

Robert W. Shaffer, Chair
Edwin R. Lozano, Vice Chair
Mark R. Murawski, Secretary



PENNSYLVANIA AVIATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PA AVIATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 9, 2021 VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Chairperson Shaffer called the virtual meeting to order at 10:00 AM in lieu of a regular in-person meeting due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. A roll call of Committee voting members was performed by Secretary Murawski. A voting quorum was established.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 10, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Chairperson Shaffer declared the June 10, 2021 PA Aviation Advisory Committee meeting minutes approved as submitted by Secretary Murawski without objection.

RESIGNATION OF DAVE EBERLY / NEW MEMBER APPOINTMENT STATUS

Chairperson Shaffer announced that he has received an email from Dave Eberly submitting his resignation from the AAC due to personal reasons. Chairperson Shaffer commended Mr. Eberly on his 44 year career in aviation, specifically as the recently retired Director of the Lancaster County airport, and also for his many years of fine service to the AAC. Chairperson Shaffer added that he has received a formal letter of interest and a statement of qualifications from Mr. Tim Edwards seeking an AAC appointment to replace Mr. Eberly who held an AAC seat representing the Aviation Council. Mr. Edwards, who is the Executive Director of the Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority, an independent authority that owns and operates the Harrisburg International Airport has received the endorsement of the Aviation Council of PA to fill their vacant seat. Mr. Edwards then addressed the group about his background, qualifications and answered some brief questions posed by AAC members. Chairperson Shaffer recommended the AAC issue a letter to the Governor for appointment stating that the AAC feels Mr. Edwards is highly qualified to serve on the AAC which was approved without objection.

PENNDOT BUREAU OF AVIATION UPDATE

Mr. Anthony McCloskey, PA Bureau of Aviation Director provided the BOA quarterly update. Director McCloskey noted that aviation block grant agreements are now fully executed and sub-grants are being fine-tuned. BOA is now required to have block grant special conditions in the sub-grants which necessitates more work in the process. Director McCloskey also reviewed BOA staffing enhancements such as David Lawson hired as the new aviation safety specialist. A new civil engineer is being hired as well. In terms of the PA Economic Impact Study, the five surveys and site work are completed. Director McCloskey expressed his gratitude to various AAC members who have worked closely with the BOA consultant team to get this done. BOA is trying to highlight the importance of general aviation airports in a number of categories which will be reflected in the study deliverables.

TRANSPORTATION REVENUE OPTIONS COMMISSION

Chairperson Shaffer provided an update on the activities of the Transportation Revenue Options Commission, (TROC) formed at the directive of Governor Wolf. The purpose of the TROC is to identify, evaluate and recommend additional transportation funding revenue options to address a \$ 9 billion dollar PennDOT funding shortfall over all modes of transportation, especially in light of PA's heavy reliance on the state gas tax which is not keeping pace with revenue needs and will likely worsen as more alternative fuel vehicles enter the market and currently do not contribute to gas tax revenues even though they use the highway system. Chairperson was appointed to the TROC representing PA aviation. Chairperson Shaffer noted the TROC completed its work and issued their report to the Governor at the end of July. The report recommends a myriad of revenue options for the short term, mid term and long term. The TROC report recommends the jet fuel tax be increased to 4 cents a gallon which would generate an additional 10 million annually for aviation which was supported by the AAC. The TROC report also introduced the concept of an aircraft state registration \$ 50 fee that would be also dedicated to aviation. The TROC report has been publicly issued by PennDOT and it is currently being reviewed by the Governor and General Assembly. It is unclear what the process looks like moving forward and 2022 is an election year. Later in the meeting, Mr. Keith Chace presented some additional details about TROC that supplemented Mr. Shaffer's comments, especially in terms of eventual phase-out of the gas tax that would largely be replaced with a Mileage Based User Fee (MBUF) during the third of three implementation phases since much homework needs done on many fronts prior to the deployment of MBUF.

AAC SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- REAL ID SUBCOMMITTEE

Chairman Monzo said the sub-committee is getting reactivated and focused on undertaking implementation steps in its original report recommendations now that the deadline to comply with REAL ID federal requirements has been extended until May 3, 2023. In short, Mr. Monzo said 2022 needs to be the year we get the word out.

- LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Since this sub-committee no longer has a Chairperson due to the recent resignation of Mr. Eberly, Mr. David Heath, AAC alternate gave the report of legislative activities he has been engaged in affecting aviation. Mr. Heath noted that ACP has been working with PA Senate Appropriations Committee staff to open Airport Land Development Zones to all public use airports which are currently capped at 4,000 acres so further expansion of the ALDZ can create more developer incentives, job creation, airport revenue and associated economic development opportunities for the Commonwealth. Mr. Heath noted House Bill 1785 introduced by Representative Benninghoff that would eliminate the 2 mile restriction between an existing airport and proposed airport when BOA reviews an airport license application. The ACP is in the process of gathering additional information regarding this proposed legislation and has not yet taken a position whether to support, oppose or remain neutral on it. The AAC will have further dialogue and coordination with ACP and AOPA on HB 1785.

- HANGAR DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairman Lozano gave an excellent powerpoint presentation summarizing the progress of the Committee's work since the last meeting. Essentially, close coordination with this AAC subcommittee and Senator Langerholc's office has been occurring weekly to craft language that will amend Section 901 of the Pennsylvania Construction Code to exempt small aircraft hangars (defined in the bill as hangars not more than 12,000 feet) from certain regulations that increase costs and time to construct hangars which serves as a barrier to new hangar development at a time where increased hangar capacity is vitally needed to address growing hangar demand throughout the Commonwealth. This was well documented in recently conducted AAC/ACP/ AOPA surveys completed at many general aviation airports. As a proactive measure to address any public safety concerns that may arise about hangar fires etc., the subcommittee will be issuing a supplemental survey to general aviation airports to document any incidents that we need to be made aware of when finalizing the bill's language and navigating through the legislative process.

-FUNDING ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE

This is a joint subcommittee formed by the AAC and ACP Co-Chaired by Mr. Murawski and Mr. Strouse to address aviation funding issues and needs in the Commonwealth. Currently, this sub-committee is identifying membership composition and committee goals and objectives. A kick-off meeting then needs to occur prior to the next AAC meeting in December. The committee work is especially timely in light of the TROC report issuance and the likely passage of a massive federal infrastructure bill by Congress.

- URBAN MOBILITY SUBCOMMITTEE, (UAM)

Tes Ali, Chair of the UAM subcommittee provided a brief report on the Committee's kickoff meeting that was held in July using a powerpoint presentation. This subcommittee will be essentially examining emerging aviation technologies and determining their applicability and potential deployment at PA airports. One key component of the Committee's work will be examining the likely conversion of aviation fuels to electric, hydrogen or hybrid fuels in the near future, especially if the proposed federal infrastructure bill includes aviation alternative fuel incentives. Mr. Ali will take the lead in drafting a letter to be issued by the AAC to our Congressional delegation urging support for these alternative fuels in the proposed bill.

AOPA GUEST PRESENTATION

Mr. Mike Guinter, AOPA Vice President of Airports and State Advocacy gave an excellent powerpoint presentation about AOPA and their activities. AOPA serves 330,000 members, 211,000 GA aircraft, 5,100 public use airports, provides extensive member services, conducts advocacy among a growing pilot population. Mike has been very pleased to participate on our hangar sub-committee and has provided many valuable contributions through this partnership with the AAC and ACP.

AIRPORT / FBO EMPLOYMENT RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT CONCERNS

Chairperson Shaffer deferred discussion of this agenda item due to time constraints.

AAC WEBSITE ENHANCMENTS STATUS

Messers Murawski and Ali gave a brief report on the status of the enhancements being made to the AAC website housed within the PennDOT Bureau of Aviation website. Essentially, a list of improvements to the AAC website has been developed and some of this information has already been posted. Mr. Ali stressed the importance of AAC members responding to the AAC Members Profile section by providing a brief bio about themselves with their aviation background and qualifications along with a photo hopefully by the end of October. Courtney Valencik at BOA has also been providing considerable technical assistance to Mr. Ali toward implementing these website improvements which is much appreciated.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business presented by members.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Monzo reminded members to participate in the PA Aviation Conference in Lancaster on October 26-27, 2021 conducted by the PA Aviation Council. A very informative program has been put together and you can attend in person or remotely. Several AAC members have agreed to be speakers at the conference. Gary Hudson noted that Lockheed Martin announced it will be closing their facility in late 2022 which will be a negative impact to the Chester County Airport and the surrounding area.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Chairperson Shaffer noted the next scheduled AAC business meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2021 at 10 AM. Again, due to the COVID situation it is not yet known whether the meeting will be virtual or in person.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mark R. Murawski, Secretary

Pennsylvania Aviation Advisory Committee