

Warren County Board of Supervisors

RESOLUTION NO. 470 OF 2016

Resolution introduced by Supervisors Girard, Wood, Strough, Conover, Seeber, Beaty, Montesi, Braymer, Simpson, Leggett and MacDonald

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FLOYD BENNETT MEMORIAL AIRPORT RUNWAY 1/19 EXTENSION PROJECT

WHEREAS, Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport (hereafter referred to as “airport”) is a county owned, public use airport in Warren County, New York, located in the Town of Queensbury and three nautical miles from the central business district of the City of Glens Falls and is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems as one of the 15 “Regional” General Aviation (GA) airports in New York State, and

WHEREAS, the airport is a vital community asset, and provides the fastest, most convenient access to Warren and Washington Counties’ communities, the Lake George and Adirondack regions and provides a vital link for businesses, tourism and recreational flying and strives to provide world-class services and facilities producing sustainable benefits to our community, and

WHEREAS, in or about 2002, in the course of updating the Airport Master Plan for the airport, C & S Engineers assessed the then current and projected future needs of the airport and recommended an extension to the approach of Runway 1-19 (hereafter called “improvement”) in order to accommodate the family of critical design airplanes/aircraft then currently operating and anticipated to operate at the Airport without imposing weight restriction or requiring an intermediate fuel stop when flying to medium or long haul destinations, and

WHEREAS, the C & S Engineers recommendation to extend Runway 1-19 was incorporated into the Airport Master Plan, which was conditionally approved by the FAA in 2009, pending further environmental assessment, and

WHEREAS, the airport will continue to enhance public safety through Federal Aviation Administration capital improvement programs consistent with the current Airport Master Plan, and

RESOLUTION NO. 470 OF 2016

PAGE 2 OF 6

WHEREAS, New York Statewide Airport Economic Impact Study, 2010 technical report: “Study surveys of sponsors and businesses revealed that 37 full- and part-time jobs and \$6.6 million in expenditures are the direct result of on-airport businesses, including airport sponsor expenditures, and visitor spending at the airport, including indirect expenditures, the total impact for Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport was \$8.3 million, supporting 53 jobs”, and

WHEREAS, the airport has contributed millions of dollars to our local economy, and

WHEREAS, aside from the 2010 study, a 2002 study found the economic impact at that time to be \$4.2 million per year, and that the airport has also attracted almost \$10 million in grants since 2002 - grants that have brought business to area employers and paychecks to their employees and significantly lessened the tax burden on county taxpayers, and

WHEREAS, according to the study by RA Wiedemann and Associates (February 2015), “Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport supports 97 jobs and \$10 million in annual economic impact. The Airport generates \$478,400 in State and local taxes and provides incomes of more than \$4.3 million to New York residents”, and “the value of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport has been estimated in this analysis, using two very different measures. The first was the economic activity metric, which assesses the job creation, income, and output, generated at the Airport. This value was determined through analysis, and shows that the Airport generates an average of \$10.04 million per year and sustains 97 jobs in the area. A second measure of the value of the Airport involves the current asset value. In this regard, a method was used that first estimated the current replacement value of the facility and then reduced that value by the useful life remaining on each specific asset. This procedure resulted in a replacement value estimate of \$80.4 million and a current value of \$46.5 million. Taken as a snapshot in time, the total value of the Airport could be estimated to include its annual economic activity (\$10.0 million) plus its current asset value (\$46.5 million). Adding these two numbers, it can be shown that the overall value of the Airport to the community is \$56.5 million. As

RESOLUTION NO. 470 OF 2016

PAGE 3 OF 6

mentioned, this means that the Airport is producing output equal to 21.6 percent of its current asset value each year, and

WHEREAS, using the information offered by the above studies (note: two separate and independent studies), the airport has contributed more than \$10 to our region for every \$1 the county has invested in it, and

WHEREAS, the airport improvement would be beneficial to existing and future businesses because the runway would better accommodate a greater variety of aircraft in a greater variety of weather conditions; such as, but not limited to, larger aircraft and aircraft with heavier loads – both fuel and freight. A 6,000-foot runway will improve the facilitation of air-freight traffic – something that many businesses evaluate as they consider where they wish to locate, and

WHEREAS, many airports, such as Cuyahoga County, Sonoma County, Kokomo Municipal, Anoka County, Cotulla County and others, are extending (or have extended) their runways to 6,000 feet, with the reasons given as follows: to better meet critical aircraft needs; meet FAA standards; improve runway and airport safety; better promote itself to the business world; better attract jet services; better promote tourism; insurance companies prefer runways with a minimum length of 6,000 feet; will attract more planes; will accommodate more types of aircraft and would offer a safer runway in bad weather; will better prepare for “cargo service”, and

