



Grand Junction Regional Airport Authority Board
Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2017

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Time: 5:15PM

I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Rick Taggart, Board Chairman, called the Meeting of the Grand Junction Regional Airport Authority Board to order at 5:19 PM on December 5, 2017 in Grand Junction, Colorado and in the County of Mesa.

<i>Commissioners Present:</i> Rick Taggart, Chairman Tom Benton Chuck McDaniel Robin Brown Erling Brabaek Thaddeus Shrader <i>Airport Staff:</i> Victoria Hightower, Clerk Ben Peck Shelagh O’Kane	<i>Other:</i> Sarah Russell, Courtyard Theresa Honat, Residence Jeff Soner, Holliday Inn & Suites Guy Parker, Citizen Doug Russo, Doubletree
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II. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Benton moved for the Board to approve the agenda. Commissioner Brown seconded. Voice Vote. All Ayes.

III. Citizens Comments

Darshann Ruckman, Clarion Inn

Ms. Ruckman stated that she wanted to ask the board a couple of questions concerning the new rate increase for the trip fees being imposed or suggested to the hotels. Ms. Ruckman stated that they have worked for years, hand-in-hand with the airport, it is a

very important part of their business and service that they are able to do this for their guests, as a service provider she looks at this as they are the airport's customers. Ms. Ruckman said that when this was all put together, she wonders what their percentage is that they are paying as hoteliers right now compared to the cab/bus companies. Ms. Ruckman said that they pay a per month fee based on their room count and the cab companies pay a percentage which they tack right on top of their fee. Ms. Ruckman asked the board if any of them knew what percentage of the current trip fee revenue that is coming in that the hoteliers pay.

Chairman Taggart stated that they do not have their budget books with them tonight, they staff can get that information to her.

Ms. Ruckman stated that she went through and read the meetings for the last year or so and this was brought up in November 2016 and it was mentioned that it would be brought to the board again the next month and it wasn't mentioned again until October 2017 and it was basically just change one term. Ms. Ruckman said that she would like the board to know that they are all team players but they want to be part of this. Ms. Ruckman stated that Mr. Minnick mentioned in the minutes that it evens out the playing field but most of the teams aren't invited to the game.

Sharah Russell, Courtyard by Marriott

Ms. Russel stated that they are all here for the same thing and they would just like to be heard and wants the board to know that they do not agree with the major increase, 2000% increase from one year to the next. Ms. Russell said that they are not on board and further work needs to be done.

Theresa Honat, Residence Inn

Ms. Honat stated that she agrees with what has already been said.

Doug Russo, Doubletree by Hilton

Mr. Russo stated that he would like to add that this is not a level playing field with Uber or the taxi as this is a complementary shuttle that the cost of \$7 per trip would directly affect their bottom line. Mr. Russo said that where the Taxi's or Uber might be able to charge their customer that price, they are not able to. Mr. Russo said that this was not budgeted and was not discussed and there is no way they would authorize this and there are not enough shuttles or transportation. Mr. Russo stated that they strongly encourage this not to pass, they all agree that some increase needs to happen, but to go from \$57 a month to over \$1,500 a month is not acceptable.

Commissioner Benton commented and said that he appreciates all of the members of the Horizon Dr. hotel associations that were at a meeting held earlier in the month.

Commissioner Benton stated that it's clear that the messaging process was limited and they need to do a better job on that. Commissioner Benton said that Mr. Minnick is looking to gather better data and get a true head count per vehicle so they can determine different ways to structure a rate/fee that does help the airport keep their grounds and

asphalt in place and a number of other things that are impacted by trips to the airport. They will be in a 90 day process.

Chairman Taggart stated that Mr. Minnick communicated with him just before the meeting, and he can tell the hotel folks that on behalf of Mr. Minnick and Mr. Achen, there was no intention that they wanted to hit them with a 2000% increase. That was never the intention. Chairman Taggart asked for them to work with the airport to get the count to determine if this is the right approach.

IV. Discussion/Action Items

A. Executive Director Selection

Board members reviewed the final employment agreement between the Airport Authority and Angela Padalecki who is one of two finalists.

Chairman Taggart stated that Ms. Padalecki has been involved in reviewing the document and the changes that have occurred over the past two to three weeks, and she has accepted this agreement.

