



AIRPORT COMMISSIONERS TURN THEIR EYES TO THE FUTURE

Priorities Include Revenue Enhancement and Added Air Service

August 8, 2012

HYANNIS – Now that the \$40 million improvement project at Barnstable Municipal Airport is essentially complete, airport commissioners are turning their attention to the future.

At a recent strategic retreat, the seven commissioners decided on steps to increase income and to market the new passenger terminal and aircraft control tower to private and corporate aircraft owners and operators, and to airlines that serve distant destinations.

“We now have first-class physical facilities to serve all of Cape Cod,” said commission chairman Ronald Persuitte. “It’s time we beefed up our business practices.”

The commission’s next steps include the organization of special task forces to recommend operating incentives for air carriers, and potential revenue from nearby land that the airport owns and leases.

Today, most flights from the airport go to Nantucket and Martha’s Vineyard with some daily service to Boston. “People ought to be able to fly directly from Hyannis to New York and other East Coast destinations,” Persuitte said. “We are looking at the opportunities out there.”

Airport Manager Roland “Bud” Breault said that whatever service is added will be done in consultation with the airport’s stakeholders. “We are good neighbors and want to work with the business community, environmental interests and people who live nearby in Hyannis and Yarmouth,” he explained. “We understand that we can’t operate in a vacuum.”

Airport commissioners feel there is ample potential to restore general aviation business, which drifted away from the airport following the institution of tighter security measures after 9/11 and during the recent recession and construction period. “To draw them back, we need first class general aviation facilities and red carpet service,” Breault said.

To offset increased expenses of operating the new facilities, commissioners are looking at new sources of revenue from the development potential of land the airport owns along Route 28, and taking a fresh look at existing leases and other commercially viable property belonging to the airport. There’s also the possibility of new income from the installation of solar photovoltaic panels on the airfield.

The airport operates from an enterprise-funded account within the Town of Barnstable and, as such, must generate income to cover its costs. “We receive no local taxpayer funds,” Breault noted. “For the most part, the airport pays its own way.”

The airport’s capital expenses are paid up front from its enterprise fund reserves and are reimbursed up to 97.5 percent by the Federal Aviation Administration and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation’s Aeronautics Division.

Breault also said the airport plans to conclude a comprehensive development agreement with the Cape Cod Commission, complete a town-mandated master plan, and to increase its involvement with the Hyannis Access Study that will affect airport boundaries at Route 28, the Airport Rotary and along Willow Street in Yarmouth.

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