said that the fire hydrants are most critical. Commissioner Fierke asked if SWBNO would be paying for the booster kits. He said they would not.

Commissioner Fierke asked if the SWBNO had an obligation to provide water at a certain level of pressure. He said it was his understanding that they did; however, the Authority needed to arrive at a solution to alleviate the problem.

Commissioner Lapeyrolerie clarified that the reduction in pressure was a result of the utility construction. Mr. Bruce Martin advised that it was. She expressed concern that the water pressure was consistently low. He advised that at the last meeting when they had mentioned the issue, the water pressure had returned up to 40 PSI, an acceptable level, before the Board Meeting.

Chair Heaton asked if the repair was accommodated in the budget. Director Capo confirmed it was.

Chair Heaton understood the challenges of repairing old public utility lines that SWBNO faced and appreciated staff for arriving at a solution for tenants.

Mr. Bruce Martin reported that significant progress had been made on the National Guard Hangar, and the roof would be completed soon. He also noted that the Notice to Proceed for the McDermott Hangar roof project had been issued.

He also advised that an RFP for the interior work for the National Guard Hangar was being issued as two separate projects: mold remediation services and interior renovations for drywall and flooring installation. He expected to have quotes in a week's time from the LMA's consultant. He anticipated that they would be ready to recommend approval of a firm at the next Board Meeting. Chair Heaton understood funding repairs was a struggle because there was a \$1 million deductible from the policy that the Flood Protection Authority (FPA) owned. Mr. Bruce Martin expected that Hurricane Zeta repairs would exceed the \$1 million deductible amount once all associated repairs and remediation services were complete.

Mr. Bruce Martin explained that the grant application for the Runway 9-27 Decommissioning/Reclassification Project had been resubmitted in view of the changes to the scope and goals to the project. He explained that the FAA and staff still believe that Runway 9-27 has too many hotspots, but instead of outright decommissioning the crosswind runway the FAA proposed exploration for options for relocating the crosswind runway. He said that the first phase of the project would be to conduct a study to find an alternative location. Chair Heaton requested that Mr. Bruce Martin communicate the status of the project to the Board once more information became available. He advised that he would be hosting a status update meeting with tenants regarding projects around the Airport the following week as well.

Mr. Bruce Martin said that staff was working on an RFP to advertise the available leasable area at 6601 Stars and Stripes Boulevard site. He said that Enterprise Rent-A-Car had reached out to Airport staff about renting the site since they bring rental vehicles to the Airport often, so he was hopeful the Airport could rent the area to them.

He advised that the Taxiway Foxtrot Drainage Project, which began before his tenure with the Authority, was advancing. The Taxiway Bravo Rehabilitation Project design would also begin soon.

He said that he would be meeting with associates from Prospect New Orleans, the international art triennial, and an artist who may display work in the Terminal Building's Atrium to discuss potential installation options.

He said that the Airport had been approached by the Greater New Orleans Sports Foundation and Air Race 1. He explained that Air Race 1 was an aviation racing circuit headquartered in Spain and was gaining popularity in mainstream media networks, particularly in Europe. They were interested in expanding their production in the United States. He said that New Orleans was a destination under consideration. He understood that it was within Director Capo's authority to sign and negotiate location agreements; however, he wanted to address the matter with the Board because there will be costs associated. The proposed date was sometime in November of 2022.

Mr. Bruce Martin reported that there were over 4,000 flight operations in July 2021 compared to about 2,300 in July 2019. He also reported that they sold 177,226 gallons of jet fuel which is the most fuel ever sold in the month of July since 2010.

He explained that Airport staff had reached out to City Jets, Inc. repeatedly, and they had not satisfied Commissioner Francis' request of providing the market study. He said he also had concerns about the flight schedule and still had several questions about their operational plans.

Commissioner Lapeyrolerie asked if the Airport was obligated to advertise available properties. Chair Heaton explained that advertising has tended to be the Board's wish in view of public policy and has moved in that direction in the past; however, the Airport was limited to the types of businesses it could lease to on its property. She advised that there were other LMA properties with environmental concerns for which they were addressing before advertising them.

Gerard Metzger, Legal Counsel to the LMA, explained that more information regarding the leasing and selling of land within the reclamation zone could be found in Title 38. He indicated that the Orleans Levee District properties were not subject to Public Lease Law.

**Public Comment:** None

**New Business**

- 1) **Motion to recommend ratification and approval of the closure of Messina's Runway Cafe in the Terminal at the New Orleans Lakefront Airport between January 6, 2021 and April 6, 2021 and the reduction of hours of operation to 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. between April 6, 2021 and December 31, 2021, and to recommend approval of the amendments of Messina's Restaurant and Special Events Lease in the Terminal on the minimum hours of operations, requirements for compliance with FAA Grant Assurance Agreements, including covenants for operations of Charter and Passenger Aviation Services in the Terminal at the Airport, and procedures for obtaining security for Special Events at the Terminal.**

A motion was offered by Commissioner Fierke and was seconded by Commissioner Lapeyrolerie to discuss the motion.

Mr. Metzger explained that the motion covered all issues staff and Mr. Messina had discussed regarding the master lease and temporary closures.

Director Capo added that during the closure period Mr. Messina remitted the base rent. He also verified that approximately \$7,000.00 in overage payments Mr. Messina paid, as mandated by the lease, to the Authority from outside catering sales was accurate.

Mr. Metzger said there was also an issue with Messina's compliance with Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) requirements. He explained that staff and legal counsel made him aware that it was a requirement of the lease. Commissioner Lapeyrolerie inquired about the terms of the requirement. Mr. Bruce Martin explained that there was a goal of 18% for Mr. Messina's utilization of outside contractors, such as lighting vendors, etc. Mr. Metzger said they are obligated to submit reports to show their efforts to achieve the goal.

