

**PUBLIC HEARING
JUNE 26, 2017**

LAKE PLACID AIRWAYS, INC. CONTRACT

Minutes of a Public Hearing held on the above date beginning at 6:45 pm in the meeting room of the North Elba Town Hall, 2693 Main Street, Lake Placid, New York.

Members Present: Supervisor Politi, Councilman Favro, Councilman Miller, Councilman Doty, Councilman Rand, Laurie Dudley

Others Present: Attorney Ron Briggs, Antonia Olivera, Mike Orticelle, Steve Short, Terry Politi, Paul Lautenschuetz, David Diets, Suellen McMillen, Bronwyn Seal, Sheri Kent, Sandra Marrow, John Kent, James Bisson, Edward McNeil, Denis Lautenschuetz, Mike Wolford, Rebecca Wolford, Andrew Tieg, James McGregor, Angela Ross, Audrey Hyson, John Tren, Carley Tren, Mike Scheer, Margo Fish, Michael Klein, Dustin Woodside, Brendan Carberry, Larry Gallery, Todd Bulliet, Bruce Goldman, George Fortune

Supervisor Politi opened the Public Hearings and Regular Board meeting by asking everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Politi reading the Public Notice which he stated was properly published and posted.

Please take notice that the Town Board of the Town of North Elba, as Trustee for the North Elba Parks and Playgrounds District, will hold a public hearing on June 26, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the North Elba Town Hall, 2693 Main Street, Lake Placid, New York, for the purpose of considering renewing/entering into a five (5) year lease with Lake Placid Airways, Inc. to provide aeronautical services in the capacity of fixed base operator of the Lake Placid Airport.

Supervisor Politi – The hearing tonight is solely about the extension of the lease agreement of the Fixed Base Operator, Lake Placid Airways, inc. The continuation of general aviation service, fueling, coordination flight traffic, tie downs, aircraft maintenance, flight instruction, building maintenance, supervision, etc. The agreement is with the North Elba Park District, a legal entity created by the New York State Legislature which allows for the lease of lands for sports, airport and recreational purposes. The Town’s primary requirements are for reliability, safety and security, a strong community’s report and an inherent knowledge of the Adirondack Aviation needs. Lake Placid Airways and the Short family have had a long established relationship with the Lake Placid aviation community. We are here this evening to hear from the public as to its satisfaction with the FBOs management and operation. This is a public hearing and we are here to listen to you. Any questions you may have can be answered by Attorney Briggs on behalf of the Town of North Elba.

Attorney Briggs – The public needs to know the reason the lease is limited to five years. It is because in the initial adoption of the Park District Legislation limits lease of Park District properties to five years. Other places do not have such restrictions for FBOs but we are bound by that. This FBO agreement is the renewal of the one that was in place for the five years ending this past June. The difference is the amount of money that the tenant will pay to the Park District for the lease. It is lengthy document with a lot of different provisions. It is for the tenant, Lake Placid Airways, Inc., that provides aeronautical service to the community. That is what it has been doing

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for 40 plus years and they have done a good job. I saw petitions circulated about helicopters. That is not what this hearing is about. It is strictly about the renewal of the agreement with Lake Placid Airways Inc.

Supervisor Politi – Steve, before we begin, would you like to make a comment with regard to your operation before I hear from the public?

Steve Short – Having been here for 43 years, Terry and Phil have been here all but three of it. We do our best to work to the satisfaction of the Town. I would like to continue on for the next five years.

Supervisor Politi – I am going to open this up for public comment. I would ask that you state your name for the record and keep your comments to less than 3 minutes please.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Audrey Hyson – I came to speak in support of the current lessee and the continuing the lease with the Town to run the airport. Five years is not a very long time. I hope that we find someone equally competent if we have to find someone in the future.

Larry Gibbons – Steve flies over our farm that I have had for 30 years all the time and he is very respectful. We 150% support him. We would like to keep him. I would hate to see helicopters come. We have had them fly over and it shakes our whole farm and scares our horses. We don't want to have accidents or broken legs.

George Fortune – I am here about the noise of the helicopter. I do not want to see a helicopter come here. I have photographs off the deck of my house and not very far over a pine tree is the helicopter. I am here because of the noise. I do not want to see them here. Yesterday there was a twin engine and somebody flying only 500 ft over old military road.

John Kent – I am an employee of Lake Placid Airways. He is a large employer of the area.

Margo Fish – One of the beauties of living in the Adirondacks is nature and the peace and quiet. I would support the way we have always had that. Steve cares for nature and the beautiful place we live.

Andrew Tieg – I live under the approach for the airport runways and the approach to the helipad to the hospital. I do not have any complaints about noise or any of the aviation. I have questions for the Board. Is there a conflict of interest when the Fixed Base operator is the airport manager as well? Is there a potential for an issue?

Attorney Briggs – It has been the way the small airports have done it historically. The larger airports have a separation between the management and the FBO. It is not unusual for small airports for it to be one and the same. My source comes from council out of Washington DC.

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Andrew Tieg – My other question; is there a bid process or is this under the Municipal Law where you can objectively contract an FBO.

Attorney Briggs – The Town has the authority to do that if we have a service provider who is meeting all the aeronautical services needs of the community. We have dealt with them before and know the track record and we are entitled to go with that entity again.

