

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Air Transportation Advisory Committee March 4, 2021

The Air Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) convened at 1 pm on March 4, 2021, in a Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting.

1. Welcome and Introductions, Keith Barrett, Chair

Keith welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed appreciation for everyone's attendance.

2. Orientation to Agenda, Natalie Bettger, NCTCOG

Natalie noted that attendance would be recorded via Teams and asked those participants who called in, to identify themselves along with their phone number, so they could be accounted for. She also noted that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of drafting the meeting summary.

3. Approval of December 3, 2020 ATAC Meeting Summary, Keith Barrett, Chair

The Committee was asked to approve a summary of the previous ATAC meeting. There were no comments, and the summary was approved as submitted. Ty Helton (M) and Sharlette Wright (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. Mesquite Metro Airport Update, Eric Pratt, City of Mesquite

Eric Pratt briefed the Committee on the current and future development initiatives at Mesquite Metro Airport. Mesquite Metro Airport is experiencing growth from increased flight school operations as well as other businesses, and fuel sales have increased approximately 20%. Airport expansion in 2021 includes increasing the height of the weather radar tower, reconstruction of Airport Blvd., fuel farm upgrades, and hangar development and construction all of which are expected to be completed in 2021. Total investments for these projects from the private sector and the City of Mesquite is \$5,315,000.

There was a comment that the FAA 7460 process for capacity development is difficult, and a question about the timeframe for approval. Eric noted the development was previously evaluated and approved in approximately 30-35 days. It was also noted that recent evaluations at other regional airports had taken much longer. Eric suggested sending the development plans to the FAA in advance to shorten the duration of the approval process.

5. NCTCOG Aircraft Hangar Fire Code Update, Pat Stewart, City of Granbury

Pat Stewart gave an update on the status of efforts to amend the current NCTCOG aircraft hangar sprinkler requirements. Current NCTCOG building code requirements state that "An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout all buildings with a building area 6,000 sq. ft. or greater and in all existing buildings that are enlarged to be 6,000 sq. ft. or greater. For the purpose of this provision, fire walls shall not define separate buildings." It was noted that the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 409 requirement does not require a sprinkler system in buildings 12,000 sq. ft. and smaller. The Committee supported Pat's representation of ATAC in a future Fire Advisory Board meeting, to request an aviation-related exception to the current building code for aircraft hangars under 12,000 square feet.

The Committee recommended and approved a letter be sent to the Fire Code Advisory Board on behalf of ATAC, requesting the code modification. Pat felt that having subject matter experts attend the Fire Advisory Board meeting would be extremely helpful in helping the Board better understand airport safety operations. A majority of the Committee voted to approve the recommendation to send the letter of support

6. NCTCOG Aviation Update, Ernest Huffman, NCTCOG

Ernest Huffman presented an update on regional funding, planning, and the UAS Task force initiatives.

Regional Planning and Funding

Ernest noted that recent Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) funding numbers did not include a breakdown of the federal funding category. In the past, funding amounts would be shown as Non-Primary Entitlement Funds, Discretionary Funds, etc. This year the funding categories only identify federal and state funding, with no specific federal funding types identified. Federal funding for the State of Texas for 2020 was substantially higher than in years past, but the amount apportioned to North Central Texas was approximately only 21% of the state's total federal funding.

Scott Gray mentioned that he received notice that his airport was awarded funding through the CARES Act but was not allowed to move forward with his project using that funding. Jim Halley, TxDOT Aviation, noted that as TxDOT is reimbursed by the FAA, they have to be sure they will be reimbursed before they can allocate those funds. Scott added that the funds have to be spent within a specified amount of time.

Ernest noted that NCTCOG is putting together a list of projects for surface transportation and hopes to work closely with TxDOT on regional aviation system planning.

UAS Safety and Integration Initiative

The Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Resolution, developed to advance safe integration of UAS into the Dallas-Fort Worth transportation system, was approved by the Regional Transportation Council and is awaiting signature. The UAS Task Force is represented by more than 287 members and over 150 organizations. In addition to the four previously established working groups, NCTCOG and the Task Force are developing a Community Integration Working Group tasked with characterizing community concerns, public engagement, identifying available funding and training for communities, and more. Recent accomplishments include a partnership with NASA as a UAS weather detection test bed and establishment of the Arlington UAS Pilot Program. Ernest encouraged participation on the Task Force and asked members to let him know if anyone is interested in hosting UAS testing for their community.

7. Open Discussion

Natalie noted that Karen VanWinkle had recently retired, and that Trent Ballard was the new member representing the City of Arlington. Other Committee changes include Lisa Gahm as Committee member representing Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport after Paul Sichko's retirement, Roger Venables as the new Director of Aviation for the City of Fort Worth and Rafael Garza as airport manager representing Dallas Executive Airport. Additionally, Marissa Sanchez is now the Assistant Director for the City of Dallas Department of Aviation.

Natalie noted the next meeting will be at 1 pm, on June 3. As there was no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting Participants

Voting Members in Attendance

Keith Barrett, Chair, Caddo Mills Airport
Christian Childs, Vice Chair, Alliance Airport
Trent Ballard, Arlington Municipal Airport
Aaron Barth, Meacham Airport
Mark Divita, Grand Prairie Municipal Airport
Scott Gray, Denton Enterprise Airport
Ty Helton, Greenville Municipal Airport
Joel Jenkinson, Addison Airport
Chase Patterson, Denton Enterprise Airport
Linda Pavlik, Representing Ennis Municipal Airport
Darrell Phillips, Midway Airport
Eric Pratt, City of Mesquite
Ken Pyatt, SKY Helicopters
Wayne Sanderson, Mineral Wells Airport
Pat Stewart, Granbury Regional Airport
Sharlette Wright, Cleburne Municipal Airport

Nonvoting Members in Attendance

Joe Hammond, Spinks Airport
Marissa Sanchez, City of Dallas Aviation

Others in Attendance

Chris Coons, Mead and Hunt Consulting
Andrew Griffin
Jim Halley, TxDOT Aviation
Vivek Khanna, Woolpert
Sandra Lancaster, DFW Airport
Bill Macke, TxDOT Aviation
Michael Mallonee, KSA Engineering
Jamie Patel, HDR Inc.
Jeff Patterson, Federal Aviation Administration
Benjamin Squire, City of McKinney
Samuel Tan, DFW Airport
Jason Williams, DFW Airport

NCTCOG Staff in Attendance

Natalie Bettger
Christie Gotti
Ernest Huffman
Dan Kessler
Lisa Key