

SYRACUSE REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority

Friday, June 5, 2020

11:00 a.m. / SRAA Board Room and also via Conference Call/Webex

Pursuant to notice duly given and posted, the regular board meeting of the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority was called to order on Friday, June 5, 2020 at 11:02 a.m. in the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority Board Room located in the Syracuse Hancock International Airport by Chair, Ms. Jo Anne Chiarenza Gagliano.

Note: The Authorities Budget Office (ABO) has waived the in-person meeting requirement during this public health emergency. During this public health emergency, in the event board members are unable to meet in person, the Governor’s Executive Order 202.1 permits the board to consider the use of telephone conferencing, “to the extent necessary to permit any public body to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings and authorizing such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed.”

Members Present/Telephone Conference:

Ms. Jo Anne Gagliano – Chair
Mr. William Fisher
Mr. Michael Lazar
Mr. Robert Simpson
Mr. Michael Mirizio
Dr. Shiu-Kai Chin
Dr. Donna DeSiato (joined 11:26 a.m.)

Members Absent:

Mr. Michael Quill
Mr. Kenneth Kinsey
Mr. Michael Frame
Ms. Latoya Allen

Also Present/Telephone Conference:

Mr. H. Jason Terreri
Mr. John T. Carni
Ms. Robin Watkins
Mr. Brian Dorman
Ms. Debi Marshall
Ms. Joanne Clancy
Ms. Cheryl Herzog
Mr. R. John Clark

Roll Call

As noted, all Board members were present with the exception of Mr. Quill, Mr. Kinsey, Mr. Frame and Ms. Allen. Dr. DeSiato joined at the beginning of the Executive session.

Ms. Gagliano started by welcoming everyone to the scheduled regular meeting of the Board at 11:02 a.m.

Reading and Approval of the Minutes

Having no objections or additions to the minutes from the May 8, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board, a motion was made by Mr. Lazar and seconded by Mr. Simpson and the minutes were unanimously approved.

The motion was approved: 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Director's Report

Executive Director Terreri updated the board on current events and operations at the airport. The impact to the airport by COVID 19 has been significant. He noted that this would be the focus of his report. The airline schedules have stabilized, load factors are up with limited seating. We are exceeding our post-COVID forecast at this time. New frequencies are starting to be added to the schedules which is a positive sign for the future. Director Terreri reviewed scheduled and actual flight enplanements for April and May. These show significant TSA throughput drops from last year at the same time due to the pandemic, but we are on track to meet our re-forecast numbers which includes parking revenues. Director Terreri informed the board that with the zip code entries which are collected via our Wi-Fi access, allows us to know what percent of travelers are for business reasons vs. leisure, which currently is a healthy split. This helps the airline partners with planning. Ride share numbers are also going up in accordance with increased passenger volume. The SRAA is tracking all forecast areas closely. The expectation is to be at 2017 levels by December 2020. The office safety plan has been distributed to all authority and Syracuse City employees' staff. New signage for social distancing has been distributed throughout the airport. A staff engagement survey was sent to staff regarding reopening plans. Marketing plans for when people want to resume travel is being prepared with a focus on family orientated outdoor locations in our catchment area. The digital campaign should be ready soon and will focus on driving increased travel at SYR. Concessions are slowly reopening with state requirements as passenger levels increase including the barber shop. The plan for the expansion for Delaware North refresh is still on track. A lot of work has been done in the terminal in terms of cleaning and refurbishing throughout the airport during this low traffic time including stripping and cleaning floors, garage work, curb work, paint striping for new ADA curb drop off areas and other maintenance that is easier to do with low traffic. Director Terreri commended the maintenance team and other teams for deep cleaning, working on electrical upgrades as well as the UV-C lights having been installed which has given SYR national recognition. Mr. Fisher asked about general compliance to the COVID-19 social distancing and cleaning rules and tenant reopening plans and Director Terreri notified the board that the SRAA is collecting all opening plans and tenants are all in compliance and our Administrative office is following all CDC Guidelines. Mr. Mirizio inquired about challenges and opportunities compared to other local airports. Director Terreri stated that Syracuse will be the place that the airlines will bring service back to first over smaller regional airports. Longer term, traffic will return to the smaller airports. Some of the smaller airports have closed their international capacity due to the low volume of passengers.

Executive Session

Chair Gagliano invited a motion to Invite a motion to go into executive session to discuss matters leading to the appointment and/or employment of particular persons and the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property.

Mr. Fisher made the motion and Mr. Mirizio seconded the motion. Executive session began at 11:26 a.m.

Executive session ended at 12:13 p.m. No action was taken.

Dr. DeSiato joined the meeting during Executive session.

