

ROCHELLE AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING – SKYDIVING BUSINESS
MINUTES - MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2011

The Rochelle Airport Advisory Board met in a Special Meeting on Monday, February 7, 2011 in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Call Meeting to Order: The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Greg Sparrow, Chairman.

Roll Call: Present: Greg Sparrow, Dale Meyers, Claude McKibben, William Tyler, Sally Sawicki, John Kenney, Norm Jenkins and Joel Thompson (alternate). Absent: None. Also present were Don Elliott, Mark Delhotal, Judy Schermerhorn (Deputy City Clerk). Also present: Mayor Olson, Dennis Berg.

Public Commentary: None

Before the business presentation began, Mr. McKibben asked if a decision had already been made as on the CSC website, they were listed as being in Rochelle. Don Elliott said that there are no contracts as yet; has to go through advisory board, Zoning & Planning Commission, and then be voted on by the Council. (Mr. Smith addressed this concern by saying that they do their promoting in the winter for the spring issue; also, that they are very optimistic.)

Skydiving Business Presentation: Doug Smith CSC (Chicagoland Skydiving Center):

- **Doug Smith**, Personal Profile: 37 years old; married six years; has 3-year old son; lives in Mt. Prospect/Sugar Grove; wife is school teacher in Batavia; just built a home in Sugar Grove and do not plan to move; can jump on hwy. and be here quickly. He grew up in Prospect Hts., just north of O'Hare; father was a 747-400 captain for United Airlines and still has a great interest in flying; his brother flies for American Eagle; Doug has been flying since he was a kid. Known for his good planes.
- **CSC** goes back to 1968; he bought it 12 years ago and has learned a lot since then. He bought his partner out and is proud to say that they continue to be good friends. The business has outgrown Hinckley; no hotels/motels; no restaurants; bars.
- **Rochelle has an ideal location;** access to highways; airport itself (has a paved runway); hotels/motels; restaurants; bars; even a bowling alley.
- **Integration Proposal:** No changes at airport; brings a lot of people into the airport and to the City; has an economic impact; communication is important; deals with any problems.
- **What makes CSC different:** Built as aviation based company; keep planes flying, especially in this economy; pro-aviation; has safeguards in place; print out a template every morning and put on board for the airport's information.
- **CSC Safety:** GA and Skydiving Operation; by using pattern is safe; takes aircraft maintenance seriously (known for nicest, best maintained planes); four-pilot staff (makes sure they fly efficiently and stay current); keeps FAR 105 and USPA BSR regulations. (See letters in agenda packet for those recommending them for nicest planes.
- **CSC Facts:** Growing business; 39,212 jumps in 2010 from April to November (with only one ambulance ride –for sprained ankle; 3,237 flight operations; \$381,412 spent on maintenance in 2010 to keep planes safe; new equipment; talented and professional staff; two planes are valued at \$3.5 million.
- **CSC Culture:** Safety defines organization; want to promote aviation; CSC team and customers are unique people; a cross-section of diverse people; everyone is considered equal. They “leave their problems at the door” and enjoy the time together with others.
- **RV's and Enforcing Airport Policies:** RV's are important and are good for business; helps build the culture of friendliness.
- **Benefits to Rochelle Airport:** Make airport a destination; put it on the map; on-site restaurant; increased jet fuel revenue; increased federal funding.

Recommendations of CSC and Doug Smith:

- **Mike Wood, General Manager:** Has 11,000 sky dives; will move here; total of 3,000 flying hours; sky diving is his passion; has sky diving photography business; experience as a past firefighter. "Safety is paramount with Doug."
- **Andrew Goodman:** Medical equipment business owner out of Northbrook; works on a part-time basis as a pilot for Doug. Known Doug for about 7 or 8 years; jumping for over 15 years; over 1,000 dives; flying for over 15 years and is a pilot for Doug. "Doug has some very unique air craft and they are maintained to a level you don't usually see in the aviation industry. If you take a look at other drop zones over the country, there is no comparison to Doug's; unique company and unique customer base and can't say enough good things about Doug."
- **Nathan Dexter:** A pilot for Doug for 9 years. Professional skydiver; jumping for over 15 years; over 12,000 skydives; a tandem instructor; AFF instructor; GTF instructor; also United States Parachute Association trainer and safety advisor. First six years of diving, traveled all over the United States looking at drops and a place to call home. When he showed up at Chicago he realized from the atmosphere this is where he wanted to be; it's not just a job. He's been on a competitive sky-diving team with Doug; is a friend. "He cares about his staff. Most of the skydiving businesses I've worked for in the past care more about the money and haven't cared about the customer. Doug is a friend, a very loyal person, takes time to listen." (Following Nathan's recommendation, Doug told how valuable Nathan is to the organization. Says he has "eyes in the back of his head." Says he sees things before they happen and is a great asset to the business.)

Further Information as a result of questions from the Airport Advisory Board:

- Drop zone (landing area) will be east of the ramp, all the way over to Dixon Meyers, from their taxiway up to proposed taxiway to the north construction road (90% will land here but remember that they are a training facility and will sometimes be outside the area.)
- Most jumpers are experienced; "newbie's" are a small percent. "Newbie's" are fastened to an experienced diver to start with. Part of the training involves finding a suitable landing area; based on the direction of the wind.
- Utilization standpoint: Long way from need of a new aircraft.
- Planes are maintained by Rampart in Raleigh, North Carolina, a leader in the industry; they maintain military planes and CSC is the only skydiving firm that Rampart maintains their planes for, as they know Doug maintains his equipment to excellent standards.
- Strive to get along with neighbors. In the past when they have landed in a farmer's field, they help them to understand that things do happen, along with paying for damaged crops.
- Other pilots using the city airport should not have their takeoffs and landings impacted at all. Frequencies will be monitored through Chicago Center Rockford Airport. They use a standard pattern most of the time. If a plane is in vicinity, they will hold the jump. Agricultural planes are a minimal problem. The communication will be monitored closely.
- Zoning is I-2 Overlay District. The airport zoning will be updated at the Zoning & Planning meeting. Chris Limas is trying to bring zoning up-to-date which includes the airport. The airport was annexed into the City just a few years ago. There will need to be a special use permit for skydiving.
- CSC provided a 3-year tax return to the City.
- Parking is an issue at this time. Doesn't want to park on the grass.
- Any long range plans CSC has will be at this facility.
- Skydiving is typically done from noon to sunset.
- They would like for people to come out and have a hamburger, spend some time out there and see just what they have to offer and share in the fun.
- Ranked third in the world / have a 5-Star rating
- There has not yet been talk of a "City jump tax." Per Don, the contract has to work for everybody.
- Will not interfere with the annual Fly-In. Doug Smith has discussed this with Mark Delhotal. Will slow up jumping for the day but will put a new spin on the Fly-In.

- RV Parking Lot will be up to engineering.
- Construction of runway expansion will not interfere with their business.
- The one fatality they had in 2004 was discussed. He was an experienced skydiver. All jumpers have two parachutes (are overseen by FAA). The first parachute didn't open and he tried to fix the problem rather than open the 2nd chute.
- They have planned two competitive events for this summer (4-men teams who will format in the sky).
- With being at the Rochelle Airport, they could host bigger events, include bringing in people from all over the world.

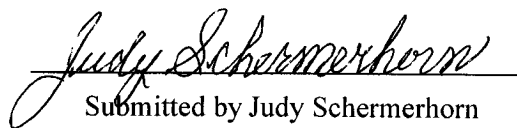
Discuss and Consider CSC Operations at Rochelle Municipal Airport: Don Elliott asked if there were any questions or further discussion about the information in the packet. Resulting discussion:

- Procedural side in regards to documentations needed; waiting for forms and will be taken care of at the proper time.
- Mr. Smith will work with the City regarding a liability waiver; will put in anything the City wants. Don said that it will also be reviewed by the City Attorney.
- With a time frame of the business starting in the spring, they will start with a couple trailers temporarily.
- They will work with Chris Limas regarding the Planning & Zoning needed.
- Sewer and water needs to come in; working with Kathy Cooper on; should not be complicated; have the cost involved.
- Doug Smith is working with Fehr-Grahm already and will work with the City engineer.
- The whole facility should be done by the end of the year.

Greg Sparrow entertained **“A positive recommendation from the Airport Advisory Board to the City Council for further consideration of the Chicagoland Skydiving Center operation.”** Moved by Dale Meyers and seconded by William Tyler. Passed unanimously by voice vote with no dissent.

Announcements/Concerns: As several board members will not be able to attend, the February 28, 2011 meeting will be cancelled. **The next regular meeting will be April 25, 2011.**

Adjournment: At 4:53 p.m., Ms. Sawicki moved and seconded by Mr. McKibben, **“I move we adjourn the meeting.”** Passed by voice vote with no dissent.


Submitted by Judy Schermerhorn
Deputy City Clerk