

BURLINGTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Meeting of August 30, 2012

Co-Chairs Councilor Karen Paul and Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Paul Sisson convened the initial meeting of the Committee at 7:36 p.m. on August 30, 2012 at the Hamilton Room of the Burlington International Airport. Present were Mayor Miro Weinberger, City Councilors Paul and Vince Dober, Airport Commissioners Jeff Munger, Bill Keogh, Gene Palumbo and Jeff Schulman; Director of Aviation Gene Richards, Airport Planning Director Bob McEwing and Chief Airport Engineer Heather Kendrew; citizen members Ed Colodny, Ernie Pomerleau, Louise Stoll, Jane Knodell, Megan Rodriguez of Congressman Welch's staff; Ted Brady of Senator Leahy's staff; Mayoral Assistant Mike Kanarick; JetBlue Representative Ann Beland; South Burlington City Manager Sandy Miller; Winooski Mayor Michael O'Brien and Staff/Counsel Joseph McNeil.

Co-Chairs Paul and Sisson welcomed the Committee and indicated that it had been established pursuant to a resolution of the Burlington City Council following a recommendation from Mayor Weinberger's Administration. The attendees then introduced themselves and the Committee was broken down by appointed members, ex officio members from South Burlington and Winooski and Congressional Staff participants and Airport staff/Committee staff-Counsel.

Mayor Weinberger made introductory remarks, indicating that he and his Administration were heavily invested in the work of the Committee. He emphasized that he had spent 9 years as an Airport Commissioner and it was this service that was the genesis of his becoming Mayor. He stated that the Airport was a critical asset for the City of Burlington and the entirety of northern Vermont. He noted that although the Airport has recently experienced some tough

times, he believes the corner towards prosperity is being turned. However, he believes it is necessary to have an intense focus upon the potential of the Airport in order for it to become an even greater asset to our region. He stated he was aware of the Airport's impacts upon its neighboring communities but he believed it could grow in a responsible manner while simultaneously being an excellent neighbor. It is his hope that the work of this Committee and the recommendations it ultimately makes will produce the same sort of excitement about the future of the Airport that was noted by JetBlue at the time it began to provide service to Burlington.

Following the Mayor's remarks, Councilor Paul acknowledged her and CAO Sisson's appreciation to each committee member for their willingness to work on this plan and stated there is a wealth of transportation expertise in the room. The Co-chair presented the Powerpoint given to the participants as a way of introducing the charges of the committee as set forth by the Council resolution. One of the points in the presentation was the question of a non-disclosure agreement by committee members. She asked Counsel whether he felt it necessary for the Committee members and participants to sign confidentiality agreements in order to do the work of the Committee. Mr. McNeil responded that he did not believe that was a necessary step at this time, but could be revisited if the Committee was dealing with proprietary information from any source. Councilor Paul also asked the Committee to consider whether it wished to further utilize the Airport consultant that certain members of the business community had engaged or instead wanted to have a fresh start with its own consultant. Finally, she asked whether the representatives of the Congressional delegation would prefer to be voting members or non-voting participants in the Committee's work. Mr. Brady spoke for all and indicated a preference not to

be voting members because of the utilization of federal funds and the presence of federal regulations at the Airport.

Co-Chairs Sisson and Paul handed out an informational piece entitled *Airport Strategic Planning Committee, Organizational Meeting, August 30, 2012* which included agenda items, the Committee's charge, the Committee's timeline and future scheduling. The seven points of the Committee's charge were accepted by the Committee and it was agreed that at the end of its work the Committee would make recommendations on each charge.

Commissioner Schulman suggested and the Committee members agreed that it would be helpful to receive from Airport Management a report indicating its perception of the current status of each of the seven charge items. Aviation Director Richards agreed to make a report on such items at the next meeting of the Committee, indicating with specificity where he considered the Airport already strong and where improvements are believed necessary.

Ernie Pomerleau stated that a number of business community members had privately engaged and funded an analysis of the present and potential future of the Airport by Aviation Consultant Steve Baldwin. This so-called "White Paper", dated May 22, 2012 was distributed to the Committee members. There was consensus that this report should be carefully read and that Mr. Baldwin should be asked to come before the Committee to inform it of his work before any consideration was given to utilizing a different consultant.

