

NJAA Meeting 06/17/08

“Meet and Greet”

Morristown Municipal Airport

10 am to 11:15 am

Attendees: NJ Assemblyman Alex DeCroce, Malverne Cooke (Alex DeCroce’s Chief of Staff), Michael Venezia (Senator Lautenberg’s Projects Specialist), Holly Kunzman (Outreach Staff Member of Congressman Frelinghuysen), Leo Prusak (FAA District Manager), Fred Proseri (FAA Air Traffic Management), Steven Brisgel (Senior Vice President of Citigroup), John Thomas (VP of Key Accounts at Jet Aviation), James T. Hurley (Director of Sales at Dassault Falcon Jet), Marilyn Vela (Signature Flight Support), Ed Newton (Chief Pilot Honeywell), Arlene Feldman (NJAA), Justin Edwards (Trenton-Mercer/ NJAA), Maria Renner (Morristown Municipal/ NJAA), Roger Moog (NJAA), Len Levy (Morristown Airport Pilots Association), Jack Taylor (Monmouth Executive), Tomas Gomez (Essex County), Paul Boudreau (NJAA), Bill Leavens (NJAA), Eric Bossard (NJAA) and Suzanne Solberg Nagle (Solberg/NJAA)

NJAA President Arlene Feldman thanked everyone for attending and Maria Renner for a superb job in organizing and hosting the “meet and greet” NJAA meeting. Arlene enthusiastically reported the recent achievements of the NJAA board:

NJAA now has the email addresses of all NJ legislators and media so communication is easily accomplished.

A press release was sent regarding the closing of Twin Pines Airport due in part to the tremendous taxes imposed by the municipality of Hopewell.

Letters were sent to President Bush, Governor Corzine and others regarding Readington Township’s eminent domain action of taking 85 % of the Solberg Airport property.

NJAA’s Deanna Lykins, Bob Checchio and Bill Leavens have been educating the legislature about the importance of including in the proposed eminent domain legislation sponsored by Senator Rice, the prohibition of local municipalities from taking land from privately owned public use airports that have sold their development rights to the State of New Jersey.

NJAA was present along with MAAC at Trenton during Advocacy Week. Arlene met with Assemblyman John Wisniewski (Chairman of the Legislative Transportation Committee). Assemblyman Wisniewski has agreed to hold a hearing on aviation in the near future.

NJAA fought for the full funding of the FAA.

NJAA endorsed Max Patel to be the new Director of the Office of Aviation. NJAA has also fought to elevate the Office of Aviation to a Division status.

NJAA “threatened” NJDOT and finally the State Airport System Plan was completed and released.

NJAA is still pushing for NJDEP to have a single point contact for airports. The FAA recently elected to meet with NJDEP unfortunately without NJAA acting as liason.

Roger Moog reported that the FAA has threatened to withdraw funding of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

NJAA has requested that airports be exempt from the Highlands legislation.

NJAA is pushing for NJ to be involved in NASAO (National Association of State Aviation Officials).

NJAA opposed the proposed water tower at Millville Airport.

NJAA objected to the misappropriation of funds with regard to Somerset Airport's medevac helicopter operation. The money that was to be used for the development and training was used for salaries and operations. NJ Senator Diane Allan is introducing legislation to change the constitution so that there cannot be misappropriation of funds in the future.

NJAA supported the appointment of FAA Administrator Robert Sturgell despite the opposition of Senator Lautenberg.

NJAA has had aviation information cards made up to be distributed through the airports. NJAA changed the newsletter from "Final Approach" to the "Aviator". Arlene asked everyone to send any information/articles that they would like to submit for future newsletters.

Assemblyman Alex DeCroce addressed the group who warmly welcomed him and thanked him for coming and for his long history of supporting general aviation.

Assemblyman DeCroce advised that the NJ budget will be released the next day so he could not report exactly how "tight" the budget would be specifically for general aviation. DeCroce remarked how NJ should do more for general aviation. Chair Justin Edwards commented how in Atlantic City during a luncheon Alex DeCroce on his own initiative encouraged all participants to "please support general aviation."

Vice Chair Maria Renner commented how Senator Lautenberg worked with Morristown and Sound Initiative on legislation to phase out over five years the Stage 1 and 2 aircraft under 75,000 pounds. Together they helped alleviate noise which is the main frustration of communities.

Tomas Gomez stated that the premise "the airport is here before you" no longer works. He stated that it is important to inform the local municipalities about all projects ahead of time. Gomez encouraged everyone to let the public know of the benefits of general aviation...medevac helicopters, angel flights, aerial pest control spraying and others. Fuel deliveries are no longer available for the next day. Three to four days notice is now required.

John Thomas of Jet Aviation explained its operation is a charter operation and not a fractional ownership operation. The reduction in air carrier service has increased the demand for maintaining adequate general aviation infrastructure. Thomas stated there is a tremendous advantage for using GA airports if they can be developed to accommodate business aircraft. More general aviation airports need to be modernized so they can be included as destination airports.

James T. Hurley of Dassault Falcon Jet explained that with the introduction of new technology there is a big increase in the utilization and distribution of corporate aircraft. Eighty six percent of corporate jets are traveling with "employees" not CEO's. Companies that use corporate aircraft are more efficient.

Arlene Feldman reminded everyone that there were recently 65 public use airports and now there are only 47. It is difficult just to keep the airports open in New Jersey.

Vice Chair Renner explained that when airports take federal funds one of the grant assurances is to be financially self sustaining. If an airport has an approved ALP, the airport should be able to develop so that it can be financially viable. The project should

not be denied because there is another airport within 50 miles that could serve the same purpose. Airports are catalysts. One mile of pavement is worth much more than additional miles of road. Smart Growth recommends exploiting land that is already used ...Renner encourages Smart Growth on airports because it is already disturbed land. Chair Edwards interjected that there is very little cohesive support for general aviation and that we have been in a flat spin spiral for many years. We need to have a “get out and fight” attitude. Trenton Mercer Airport has been given notice that the FAA is rescinding a FONSI (Finding Of No Significant Impact) with regard to an eight year safety capacity project.

President Feldman advised how Readington Township did not adopt the Airport Safety Zoning Act (with respect to Solberg Airport) and yet the Attorney General refused to enforce Readington Township to comply.

Jack McNamara (NJAA) stated in 1953 New Jersey had 103 airports and now in 2008 there are only 47. If the State of New Jersey still had all of the airports it did in 1953, the noise from aviation would be almost eliminated as it would be spread out more. New Jersey needs more runways. McNamara predicts that the last airport in the state will be a general aviation airport. The fuel costs are 30% of an airline budget where as the fuel costs of a corporation are less than 1%. The State Airport System Plan put a dot on the map of New Jersey where a business use airport should be located. The dot was placed on land of Solberg Airport. McNamara contends it is a travesty that Readington Township can condemn 85 % of Solberg Airport.

Submitted by: Suzy Solberg Nagle, Secretary