

**MINUTES OF THE
LAKEFRONT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
AIRPORT COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY DECEMBER 7, 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

ALSO

PRESENT: Gerard Metzger – Legal Counsel to the LMA

The Airport Committee of the Lakefront Management Authority met on Tuesday December 7, 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:

Chair Heaton explained that she was excited to discuss the potential for a grant to construct the Bessie Coleman Academy of Aviation. She reminded the Committee that are still seeking funding for flood protection at the Airport.

Motion to Adopt Agenda:

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

Motion to Approve the Minutes:

A motion was offered by Commissioner Meadowcroft, seconded by Commissioner Lapeyrolerie, and was unanimously adopted to defer the adoption of the Airport Committee Minutes until the Board Meeting. All were in favor. The motion carried.

Commissioner Lapeyrolerie asked if only the Airport Committee would be voting on the minutes. The Committee and Gerard Metzger, Legal Counsel to the LMA, confirmed that was the case.

Public Comment: None

Airport Director's Report:

Bruce Martin, Airport Director, explained that the National Guard Hangar was substantially complete. Ochsner's Medivac unit was moved back into their leased area.

Mr. Bruce Martin anticipated that staff may bring a change order to the next meeting for the Committee's consideration for the McDermott Hangar Roof Repair Project (Hurricane Zeta). He explained that because of Hurricane Ida there were additional damages to the roof that required remediation.

He advised that the PAPI lighting was reinstalled. He reminded the Committee that the Airport owned their PAPI lighting. At most Airports the FAA owns them, but due to concerns of flooding at the Airport the FAA refused to take ownership of the lights or pay to maintain them regularly. He said that as a standard practice the Airport removes the lighting during hurricane season.

Commissioner Meadowcroft asked if the FAA would take the PAPI lighting responsibility back once the Airport had flood protection. That was Mr. Bruce Martin's appreciation.

Mr. Bruce Martin explained that the ARFF department had been collaborating with the Belle Chasse Fire Department to perform a live burn training to maintain their certification. He explained that it is an expensive undertaking and historically meant that the ARFF department members had to travel out of state to obtain their certification. There would be no cost to the LMA.

He advised that the Sugar Bowl, a college football championship game, was upcoming and would take place at the Caesar's Superdome. He anticipated an increase in traffic at the Airport but not as considerable as other sporting events in the New Orleans metropolitan area.

He reported that in October 2021 there were 6,236 flight operations.

He advised that Mr. Addie Fanguy, who would often attend meetings as the manager of Signature Flight Support, LLC, had retired.

David Martin, Director of Engineering and Operations, advised that the water pressure around the Airport was sustained at 50 PSI, and the sewerage pipeline - which services the Williams Hangar leased to Flightline First - would begin to be replaced the following week. He anticipated that there would be about a two to three week project duration.

Commissioner Lapeyrolerie asked about the resolution to the water pressure issue at the Airport. Mr. David Martin advised that there was a leak in a remote part of the airfield. The leaking waterline was capped off. Fire suppression services would not be impacted. He clarified that the segment of waterline impacted was not being utilized for water service, and the general area was used for overflow aircraft parking. A valve has since been installed. He was grateful for the

maintenance crew's efforts. He confirmed that they saved money by thoroughly investigating the issue because they determined they did not need to purchase and install booster kits after all.

New Business:

1) Discussion regarding the New Orleans Lakefront Airport's application for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) FY 2021 American Rescue Plan Act Build Back Better Regional Challenge Grant.

Chair Heaton explained that the Authority may be an eligible recipient of an EDA grant for the construction of a flight school and airplane mechanic's school. She advised that a few years ago the Board had supported the University of New Orleans' (UNO) goal of developing a professional pilot Bachelor of Science degree program by resolution. The program was presented to the Board of Supervisors and Board of Regents and was accepted by them. She added that collaboration with Delgado Community College was also possible.

She further explained that the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority – East (FPA) had hired a consultant to search for and to write grants, especially those which pertained to port security. She said that the consultant had found the opportunity from the EDA and thought it would be a good fit for the Airport. The grant would require the LMA to match 20 percent of the cost.

She explained that she conferred with UNO President Dr. John Nicklow and leadership at the FPA to discuss the grant opportunity. President Nicklow was supportive of the grant initiative. The FPA paid for the grant writer's services until December 31, 2021. The grant would be due in March for consideration by the EDA.

She believed there was a strong possibility that the LMA could be eligible for the grant and could make significant economic impact with the development of the facility. She had been advised by the consultants that they believed the grant application could score high as well based on the criteria.

She noted that there is a nationwide shortage of pilots and airplane mechanics. In order to sustain the aviation industry, those jobs needed to be replaced and thus students needed to be educated on how to perform those jobs.