New Business

CFO Watkins updated the board regarding the Operating Budget, the Capital Budget and Reserve Status, Capital projects, CARES Act funding status, and the impacts of COVID-19. She further went on to explain the current status of revenues, fee and the impact that passenger traffic has had on these numbers and compared them to the prior years budget numbers. There have been changes made to how this budget was created and will be implemented in the future. The Finance Department is now closing out the books every month, which was not previously done. Some changes in practices were made such as the cost of staff member salaries have been allocated into the appropriate buckets based on how their actual time is split up by department. Director Terreri praised Robin and her team for all their hard work during this transition into monthly close-outs, new software and updated best practices. The PRISM account had never been separately budgeted previously, it was put in the parking expense line item. This has been remedied to show true expenses and revenues going forward for each department. CFO Watkins pointed out some specific expenses for maintenance items such as baggage belts and the greatly needed information technology systems and re-allocations that were needed to put SYR in place for a solid foundation moving forward. CARES Fund items include maintenance, budget shortfall adjustments and a reserve account for unexpected costs such as if the recovery is slower than anticipated. This helped the airport maintain the same rates and charges, so there will be no increase in the coming year during this recovery time giving our airline partners some relief. Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs) come from the airlines. Those monies are segregated into separate bank accounts and there is a \$23M balance in that account which is dedicated to meet our debt service needs. The CFCs come from our rental car agencies. The collection of those fees began in September 2019 and currently the balance is \$1.6M. There are no projects identified yet for those funds so they will continue to be held until such time that we utilize them for a meaningful project.

The Finance Committee held a meeting prior to this board meeting and presented the board with their recommendations regarding their approval of the Operating Budget and Capital Budgets as presented. Urgent needs for Capital projects were discussed and further detail will be provided to the board in September. Mr. Fisher requested that management commit to provide further detail on long term planning, sources of funding in more detail showing multi-year debt service and for a longer period of time than has been provided to the board and Finance Committees in the past. Therefore, approval is being requested for the immediate needs only and the remaining items will be put forward to the board with more detail per that request, in September.

Resolution adopting the 2020/21 Syracuse Regional Airport Authority Operating Budget. Having no further discussion regarding this resolution, a motion was made by Mr. Lazar and seconded by Ms. Gagliano.

The resolution was adopted: 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Resolution (1) adopting the 2020/21 Capital Budget; (2) Authorizing Executive Director and/or Chief Financial Officer to apply for and accept grant offers and enter into grant agreements with the Federal Aviation Administration and New York State Department of Transportation for such projects; (3) Enter into contracts to undertake and complete projects (4) Authorizing expenditure of funds on projects. Having no further discussion regarding this resolution, a motion was made by Mr. Lazar and seconded by Mr. Mirizio.

The resolution was adopted: 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Resolution authorizing Executive Director and/or Chief Financial Officer to apply for and accept grant offers and enter into grant agreement for Federal CARES Act funding. Having no further discussion regarding this resolution, a motion was made by Mr. Lazar and seconded by Ms. Gagliano.

The resolution was adopted: 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Resolution authorizing the creation of the position of IT Manager. Chair of the Human Resources Committee, Mr. Lazar and CFO Robin Watkins explained the need for an on-site person along with retaining the usage of our vendor for on-call services. Mr. Lazar cited the savings that will be gained by adding this position as well as the service improvements. Having no further discussion regarding this resolution, a motion was made by Mr. Mirizio and seconded by Mr. Fisher.

The resolution was adopted: 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Resolution authorizing the creation the position of Finance Manager. CFO Watkins explained recent vacancies in the Finance Department. With the reorganization of the department to do month end closes and other improved processes, this position is being requested. Mr. Lazar stated that the Human Resources Committee approves of this position. Having no further discussion regarding this resolution, a motion was made by Ms. Gagliano and seconded by Mr. Lazar.

The resolution was adopted: 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Resolution authorizing the creation of the position of Airport Information Aide. Human Resources Manager, Debi Marshall explained the position description of this needed entry-level full-time position that will be supplemented by our Fly Guide volunteers. Mr. Lazar stated that the Human Resources Committee approved this position. Having no further discussion regarding this resolution, a motion was made by Mr. Lazar and seconded by Ms. Gagliano.

The resolution was adopted: 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Resolution authorizing the creation of the position of Payroll Administrator. Human Resources Manager, Debi Marshall explained that we currently have the position of Payroll Assistant on our roster, but that is not the level of experience that is needed for the role. Mr. Lazar stated that the Human Resources Committee approved this position. Having no further discussion regarding this resolution, a motion was made by Mr. Lazar and seconded by Mr. Mirizio.

The resolution was adopted: 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Resolution approving Executive Director’s 2019 Annual Employee Evaluation. Having no further discussion regarding this resolution, a motion was made by Mr. Lazar and seconded by Ms. Gagliano.

The resolution was adopted: 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Committee Reports and other updates

Director Terreri explained that a Consent Agenda resolution will be provided for consideration to the board in September which will cover more basic housekeeping items such as the approval of minutes and other items that were approved in advance by committees. If further discussion is requested, that item will be pulled from the Consent Agenda into New Business for discussion. There were no further committee reports or other updates.

Adjournment

Having no other topics brought to the board, a motion was made by Ms. Gagliano and seconded by Mr. Lazar to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:49 p.m.

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