



Tweed New Haven Airport Authority (TNHAA)

Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC)

Minutes of April 16, 2024 via Zoom

Attendance

Members in Attendance: Tom Rafter, Michael Jones, Jeremy Nielson, Linda Hennessey, Rose Chatterton, Giovanni Zinn, Kenneth Dagliere, and Chuck Licata.

Members absent: Carlos Eyzaguirre.

Others in Attendance: Malena Zanjani and Felipe Suriel.

Agenda

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Approval of Minutes from February 20, 2024 Meeting | Tom Rafter |
| 2. New Haven EAC Recommendation: Goats Update | Jeremy Nielson |
| 3. Noise Website Update | Michael Jones |
| 4. Sound Insulation Phase Update | Michael Jones |
| 5. Air Quality Monitoring Update | Giovanni Zinn |
| 6. Project Greenway | Giovanni Zinn |
| 7. Avelo Installation of Fuel and Emissions-Reducing Finlets | Tom Rafter |
| 8. Solar at Tweed | Tom Rafter/Michael Jones |
| 9. Airport Environmental Policy for Board Approval | Attached |
| 10. Next Meeting – Date, Time, Topics | Tom Rafter |

Minutes

Chairman Rafter called the meeting to order at approximately 2:05 PM. The first agenda item was the unanimous approval of the minutes from the previous Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) meeting held on February 20, 2024. There were no objections.

Next, Mr. Rafter introduced the agenda item concerning the use of goats for vegetation management at the airport. Mr. Nielson updated the committee, stating that there had been several inquiries from potential partners in Connecticut, with additional interest from Rhode Island. Communications have begun with five or six local farms to explore environmentally friendly methods of maintaining airport properties. Mr. Nielson highlighted the positive feedback and the proactive nature of the interested parties. He expressed optimism that within the next month, more concrete opportunities for using goats in their environmental management efforts might be finalized. Mr. Rafter commended this progress as good news and thanked Mr. Nielson for his efforts.

Mr. Rafter moved the discussion by requesting an update on the new noise website, recalling Mr. Jones's previous briefing to the committee. Mr. Jones reported that a contract had been executed, focusing on two main components. The first is to revamp the website to enhance visual appeal and provide a more comprehensive dataset. The second component involves appointing Prudence Parry of Jones Payne as a dedicated community liaison. Her contact details will be provided on the website to

Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) Minutes

assist with questions about program eligibility or status. Mr. Jones emphasized the benefit of having Ms. Parry available to respond to frequent inquiries, ensuring timely feedback for community members. Mr. Rafter shared his anticipation for the new website's launch, expected by the end of May 2024, and suggested that Mr. Jones notify the committee by distributing a link to the updated website as soon as it is available.

→ **Action Item – Mr. Jones to send link to new noise website once live.**

Mr. Dagliere asked about the scope of the noise impact area around the airport. Mr. Rafter explained that the boundaries are defined by the Noise Exposure Map developed during the Environmental Assessment (EA) and approved by the FAA. He noted that this is an ongoing process with updates anticipated after project expansions.

Mr. Jones then updated the committee on the next phase of the Residential Sound Insulation Program (RSIP), which involves the ongoing procurement process to select a firm for design and construction. This phase is expected to involve approximately 56 properties and last three to five years.

Ms. Chatterton expressed concerns from the community, specifically from residents on Concord Avenue, about the impact of noise on families with newborns. She sought advice on how to communicate with these residents. Mr. Jones recommended that residents contact Ms. Parry directly for immediate assistance and information, even before the website is fully operational. He highlighted the proactive measures being taken to address community concerns. It was agreed that Ms. Zanjani would provide Ms. Chatterton with Prudence Parry's contact details to facilitate this communication.

→ **Action Item – Ms. Zanjani to send Ms. Chatterton Prudence Parry's contact information.**

Mr. Rafter introduced Giovanni Zinn to update on two significant projects related to air quality and urban development. Mr. Zinn first discussed the air quality monitoring project, explaining that a network to monitor PM 2.5 particulate matter has been established across the city, focusing on major pollution sources such as the port, airport, and highways. He noted that the data, including historical records, will soon be accessible on both the vendor's website and the city's official website. The system is nearing completion, with installation of the final sensor near the tide gates pending. Mr. Zinn announced that the formal launch of the project is imminent.

Mr. Zinn then provided details on the Shoreline Greenway project, a longer-term initiative aimed at enhancing regional connectivity and recreation. He recounted the recent well-attended public meeting, where the plan for a 4.4-mile mixed-use trail was presented. This trail will connect the farm-to-canal line with the Shoreline Greenway, passing through East Haven, Branford, Guilford, and Madison, and will require a small land acquisition from the airport. The project is essentially fully funded with \$7 million in federal funds and \$2.3 million in state funds. Design work is ongoing, with construction scheduled to follow. Mr. Zinn highlighted that only one small land acquisition was needed, for which an agreement is already in place. Coordination with the airport, the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), and the Connecticut Department of Transportation is underway. Mr. Rafter expressed his enthusiasm for the project's potential and its significance for the city and the region.

Mr. Rafter continued the meeting by discussing Avelo Airlines' recent environmental initiatives. He commended Avelo for partnering with VCT to become the first Boeing 737-800 operator and the second airline worldwide to adopt the Finlet technology. This technological advancement is anticipated to

Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) Minutes

reduce Avelo's carbon emissions by 11 million pounds of CO2 annually while also reducing operating costs. Mr. Rafter highlighted the significance of this achievement considering the substantial pollution associated with aircraft operations. He noted that most of Avelo's fleet has been equipped with Finlets, with plans to complete the fleet by the end of the year. He praised Avelo for its leadership in environmental stewardship, marking it as a major advancement in the aviation industry's approach to reducing environmental impacts.

Next, Mr. Rafter introduced the topic of solar energy initiatives. Mr. Jones reported that the City of New Haven's sustainability office had contacted the airport about integrating solar energy, motivated by a new sustainability designation that could bring additional grants and incentives to the region. He discussed potential projects such as installing solar parking canopies at the airport's Lot A and Lot B, which would require FAA coordination and strategic management of the generated power. Mr. Jones explained the option of power purchase agreements, allowing the airport to sell power back to the community or to the utility at a reduced rate, which would particularly benefit Environmental Justice (EJ) communities.

Further, Mr. Jones mentioned ongoing discussions with several solar vendors to assess these opportunities at Tweed Airport, including the introduction of battery storage systems to enhance airport resiliency by reducing grid dependence. This would help mitigate pricing spikes and demand charges, benefiting the local community. Mr. Rafter expressed his support for the battery storage concept, particularly its capability to store energy during peak demand periods.

Additionally, Mr. Jones highlighted a recent dialogue with a local entrepreneur exploring wave energy from tidal movements in Long Island Sound, underscoring the broad spectrum of renewable energy options under consideration. He emphasized the commitment to innovative energy solutions, reflecting a proactive approach to sustainability. Mr. Rafter concluded the discussion by referencing successful wave energy programs in Hawaii, illustrating the potential for expansive renewable energy applications in New Haven.

Chairman Rafter concluded the meeting by announcing his plan to present the airport's environmental policy to the Board for approval the following day. He reminded the committee that the policy was included in the meeting packet and invited any objections or questions. Ms. Chatterton expressed her approval, with no objections raised by other committee members.

Mr. Rafter then announced that the next meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2024, at 2 PM EST. The meeting was officially adjourned at approximately 2:30 PM.

Action Item Summary

- **Action Item – Mr. Jones to send link to new noise website once live.**
- **Action Item – Ms. Zanjani to send Ms. Chatterton Prudence Parry's contact information.**