Commissioner McDaniel commented.

“I have made my concerns about the selection of the Executive Director known in our executive sessions, but I feel it is necessary to put my opinion about this matter in the public record.

I cannot support employing Ms. Padalecki as Executive Director. Principally, I believe that Ms. Padalecki lacks sufficient experience to be the chief executive of the airport. Her aviation experience consists of 4 ½ years at Denver International. Of that 4 ½ years, 2 ½ years were spent in the finance department as analyst and advisor to the CFO and, more recently, 2 years as director of airline affairs. Her formal training is in economics and finance. She has almost no airport operations experience. She has never been a chief executive or top manager.

In contrast, the other candidate the board considered has 24 years of airport experience, including all phases of airport operations, has a degree in Aeronautical Studies and is currently an airport manager.

I also believe that the proposed compensation is excessive, particularly given Ms. Padalecki’s experience. We advertised the position at a salary of \$160,000. The current draft of the agreement has annual cash compensation of \$182,800. In comparison, the City Manager’s compensation is \$180,000 and the County Administrator makes \$131,000. Each of those managers has considerable experience in public administration.

The longevity bonus in the agreement of 14.25% of salary lasts for five years. That is longer than the term of any of the commissioners now serving.

Also, the moving and transition expenses allowance of \$15,000 for Ms. Padalecki is twice the amount received by the City Manager.

In summary, I would not employ Ms. Padalecki as Executive Director, nor would I compensate her at the proposed level if she were employed.

And one final word, I earnestly hope I am wrong about this.”

Commissioner Brabaek said that he believes that in history with the past executive directors, they were all managers and some say they did a fine jobs and others say they did not. Commissioner Brabaek said that it is okay in his book for the compensation they are offering due to the fact that they are really trying to keep someone here and it's important with this airport's history. Commissioner Brabaek commented that her background brings much more than just an executive director and that can out way the lack of executive director experience because they have fine staff that runs the airport. Commissioner Brabaek stated that he supports the contract and Ms. Padalecki.

Commissioner Shrader stated that she is a little bit less experienced than some of the other applicants, however, as they dove into the details throughout the interviews it became very apparent to him that Ms. Padalecki displayed a really broad sense and understanding how to be a community developer and an economic driver. Commissioner Shrader said that for him that was an extremely important. Commissioner Shrader stated that he looked at her background in finance and her professional career having stemmed from being in public service throughout, for him, were very important points that swayed him to be in favor of her joining the team and acting as the Director of the airport.

Commissioner Brown stated that she respects Commissioner McDaniel's comments and opinion. Commissioner Brown added that the last three airport directors had looked great on paper and haven't worked out, so she thinks it's okay to take a risk on someone with less experience especially because she has a lot of faith in the airport staff that they already have and they will help Ms. Padalecki navigate what she doesn't know.

Commissioner Benton stated that they were very fortunate to have 46 applicants narrowed down to three. The other finalist was qualified as a “safe candidate”, but Ms. Padalecki brings a number of resources that are very important such as an extremely effective communicator, person who has the capacity to recognize both the spoken and unspoken aspects in conversations, very perceptive and very sharp. Commissioner Benton stated that he supports Ms. Padalecki for Executive Director as well as the contract.

Chairman Taggart said that they have members of staff that are very good at what they do so he was never really interested in finding a candidate with significant value and repeating the strengths they already have. Chairman Taggart said that he agrees

with Commissioner McDaniel, Ms. Padalecki is lacking on the operations side but he would like to trust that the airport staff in place today, is very capable of doing that. They can help her on that side of the business and she can help them in terms of how to develop the airport.

Commissioner Brown made a motion for the Board to approve the employment agreement as written. Commissioner Brabaek seconded. Roll Call Vote.

Commissioner Brabaek: Aye, Commissioner Shrader: Aye, Commissioner Benton: Aye, Commissioner Brown: Aye, Commissioner McDaniel: No, Chairman Taggart: Aye.

V. Adjournment 7:38PM

Commissioner Shrader made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Brown seconded. Voice Vote. All Ayes.

Meeting adjourned at 5:54PM

Rick Taggart, Board Chairman

ATTEST:

Victoria Hightower, Clerk to the Board