Ed Colodny requested that the Committee members be provided a listing of all individuals who would be working with the Committee as ex officious, and suggested that it was typical for ex officious to have voting status. City Manager Miller and Mayor O'Brien both indicated that they would like to have voting status on the Committee. Mayor O'Brien indicated

that he would be present at certain meetings and that City Manager Deccaureau would be otherwise present.

Councilor Dober suggested that the Committee look at all aspects of the Airport's current major projects and that it do so following a "gap analysis format." He suggested that subcommittee assignments be made to cover each specific project with defined assignments and set timelines for completion. He suggested that the subcommittees continue going until completion or until a "blocker" is hit which requires full Committee consideration.

Jane Knodell asked whether the "White Paper" covered all aspects of the Committee's charge. It was agreed that this question would be discussed once all members had opportunity to read it and the Committee had heard Mr. Baldwin's report.

Ernie Pomerleau indicated that the report acknowledges the Airport as the regions number one economic driver. He stated that the White Paper compared BTV with five other airports of similar size with regard to marketing, strategic planning, economic analysis and governance, though Ernie suggested that it would probably make sense to put the governance question aside for the time being. He indicated a belief that the data developed and synthesized in the report would be most helpful to Committee members. He emphasized that the White Paper was a very significant study. An important conclusion that it reached was that BTV's cost of enplanement was comparatively low. Ultimately, it concluded that BTV was an excellent airport but still had great room for significant improvement.

Mr. McNeil advised the Committee that simultaneously with its work the Airport was developing a proposed revenue bond issue to refinance its 1997 and 2002 revenue bonds as well securing permanent financing for the last expansion to the Airport parking garage that has been financed on an interim short term basis. He noted that the pricing of these bonds is scheduled to

occur in the first week of December, and that this will be preceded by a rating session with Moody's and Fitch in October. He noted the importance of consistency of both data and forecasts so that the rating agencies were not confronted with conflicting information. He stated that as a part of this financing there is being developed a forecast by Riccondo & Associates which is a necessary part of the sale of bonds. This report should also be reviewed by the Committee.

Mr. Colodny stated that he would like Gene Richards' report to identify the three or four top priorities facing the Airport and would also like to know if the Airport Commission concurred with Management's analysis. It was pointed out that through a variety of circumstances the current members of the Airport Commission are just beginning their period of service. However, Commissioner Schulman stated that he believed this was the Commission's role and would look forward to this type of analysis.

It was noted that the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation's representative to the Committee would be Mr. Chris Cole, the Director of Planning for AOT. Commission Chair Jeff Munger suggested that it was very important that a representative of the Vermont Air National Guard be a member of the Committee because of the Guard's significant role at BTV. It was agreed that this oversight should be corrected and the Guard requested to provide a Committee member.

It was agreed that the Committee would meet every other Thursday commencing September 13, 2012 until its work was completed, and that the Committee goal was to be complete by the end of calendar 2012. It was noted that there would also have to be opportunity provided for any members of the public who desired to do so to address the Committee at its

meetings. It was agreed that Mr. Baldwin would be requested to speak to the Committee either on September 13 or September 27.

Mayor Weinberger stated that he particularly appreciated the participation of South Burlington and Winooski and he pledged better communications with both communities. He stated that it was his desire for the communities of Burlington, South Burlington and Winooski, as well as BTV, to survive and thrive into the future. He stated that although of necessity the Committee was created by resolution of the Burlington City Council which has the ultimate fiduciary responsibility for the success of the Airport, Burlington cannot form its priorities for BTV in a vacuum and he desires that the Committee be well aware of the need for a positive relationship between the Airport and its neighbors into the future. He indicated that this would be particularly the case with regard to the 140-150 properties that the City has recently purchased.

City Manager Miller stated that South Burlington appreciates the Mayor's remarks and was similarly interested in the communities and the Airport surviving and thriving into the future. He emphasized his community's desire to fully participate as a voting member in the work of the Committee. Mayor O'Brien also emphasized this desire. The Co-Chairs stated that they would meet and discuss this issue with the Mayor prior to the next meeting and would amend the Council's creating resolution if appropriate.

There being no further business to discuss at this meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

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Joseph E. McNeil,  
Committee Clerk