Andrew Teig – The law firm you retained out of Washington, DC, how much did it cost for that retainer?

Attorney Briggs – They do not require a retainer in advance. It is an hourly rate of \$325 per hour.

Paul Lautenschaetz – I own two apartment buildings off the end of the runway and have never had a complaint from tenants. I am in favor of Steve Short.

Edward McNeil – I have two hangers at the airport and have had an association with the airport for 25+ years. Most people don't realize what goes on at the airport is that it acts as a visitors bureau service for people off the street or people who come off the ramp. There is always somebody there to answer a question. This is not a small part of the airport. All the employee get involved in that end. That doesn't come cheap to Steve because he has to pay for the employees. It is very appreciated by those of us who are on the airport who use the facility.

Gene Brenan - The Adirondack Flying Service has maintained a good employee population. The employees are in Lake Placid and a handful is able to maintain their houses here. The airport is run as a family operation. If we start flip-flopping with who is maintaining the airport we might lose that good base of employees.

Mike Scheer – I have lived here for 29 years and would be remised if I didn't acknowledge my support for Steve Short. He has done a wonderful job for training people to fly as well as the fact he is a good manager and a gifted pilot. He is an asset to our community and to the Adirondacks. He provides a solid business that provides employment for several people who have been here for a long time. I support the renewal of the agreement.

John Trevor – Steve Short is very aware of the needs of the community. When my former wife was dying of cancer, Steve flew us to the hospital. I appreciate that Steve. Our farm is right underneath the flight path and Steve planes always operate in a safe reliable manner. We have had two plane crashes on our farm that were in no way related to Steve. His organization has always been supportive and helpful and attentive to what needed to happen.

Bronwyn Seal – I had the fortune of teaching Steve's three children at the Lake Placid High School. It is another indication of how Steve has supported our community and had his children at the public school. He is a great dad.

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John Kent – I work for Steve for 18 year now. The regular comment we get from people is about the atmosphere at the airport. It is not like many airports. It is because of the employee base that he has and the way he treats them. The friendly atmosphere is commented often.

Suellen McMullen – I live near the airport as well. I have never noticed any noise from the airplanes in the 20+ years of living there. It sounds like that has been the experience of everyone we have heard from in the room. I find few communities where you find support for one business as strong as this.

James McGregor – I moved to the area about three years ago. I am an airline transport pilot and flight instructor. I have flown everywhere and worked from here to California to Africa. I have flown to the airport a couple of times. Once in September of 2015, I flew in and spent the weekend here. When I came back, there was a letter taped to the side of my airplane. I don't know if I offended somebody, but I have never in my entire time if flying over 5,000 flight hours see someone tampered with an aircraft on a flight line. Security is an aspect. I have never had a note taped to my aircraft before. The second instance is what I have been reading about; a am a pilot that is not overly rich and I read about people using a public airport for public needs and the legal recourse being brought against them possibly because of competition between the airport manager who also has his own FBO charter service. I have been to a lot of airports and that is unique and definitely makes me second guess as a working pilot flying in this area. I cannot afford to attain a lawyer. I don't know the community very well. It is great to have those connections but security is an issue and an aircraft flying within the Federal Aviation Regulations are being threaded for legal recourse. You cannot say there is no conflict there. I thought it would be good for me to come here and mention that.

James Bisson – The comments that have been made here tonight about the noise and the activity at the airport is not by accident. I am a former employee of Steve's and his instructions and training for us has always been to keep the community in mind and be conscious of the people that we are flying over and to treat those people with respect. By watching the call on the engines and reducing power on take-off sooner than you would be required to do by the operator minimal requirements of the airplane. We are trying to confine our noise to the airport. That was not by accident. It was by design and Steve's leadership in making that happen. I would continue supporting his efforts to be the airport manager and FBO operator.

James McGregor – I have a question, the instruction was to reduce power on take-off outside of the aircraft manual for the aircraft for noise reduction?

James Bisson – It was to reduce them to the lower levels of the manual.

James McGregor – With this gentleman saying two aircraft crashed on his field. Anything flying outside fmax power especially with higher altitude here and lower power single aircraft of someone not very experience. Noise abatement is a good thing but we also have to look at safety.

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John Trevor – I would like to respond to that crash on my field. None of the crashes were associated with this area. They were residence from outside. They did not have the benefit of Steve’s council.

Leslie Trevor – I also have a farm at the base of the runway. It is great to meet all the airport neighbors. I know we are not supposed to comment on the helicopter noise but in early June I was on the farm working with the horses and suddenly we had an onslaught of noise with low flying helicopters coming at us. It was affecting the horses and effecting out livelihood. We had inexperienced riders and if we had repeated that it would be so detrimental. It would be so detrimental to the peace of the Adirondacks and what we are trying to achieve by being here. I just want to say that I hope that this can be an exclusive relationship with Steve Short because we have never had a noise issue. People leave the city to get away from the stress. They want to hear the beat of their hearts. They don’t want to hear the beat of blades above their heads.

Supervisor Politi - I appreciate you all coming out tonight and voicing your opinion at this public hearing. Thank you very much

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments, Supervisor Politi declared the public hearing closed at 7:25 pm and will keep the record open until July 10th for public comment via mail.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Dudley, Town Clerk