

**St. Mary's County Regional Airport
Airport Advisory Board Meeting
28 January 2019 Minutes**



The January 28, 2019 meeting was commenced at 6pm at the St Mary's County Regional Airport Terminal Building. This included a Special Public Hearing to address the proposed December 2018 Rules, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Minimum Standards for Aeronautical Businesses (Min Stds). Over Seventy Members of the Public (including members of a boy scout troop) were present.

The following Airport Advisory Board members were present. Eric Pratson (Chair), Robert Lightstone (Vice Chair), Ted Klapka (Secretary), Terry Adair, Jim Alexander, Bryan Barthleme, Andre Swygert. Alternates: Craig Nixon and Carrie Kelly.
Dept of Public Works & Transportation: John Deatruck (Director), Allison Swint (Airport Manager), Gary Whipple.

Randy Guy – President of St Mary's Commissioners led off by welcoming everyone. He addressed the changes to the Airport Advisory Committee Bylaws to change the committee to Board, AAB, and to bring the bylaws in line with all the other 37 advisory boards in St Mary's. Stressed that Airport Advisory Board is the eyes and ears of the Commissioners.

John Deatruck – Director, St Mary's County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Wants a friendly welcoming airport
Receptive to new ideas
Keep the interaction going
Proposing that a County owned hangar be built to support General Aviation (GA) and multiple tenants
DPWT is onboard with the changes proposed (in the next presentation) by the AAB

Robert Lightstone briefed the AAB's recommended changes to the December 2018 rules documents. See attached briefing.

Eric Pratson opened the Floor to Public Comment.

The public inputs included the following:

Kristen Farry – Keeps three aircraft and gliders at St Mary's
Do not use consultants, we have the expertise in this aviation county
Rules are the statement of intent.
Fees, permits belong in the SOP
Have simple method for updating SOP and Minimum Standards
“every line in Rules, SOP, Minimum Standards adds Costs and Barriers, not Safety”

Rusty Lowry –
Gliders – was heavy user at 2W6 – moved his collection North
Make St Mary's Airport Great Again. Reasons that the airport is growing:
1) location outside Special Use Airspace
2) Population – huge GA pilot population in the area
In the process of putting it (rules et al) together, if use consultants, make sure get local airport folks on it. (as in the room)

**St. Mary's County Regional Airport
Airport Advisory Board Meeting
28 January 2019 Minutes**



Egon Frech –

Re-read the location Chapter EAA 478 Letter that had been previously submitted.
Emphasized the importance of the Young Eagles program and the experimental builders
Then reemphasized his own previous letter – specially the portion about exclusivity.
“the current and proposed Rules keep us from safely maintaining our aircraft”
EAA Chapter wants to bring maintainers onto airport without a permit process
Specifically, took issue with the Fire Prevention section – noting that heaters are in
common use throughout the airport.

Min Standards are focused on Big Business and Government Contracts
Must include both big business and recreational flyers
Hangars must allow maintenance
“Proposed documents are worse than the October 2013 rules”
Noted that the current President of Van’s aircraft could not today have the business in a hangar
that he did previously at St Mary’s

Ron Surfield – Aircraft Builder and hangar tenant

We are an aviation community...need maintenance to be able to access hangars and need to be
able to build E-AB in hangars
Airport has to serve everyone in the community
The documents have to look at the little guy
Make available to recreation pilots

Jeff Clark –

Was at one time on the board. Airport had a major issue with Sky Divers
Cost the airport (county) much money. Do not let them back in
Ensure documents are consistent on Sky Divers
Remove any reference to on-airport Drop Zones

Sandy Hunt –

Emphasis on safety – need mechanics to support
“we don’t have maintenance shops on the airport”
Our rules in general are not that bad. Used examples of Cambridge and others
that are much more restrictive.

Jim Davis –

Jim Dayton used as an example of the small airport mentality – and support for GA
“this airport has become a cemetery”...need to restore friendliness and openness
Credit for the expansion to key players like Ken Reed,
Airport Manager must pay attention to the GA folks in the private sector

Tony Capozzi – FBO Operator

Was one that landed with a disabled aircraft – having an FBO that could handle quickly moving
the aircraft from the runway was a great benefit.

Supports on-airport brick & mortar maintenance shop on the airport
He will be submitting a detailed input tomorrow

**St. Mary's County Regional Airport
Airport Advisory Board Meeting
28 January 2019 Minutes**



Eric Anderson – former Airport Committee Chair

Do not use Delta as a consultant – they are terrible

Used his example of the need to bring in an uninsured expert on his specific aircraft – they should not need a permit

Keep in mind need access to keepers of knowledge

Ken Reed – Hangar provider, airport developer

Provided a handout book to members of the board and the Airport Manager. Great Document.

Only State on East Coast that does not have tax exemption for aircraft maintenance

Bill is pending in Maryland – get your representatives to support it

Feb 9 – fly in farmers market

Always has supported builders, maintenance, et al in the hangars

Supports permit for outside maintenance, Insurance per the Min Stds

Changes in Rules documents could impact Agreements, Leases and Insurance, potential changes need to be harmonized

Used CAVU detailing as a successful example of getting and using a permit

EAA home airport more restrictive than 2W6

Needs an FBO

Reiterated many of the attributes at 2W6 – low gas prices, many hangars, et al

Christian Vlahos –

Need a GA focused FBO but need to make sure Permit process doesn't put FBO out of business

Has to be Fair

Jim Atkinson – current FBO at Tappahanock VA

Was at the meeting to listen to the local folks.

Has been working to move his company to 2W6 – Many of the main details already worked out

Hangar place, aircraft parking et al mostly done

His reason for being at the meeting was to get the feel for the community

Also trains private pilots how to do their own preventive maintenance

Ivan Edwards – CAVU Detailing

Got a Permit, doing good business at St Mary's

Paul Gambacorta –

Need to avoid exclusivity

Need to be able to do maintenance in hangars

Pat Weaver – St Mary's Hangars

He does not believe aircraft insurance covers mechanics that are working on aircraft in hangars

Joe Arvai -

Need to work together to rationalize the rules, SOP and Min Stds

Public Hearing ended.

**St. Mary's County Regional Airport
Airport Advisory Board Meeting
28 January 2019 Minutes**



Synopsis of Public Input:

Strong desire from Pilot community for the Rules documents to reflect easier access to maintenance, building of aircraft, etc in the hangars and leased spaces that currently exist and a desire for more open access for maintenance providers and competition. Opinion of pilot community is that current and proposed maintenance barriers compromise safety.

Business members were more measured in their comments stressing that unfettered access to airport by off-field maintenance providers undermines on-field businesses. County will have to appropriately balance these competing aspects to ensure safety is not compromised while providing a measure of support to those who invest in an on-field maintenance business.

AAB is of the opinion that their briefing is in alignment with the public comment received.

The Board reelected Pratson, Lightstone and Klapka to Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary for 2019.

Next planned meeting will be at 6pm on Monday 25 February 2019 at the Airport Terminal.

Meeting was adjourned at 730pm.

These Minutes were reviewed by Robert Lightstone (Vice Chairperson) prior to submission.

Attached to these Minutes are AAB's Briefing and Action Item List.

Submitted,

Approved,

Ted Klapka

Eric Pratson

Secretary

Chairman