Emile "Trey" Babin, Legal Counsel to Messina's, committed to providing the DBE report to Mr. Bruce Martin within 24 hours after Mr. Messina approved the report.

Mr. Metzger reminded the Committee that the Board had previously approved closures of the restaurant before January 6, 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic conditions, but ratification of the final leg of dates for the temporary closures had not yet been approved by the Board. Chair Heaton explained that staff does not have the authority to change the terms of a lease and since hours of operation were a term of the lease, bringing it up for Board approval was the most appropriate remedy.

Director Capo said the motion would also give Mr. Messina permission to reduce hours of operation due to COVID-19 pandemic conditions until December 31, 2021.

Mr. Metzger also said the new proposed lease grants a reduction in hours to 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM unless a charter service began operations at the Airport (and at which point the hours would be

8:00 PM to 5:00 PM as originally mandated). Commissioner Lapeyrolerie complimented staff and counsel for determining a solution with FBO tenants in mind.

Mr. Metzger said that the new proposed lease included language regarding the adherence to FAA regulations as to not threaten FAA grant assurances as the restaurant was subordinate to the Airport operations and capital projects.

Mr. Metzger added that additional language was included regarding the procurement of security details for special events. He clarified that the lessee would be subject to the ordinary procedures of the Orleans Levee District Police Department (OLDPD). It was Mr. Metzger's understanding that a new procedure was being brought forth at the next Flood Protection Authority (FPA) meeting via a resolution. Chair Heaton confirmed that was the case.

Mr. Pappalardo confirmed that he participated in the discussions regarding the negotiation of the proposed new lease and other items and recommended the motion.

Commissioner Fierke asked for a summary of the issues for the benefit of other Commissioners for the Board Meeting.

All voted in favor. The motion carried.

**2) Motion to recommend approval of a settlement of the amount of rent owed on Suite 121 in the New Orleans Lakefront Airport Terminal between December 2019 and August 2021 in the amount of \$16,250.00 and a one-year lease commencing on September 1, 2021 for Suite 121 for an annual rental of \$26,025.48 with Messina Lakefront Airport, LLC.**

A motion was offered by Commissioner Fierke and was seconded by Commissioner Lapeyrolerie to discuss.

Mr. Metzger reminded the Committee that when staff brought this issue to the Committee originally, it opened the door for a discussion of the global issues described and resolved in the previous motion. He explained that statements were made by a former aviation director and executive director about use of the space, but current staff wanted to reach a resolution to the issue.

Mr. Pappalardo explained that as a methodology to determine back rent rates, he calculated the rental rate of that period with the consideration that the unit was not built out and ready for immediate use by another tenant. He explained that he calculated the rate by accounting for 21 of the previous months, and the full rent would have been \$32,500.00. Mr. Messina offered to pay half of the calculated back rent. Mr. Pappalardo and Mr. Metzger agreed that it was a fair offer and recommended that the Board accept the offer.

He further explained that going forward, Mr. Messina would pay the full rental rate of \$30 sq/ft with passthrough charges, and the lease would be for a term of one year with automatic renewals with a 60-day cancellation clause. Additionally, the lease would be subject to CPI increases.

Chair Heaton thanked staff and consultants for determining an issue that would allow the public to gain value and avoided litigation. She added that the Legal Committee would also be reviewing the issue at their upcoming Committee meeting. Commissioner Lapeyrolerie thanked consultants and staff for their efforts.

All were in favor. The motion carried.

**3) Update regarding potential leasing and charter flight operations with City Jet, Inc.**

Chair Heaton explained that staff, herself, and the partners of City Jets, Inc. had met at the beginning of the summer at the Airport. She said initially the firm expressed great enthusiasm; however, they have been nonresponsive as of late, and staff was missing pertinent information from them.

Commissioner Lapeyrolerie asked for an update on the police detail protocols. Chair Heaton said she had a packet regarding the police details, and they would be discussed at the FPA's Board Meeting. Chair Heaton said they have policies and protocols in place; however, the FPA was revamping the existing policy.

Commissioner Lapeyrolerie clarified that another officer, aside from the designated detail coordinator, was scheduling details for Messina's, and Mr. Messina would contact him directly. Chair Heaton and Director Capo confirmed that was the case. Director Capo further explained that when there was an OLDPD Airport Liaison Officer, they took over the coordination of details at the Airport during that period without coordination with the LMA.

Commissioner Lapeyrolerie asked if the LMA notified OLDPD about the issue. Director Capo and Chair Heaton confirmed they had. Commissioner Lapeyrolerie also supported the idea that there be consistency and that the officers adhere to the policy. She inquired about what their response was to the notification. Director Capo said there was not a response, though they indicated that they were revamping and strengthening their policy.

Director Capo said there were several reasons for why details needed to go through the designated detail coordinator, such as to verify that officers were not working details while on regular duty.

**New Business**

**1) Discussion regarding additional mold remediation services and installation of flooring and dry wall at the National Guard Hangar.**

Mr. Bruce Martin explained that there would be two separate contracts for mold remediation and secondly for flooring and drywall installation. He explained that after the rain event following Hurricane Zeta water gushed into the hangar, and the interior was entirely damaged. He wanted to make the Committee aware that quotes should be ready a week following the meeting and would be presented at the next Board Meeting for approval.

**Announcement of next Airport Committee Meeting:**

**1) Tuesday, September 14, 2021– 2:30 PM**

**Adjourn:**

Commissioner Fierke made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lapeyrolerie seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 3:15 PM.