

**Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC)  
General Aviation (GA) Airports Strategic Business Plan  
Town of Middletown Meeting - Newport State Airport  
Middletown Town Hall, November 6, 2019, 2 p.m.**

**Town of Middletown (Town) Attendees:**

Shawn Brown – Town Administrator  
Warren Hall – Town Engineer  
Ron Wolanski – Town Planner

**Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC) Attendees:**

Christine Vitt – Senior Vice President, Chief Infrastructure Officer  
Daniel Porter – Vice President, Planning  
Jeffrey Goulart – Vice President, Finance & Business Development  
Eric Seabury – Assistant Vice President, Engineering  
Jeffrey Wiggin – Assistant Vice President, Landside Maintenance  
Kerri Fadden - Assistant Vice President, Operations & Maintenance  
David Cloutier – Assistant Vice President, Business Development & Commercial Programs  
Brent Semple, Esq. – Corporate Attorney  
Leo Faria - Airfield Technician II General Aviation Airport, Building Maintenance

**Meeting Notes:**

- RIAC began by thanking Town officials for their time and indicating the purpose of the meeting was to introduce the General Aviation Strategic Business Plan (Plan). RIAC further stated that we are asking for the Town's support in developing the Plan as well as their assistance in engaging community and stakeholders.
- All attendees in the room introduced themselves.
- RIAC provided an overview of the five key elements of the Plan, including the infrastructure assessment, pavement assessment, airspace analysis, business and financial plan and stakeholder outreach. The status, schedule and cost of each element was reviewed.
- The Town asked how the airport might benefit the Town's economic base and not be a stand-alone entity, including non-aviation business development. It was requested that drone operation and future regulation, including airspace be part of upcoming discussions. The Town also inquired as to whether there were any opportunities to help with pilot shortages. It was agreed that a follow up meeting should be scheduled in the near future to discuss economic development opportunities.
- The Town was interested in the next steps of the Plan and who would be involved in the future. RIAC indicated the RIAC task force present at this meeting would be responsible to pull everything together and that future meetings would occur to review progress.
- A summary of the Rhode Island Airport System including T.F. Green and five general aviation airports was provided by RIAC. It was indicated that RIAC is self-supporting with no local tax dollars and that the general aviation airports system operates at a deficit which is subsidized by T.F. Green and Quonset Airports.

- RIAC stated that their role is to provide a safe environment for aviation and to provide facilities that meet the needs of the State and local communities. RIAC added that it is not their role to decide the future size or status of the airports.
- RIAC provided an overview of the ongoing litigation at Westerly regarding obstructions and the effect that litigation is having on the utility of the airport. It was indicated that runways have already been displaced by more than 900 feet and that navigational aids have been impacted. It was noted that there was no near term end likely regarding the lawsuit and that the impacts are now starting to spill over into other airports including Newport State Airport (UUU). RIAC further reiterated that we were asking for the Town's support in joining the litigation.
- RIAC shared the results of recent aerial data that shows that there are currently numerous additional obstructions that require mitigation at UUU, and that we are likely going to have to displace the runway.
- RIAC added that federal dollars that were received through a federal grant had to be returned recently due to our inability to remove obstructions at Westerly.
- RIAC mentioned that the Middletown overlay zoning process that is underway will help with this issue in the future, but will not likely help correct the past. The Town indicated that the overlay zone effort is taking a different direction than what was provided recently to RIAC. The Town will provide new information soon.
- The conversation was then opened up to discuss the upcoming Town Hall meeting and any other topics.
- The Town indicated the most common complaints received are regarding helicopter tours, parachute jumping, trees and excessive speed on the entrance road.
- The Town expressed concern that they are providing emergency services with no revenue returned to the Town.
- With respect to the upcoming Town Hall meeting, the Town indicated they could post the flyer on their website and requested that RIAC send to them.
- The meeting was adjourned and RIAC again thanked the Town for their input and time and indicated they look forward to seeing everyone at the Town Hall meeting.

Post meeting, additional conversation ensued with a smaller group regarding joining in the current Westerly Avigation Litigation. While not committing to anything, the Town expressed interest in having further conversation with the Middletown Town Council. RIAC offered to return and present the issue to the Town Council. The Town will let RIAC know.

Agenda attached