WHEREAS, Clinton County looks forward to its infusion of \$35,000,000 from the FAA to pave the way for more growth at the airport and making the airport safer, and Senators Schumer and Gillibrand said making sure our airports are as safe as possible is one of our top priorities, with Senator Schumer adding that, “keeping this airport in top shape will allow it to continue to serve as a major economic driver for all of Clinton County”, and

WHEREAS, Watertown received federal funding for its runway extensions and to complement those extensions, received one million for the development of a business center. Senator Schumer said, “We

RESOLUTION NO. 470 OF 2016

PAGE 4 OF 6

worked very hard to secure funding because better service into and out of Watertown is fundamental to growing the region's economy and to attracting more planes and more business and more tourism to the region," and

WHEREAS, a 6,000-foot runway is safer than a 5,000-foot runway because it provides for safer takeoffs and landings (Approach and landing is the most common general aviation accident phase according to the National Transportation Safety Board), and

WHEREAS, the airport improvements will help regional civil preparedness. Airports are vital links in the event of disasters. They typically are at the tip of the spear for relief and rebuilding efforts. In our case if I-87 became unusable for any reason a viable airport would be valuable. Alternatively, if New York City or Albany experienced a disaster the airport could provide an important gateway/relief value for people and cargo, and

WHEREAS, the improvement could better position the airport to accommodate future flight management systems, like NextGen. The Federal Aviation Administration is building a new Air Traffic System (NextGEN) which will expand the airways to allow for safe direct instrument flight from airport to airport by providing additional flexibility for a wide range of jet aircraft as stated by the FAA, "Through satellite-enabled procedures and technology, NextGen is making General Aviation safer, more efficient, and better for the environment," and

WHEREAS, in reference to the improvement, professional personal testimonies have been provided by Tim Malony (of Saratoga Aviation, operates a Hawker 800XP), Gregory Bean (Chief Pilot for Heritage Flight), John Witzig (Director of Operations for CitationShares that operates over 70 business aircraft), and Al Ball (NetJets Manager for Operational Intelligence & Analysis). Those professionals spoke to the need for and benefits of an additional 1,000 feet of runway and offered the following: the extra runway would help reduce restrictions born from the warmth of the summer and/or runway rain or snow contamination; FAA rules require passenger carriers to abide by the 60% rule (for a 5,000-foot runway the useable length

RESOLUTION NO. 470 OF 2016

PAGE 5 OF 6

is only 3,000 feet) which is quite limiting and many jets are not capable of 5,000 foot runways; limits freight loads; short runways (i.e. 5,000 feet) will limit an airport's ability to be a determining factor in attracting business and in the development of long term economic plans; a longer runway would greatly improve aircraft performance; a longer runway will provide a safer environment; a longer runway would prevent diversions to alternate airports; a 6,000 foot runway helps eliminate performance issues; a longer runway will provide a more contained environment for noise issues; landing distances will be less of a challenge; the increased runway will encourage greater usage and would be a boom for the tourism industry (See Draft Environmental Assessment – Appendix A), and

WHEREAS, a key component to an efficient transportation network is a viable airport. The more capable the airport the more likely it will function to attract and diversify business.

An improved airport would more likely encourage the development of current unused or underused commercial/industrial-zoned properties in both Warren and Washington counties, and

WHEREAS, the county will work with the NYSDEC and other agencies to assure that environmental disturbances and impacts are eliminated or mitigated so they are not substantial, and

WHEREAS, the estimated \$8,000,000 project will be 90% funded by FAA funds and 5% by the state, with a local share of about \$400,000 or about \$6.12 per Warren County resident, and

WHEREAS, in summary, for the price of a sandwich, Warren and Washington counties' residents will get a significantly improved airport, a safer and more viable Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport; an airport that will better serve the business jets, the fastest growing segment of the aviation industry, and the segment of the economy that brings jobs and capital. Improving our airport will open doors of opportunity for our area. For the most part, the FAA will fund this great opportunity, with funding that can only be used to fund airport improvements. We need to improve our regional airport for both safety and economic reasons, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Warren County Board of Supervisors authorizes the Chairman of the Board of

RESOLUTION NO. 470 OF 2016

PAGE 6 OF 6

Supervisors to take such other and further action as may be necessary to effectuate the terms of this Resolution.