She reported that the preliminary cost of the facility would total to about \$2.8 million. The consultant had been compensated through the end of 2021 for their services by the FPA. She suggested that the LMA could pay for the rest of their services to complete the grant.

She said that she and Commissioner Richard had discussed naming the structure after Bessie Coleman, who was the first licensed African American (1926). Dr. Nicklow was also excited about that possibility. She noted that only a small library had been named for Ms. Coleman in Chicago, IL.

She reminded the Committee that she had distributed a briefing paper summary on the issue. She offered that the Committee could bring the issue before the Board before its due date in March 2022.

Commissioner Meadowcroft felt that the grant application and possibility of the project coming to fruition was a win-win for the community and the LMA. She felt the issue should be prioritized as a top issue.

Chair Heaton appealed to the Committee for commentary. Commissioner Lapeyrolerie thought the project was great but had concerns regarding cost. Chair Heaton answered that with the 20 percent match, per the grant terms, that the Authority may need to come out of pocket for around \$600,000. She noted that her commitment to this was so great that she would resort to private fundraising or a private partnership if necessary.

Director Capo offered that the cost could be included in the next Capital Budget and funds could be allocated from the LAMP account if necessary. He said that on average the LMA spends around \$2 million in capital projects.

Commissioner Meadowcroft believed that if fundraising was not an option then the cost share was not cost prohibitive, especially for the impact it would have on the community.

Commissioner Lapeyrolerie asked if the school would generate revenue for the Airport. Chair Heaton did not think so but needed to review the grant assurances with consultants to see if that would be permissible. She clarified that Kutchins and Groh, the Airport's planning consultant, kept staff apprised of grant assurances.

Commissioner Meadowcroft requested that Chair Heaton update the Committee and give more specifics as the situation evolved. Chair Heaton noted that she had a call with EDA staff scheduled to be briefed on grant requirements and eligibility factors. She noted that Dr. Nicklow wanted to officially support the grant.

Commissioner Meadowcroft was excited about the opportunity and believed the project could bring positive press coverage to the LMA and have a positive impact on the community.

2) Motion to recommend approval of the purchase of a replacement aircraft rescue and firefighting (ARFF) vehicle for the Airport's ARFF department in the amount of \$425,000.00.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Meadowcroft, was seconded by Commissioner Lapeyrolerie, and was unanimously adopted to recommend approval of the purchase of a replacement aircraft rescue and firefighting (ARFF) vehicle for the Airport's ARFF department in the amount of \$425,000.00.

Mr. Bruce Martin advised that at the October meeting he informed the Committee that the ARFF truck was inoperable. Staff reviewed several options to keep the ARFF department compliant and fully functional, both temporary and permanent. He said that staff pursued a grant to obtain a

new ARFF vehicle; however, the Airport was not eligible because it did not have the Part 139 certification from the FAA.

He said that after reviewing the issue and discussing it at length at the staff level they determined that purchasing a replacement vehicle was the best option for a long-term solution.

He advised that the company they would be seeking to purchase from offered the Authority \$50,000 for trade in value of the downed ARFF vehicle.

Chris Henderson, Airport Manager, advised that the current ARFF vehicle was 17 years old. He and Mr. Bruce Martin advised that the National Guard had heavily used the vehicle following Hurricane Katrina off Airport property. They were informed that after its use during recovery efforts it incurred several issues.

Mr. Bruce Martin said that after performing a cost-benefit analysis, staff determined that around \$105,000 had been spent on the ARFF vehicle for repairs. The vehicle was oftentimes taken out of commission for substantial and costly repairs. Without the ARFF vehicle in service, the Airport could lose business as it deters pilots from landing at the Airport.

Mr. Bruce Martin explained how funds were allocated towards the purchase of the vehicle:

- The ARPA Grant, \$148,000, supplemented salaries.
- Unused security funds were allocated.
- Staff had planned to lease a rapid response vehicle for \$55,000, a temporary solution. Instead they would allocate those funds to the cost of the new truck.
- A trade in value of \$50,000 would be applied towards the cost.
- \$83,000 would be moved from the LAMP account.
- The Airport earned twice as much revenue as it had budgeted in 2021 for its category in film industry rentals.

Mr. Henderson explained that the replacement vehicle had a platform for enhanced response and an internal testing mechanism for its fire suppressant foam.

Mr. Bruce Martin thanked Mr. Henderson for his noteworthy efforts in determining a solution to the ARFF department's vehicle woes. The safety and performance of the ARFF department would be enhanced as a result.

Mr. Bruce Martin and Mr. Henderson thanked the Committee for their support of the issue.

Announcement of next Airport Committee Meeting:

- 1) Tuesday, January 18, 2022– 2:30 PM

Adjournment:

Commissioner Meadowcroft made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lapeyrolerie seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 3:18 PM.

3:18