

TOWN OF EASTON, MARYLAND
Easton Town Hall
14 S. Harrison Street

January 27, 2014

PRESENT AT CONVENING

Mayor Robert C. Willey
Council President John Ford
Councilmember Megan M. Cook

Councilmember Kelley K. Malone
Councilmember Pete Leshner
Councilmember Leonard E. Wendowski, Sr.

Also present was Town Manager Mr. Robert Karge, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch, Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy Ruf and Assistant to the Town Engineer Brian Hause.

Also in attendance were Tony Kupersmith, Assistant County Attorney, County Manager John Craig, County Council members Dirck Bartlett, Laura Price, Airport Manager Mike Henry, Washington – Dulles Airports District Office Manager Terry Page and Airport Engineer Mindy Lee.

OPENING REMARKS BY AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

At 6:00 p.m., President Ford called the meeting to order and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. President Ford reiterated that this is a workshop meeting and public testimony would not be taken. He stated that the questions submitted by Talbot River Protection Agency (TRPA) have been given to County Manager Mr. Craig.

OPENING REMARKS FROM MAYOR WILLEY.

Mayor Willey stated that there are questions that keep coming up that need to be addressed such as if activity at the airport is leading to the necessity to remove/cut the trees at Mistletoe Hall farm. He said that it has been asked if larger planes are the reason for a longer runway. Mayor Willey asked if there are any alternatives or if the planes could land at another runway.

MEETING.

John Craig, Talbot County Manager discussed the necessity to comply with the Forest Conservation Act. He stated that removal and cutting of the trees is strictly to do with grant funding and there are no expansion plans for the airport. He discussed the history of the obstructions as outlined by FAA. Discussion occurred regarding the 517 trees on the parcel, 359 of which have been designated by the FAA as safety obstructions for landing planes.

Mr. Bill Stagg discussed his role with the county and stated he could have the Forest Conservation documents completed in two weeks. Talbot County has to comply with the Forest Conservation Act and delineate the trees and the county has not formally applied to the town yet.

Discussion occurred on how the installation of the ILS (instrument landing system; 1998) altered the landing minimums and size/shape of the imaginary surfaces deemed a risk by the FAA.

Discussion occurred on what type of aircraft and how many operations use the ILS on runway 4-22 and what the financial implications to the airport would be without the ILS landings and takeoffs.

The county stated that the next step would be to get permission from the town and to advertise a RFP to remove the trees from the town's land.

Mr. Terry Page, FAA Manager Washington – Dulles Airports District Office stated that it is not unheard of to ask for an extension to comply with grants. He stated that a plan would have to be submitted with timelines in order to be considered for an extension from the four-year June 30 expiration. Mr. Page said the FAA would continue to fund safety issues at the airport but improvements would be put on hold until the airport comes into compliance with the FAA's safety standards.

The fox squirrels mating season and the fish in the stream on the property were discussed. No work may be done in the primary mating season. May 15 is the date after which any development activity can occur. Discussion also occurred on the buffer on both sides of the creek where expansion is necessary.

Mr. Page discussed the four categories of airports. He stated that there are only two in Maryland that have National significance; Martin State Airport and Easton and part of that designation is due to the composite of the Airports.

President Ford stated that they are stewards of this property and he feels it necessary to inform the public and accept comment. He stated that it would be desirable to have a public hearing the first meeting in March for comment. He stated that the town is sensitive to the time schedule.

ADJOURN.

At 7:45 p.m., the council workshop adjourned.

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk