



**AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
Thursday, November 7, 2019

The Rochelle Airport Advisory Board met in special session on Thursday, November 7, 2019 at 3:00 p.m. in the conference room at the Rochelle Municipal Airport.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3pm by Skip Kenney.

**Roll Call:** Present at the meeting Board Members: Gary Dunn, Norman Jenkins, Skip Kenney, Rick Kettley, Claude McKibben, Joel Thompson, William Siemer, and Steve Wiggins. Also present: Mike Hudetz, and Noah Carmichael. Mayor John Bearrows, Jeff Fiegenschuh, and Peggy Friday entered the meeting at 3:22pm.

**Absent:** Bill Tyler and Jason Anderson.

**New Lease/Permit Hangar Rates (Mike Hudetz):** Discussion highlights

- Mike Hudetz said justifications for proposed hangar rate increases are increased utility and maintenance costs.
- Mr. Siemer presented and compared airport hangar rates and services from three (3) airports south and west of Rochelle.
- Mike Hudetz identified Safety, Solvency, Service, and Scenery to be the functions of the airport.
- City Manager Fiegenschuh applauded Mike Hudetz for his work on the 2020 airport budget. He encouraged the Advisory Board to seek new sources of revenue because the General Fund is unable to sustain cost of operations. Rail Revenues have supplemented infrastructure and improvements.
- Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to fund a 2020 economic impact study. Group challenged to begin tracking how people are using the airport.
- Mr. Thompson gave brief comparisons with the Dixon Municipal Airport.
- Rochelle Municipal Airport runway is insufficient to handle the weight of corporate jets over 25,000 pounds. Refurbishing the overlay does not increase weight-bearing capacity.
- Board members disagreed with compounding rate increases of 3% or 6% until 2024.
- Loss of tenancy was a concern.

- Concerns expressed of perceived inaccuracies of 2020 Airport Budget document but it was pointed out that this document was a draft and not in its final form.
- City Manager Fiegenschuh to approach NICOR Gas to consider reducing its franchise agreement to provide free or reduced cost of natural gas to City enterprises.
- Mr. Dunn suggested developing ways to attract more pilots to purchase fuel in Rochelle and increase amenities and the level of customer service. It was decided the current staffing model cannot support enhanced service features.
- Attracting a flight school could increase revenue.
- Improving the competitive bidding process on the lease of 50 acres of tillable farmland could generate additional income. Process needs to be made more fair for local farmers.
- Additional Advisory Board meetings will be added throughout the year as quarterly meetings are no longer adequate to increase operations.
- Consideration of obtaining a mobile fuel truck to attract additional point-of-sale fuel.
- Ms. Friday suggested partnering with Kishwaukee College Business and Training Partnerships or Kishwaukee Education Consortium (KEC) Aviation program to enhance services.
- Mr. Carmichael shared that the inconveniences to tenants during infrastructure improvement projects was reason to keep hangar rates same during construction period.
- Consideration of corporate sponsorships to help fund infrastructure projects.
- City needs to cast an airport improvement plan vision with Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to move beyond the designation of a general aviation airport with limited runway capabilities.

**A Motion by Mr. Thompson and Seconded by Mr. Siemer to take no action to increase hangar rental rates for the immediate future while searching for new potential revenue streams with a focus on enhanced customer service.** Motion passed by voice vote.

**Public Commentary:** None

**Next Meeting:** Next Airport Advisory Board meeting is January 20, 2020 at 3pm.

**Adjournment at 4pm**

Submitted by Peggy Friday