



**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes  
Friday, February 10, 2022**

Pursuant to notice duly given and posted, the Finance Committee meeting of the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority was called to order on Friday, February 10, 2022, in the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority Board Room located in the Syracuse Hancock International Airport and Teams Virtual/Audio Conferencing by committee Chair, Dr. Shiu-Kai Chin.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Chin at 9:36 a.m.

**Members Present - Video/Audio Conference:**

Dr. Shiu-Kai Chin (Chair)  
Mr. William Fisher - Video  
Mr. Michael Lazar  
Mr. Rob Simpson - Video  
Mr. Nick Paro  
Ms. Jo Anne Gagliano

**Members Absent:**

Mr. Michael Frame

**Also Present:**

Ms. Robin Watkins  
Mr. John Clark  
Ms. Cheryl Herzog

**Review and Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:**

Chair Chin asked if there were comments to the minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Lazar to approve the minutes from the previous meeting on October 22, 2021, and Ms. Gagliano seconded the motion. Motion carried by committee.

**Committee Business**

**A. Q1 Rates and Charges Review Update**

CFO Watkins indicated at the end of December that metric landing weights were up, airlines continue up gauging their aircraft and adding air service which drives revenue. Enplanements are running consistent with the budget. Financials are also doing very well. Expenses are just slightly below the budget. The Cost Per Enplanement (CPE) is in line with plan. CFO Watkins mentioned the SYR ARFF and plan for 174<sup>th</sup> ATKW to take over fire services and that transition will bring significant cost savings to SYR without impacting services. This transition will also help reduce the CPE further. The airport will still have costs related to maintaining the building,

but there will be no salary costs. There will be a transition period as the airport works through the switch over.

The airport is hoping for some lower costs this snow removal season if there are no major storms. Dr. Chin spoke about snow removal and how the cost is not within the airports control. Mr. Lazar indicated everything else is within control unless something out of the ordinary happens like COVID. The airport has come a long way with managing costs, there are reports that go out to department heads and the airport is able to plan better. Snow removal costs were discussed further about how they are budgeted, and CFO Watkins stated it is based on historical data.

Mr. Fisher inquired about the county E911 center and how they respond to calls. CFO Watkins stated that we are working directly with them. CFO Watkins reported that Chuck Combs, the Communications Project Manager, is setting up our communications system. We recently deployed handheld radios out onto the airfield and throughout our Operations Department. Mr. Combs has worked with the County 911 center to set up channels for the radios which will be utilized for emergency situations internally and externally. Mr. Combs has set up the policies and procedures for those radios to ensure compliance with regulations.

CFO Watkins reviewed the CARES funds and the guidelines for reimbursement. Projected costs for 2022 landing fees were explained and how that settlement is processed with the airlines including Common Area fees and the difference between signatory and non-signatory airlines and associated costs. CFO Watkins updated the committee on Common Use Platforms and indicated that will be going live on Friday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Lazar commented that the Common Use Platform will allow the expansion of airlines.

CFO Watkins shared that the SRAA is actively looking into submitting the next PFC application. Items being requested in the upcoming application will be Maintenance Department equipment because the current equipment is so old that the parts are hard to find or not available anymore. Full analysis of the snow equipment has been completed. There are issues regarding delays with various equipment shipments taking 12-18 months lead times. The airport has necessary updates that need to be done with the Fuel Farm and costs will include the critical, recommended and options for replacing the buildings at that facility. The PFC application will include requests for two additional jet bridges and modifications to one gate that are needed.

CFO Watkins stated the airport has investigated options for modifications to the North Concourse to address capacity needs. If the UAI grant request is not approved, the airport would need to add an additional \$13.2M request in the PFC Application.

CFO Watkins updated the committee on Common Use Implementation. Hardware has been installed at gates 2 and 5 with the remainder to be completed 2/11/2022. Hardware is installed at the common use ticket counters. Testing is in process and User and Admin training is complete. Manuals and videos have been provided to the airline carriers to use when onboarding new staff. Dr. Chin inquired what happens if the hardware should break or is missing. CFO Watkins said the equipment being used is locked up in a cabinet and there is additional equipment if needed. It

was explained that no one else can log into the system, each user has their own security code. The software is cloud-based. The airlines need their specific login information. Mr. Paro asked if it were feasible to have the hardware at each gate, and CFO Watkins replied that this is the goal. Dr. Chin wanted to know the procedures when the system goes down. CFO Watkins stated there is redundancy with the database warehouse. Dr. Chin asked if we are responsible for operating the system and the connectivity is gone what is the plan? CFO Watkins stated it would be considered a level III issue and would be addressed immediately as an urgent ticket per agreement with Amadeus. All airlines have hand-held devices to use if necessary. There are security protocols with the Common Use companies, each of them must have their systems audited yearly. Mr. Lazar stated this should be added to the SRAA Risk Register.

Items of note for the Finance Committee budget preparation will start next month. Discussions will begin with the department heads to find out status of budget lines due to unanticipated costs and will review and prepare for next year incorporating new efficiencies. Mr. Fisher discussed the topic of the service agreement with the City of Syracuse and the Department of Aviation. CFO Watkins explained there is a form that goes to the City of Syracuse stating what SRAA has budgeted in terms of employees for last year. In 2021-22, there was only one City of Syracuse employee remaining who will be retiring next month. CFO Watkins explained that the Authority only pays the City of Syracuse for actual costs, not budgeted amounts.

**B. March offsite agenda discussion**

Chair Gagliano discussed with the committee that there will be an overnight retreat held March 24 – 25, 2022 for all SRAA Board members. Chair Gagliano stated that we have committed to the rooms and meals. The Chair of the Board and the Executive Director stressed that they would like every board member to attend and to not cancel at the last minute and shared further draft agenda details.

**C. Asset Capitalization Policy**

CFO Watkins mentioned there has been a new fixed-asset capitalization policy drafted. This policy provides updated guidance and addresses purchasing, capitalization, disposal and tracking of assets. The Authority has purchased tags and will attach them to our fixed assets.

**D. Investment Guidelines annual review**

CFO Watkins reviewed the Investment Guidelines and indicated there were no changes.

**Adjournment:**

Having no other topics brought to the committee, a motion was made by Dr. Chin to adjourn the meeting. Motion was approved by Mr. Lazar and seconded by Mr. Simpson. The meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m.