



**OKALOOSA COUNTY AVIATION BOARD
MEETING AGENDA**



Date and Time: Monday, June 12, 2023 1:00 PM	Type: REGULAR
Location: County Administration Building – BOCC Chambers 1250 Eglin Parkway Shalimar, Florida 32579	

I. Prayer

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Airports Update

- Mr. Tracy Stage, Airports Director
- Mr. Eric Pilsk, Aviation Special Counsel – Updates to the Minimum Standards and Rules and Regulations

IV. OCAB Business Items

1. Review and approval of the April 10, 2023 OCAB Meeting Minutes
2. August Board Meeting Date Change Discussion

V. Public Comments

VI. Board Member Minute

VII. Adjourn Meeting

Next Meeting will be held TBD

Okaloosa County adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act and will make reasonable accommodations for access to this meeting upon request. Please call the Airport Director's Office at (850) 651-7160 X 4 to make a request. For Hearing Impaired, Dial 1-800-955-8771 (TDD), and 1-800-955-8770 (Voice). Requests must be received at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting in order for Okaloosa County to provide the requested service. This meeting was publicly noticed on 5/31/2023.

Meeting Minutes
Okaloosa County Aviation Board

Monday, June 12, 2023

1:00 PM

Board Members in Attendance:

Seat 1 Mr. Richard Russell (Vice Chair)
Seat 3 Mr. Don Harrington
Seat 6 Lt Gen Gordon Fornell
Seat 8 Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel

Seat 2 BG Robert Buhrow
Seat 5 Lt. Gen Mike Wooley
Seat 7 Dr. Richard P. Hallion (Chair)

Board Members not in Attendance:

Seat 4 Mr. Chip Cook

Visitors in Attendance:

Commissioner Mel Ponder

Mr. Craig Coffey

Mr. Eric Pilsk

Mr. Rick Gay

Mr. Randy Troop

Mr. Robert Smith

Mr. Quin Ducharme

Mr. Charlie Vanden Bossche

Mr. Demi Lee

Mr. Matt Metcalf

Mr. Josh Lewis (Atlantic Aviation)

Ms. Lynn Hoshihara

Mr. Adam Gerchick (Zoom)

Ms. Patti Brown

Mr. Darryl White

Mr. Justin Johnson

Ms. Kelly Vanden Bossche

Mr. Chuck Elwell

Mr. Mark Causy

Mr. Gary Troop

Chairman Hallion opened the meeting at 1:07 PM

Opening Prayer by Mr. Mike Wooley

Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice-Chair Russell

Chairman Hallion opened to public comments with a three-minute limit per person.

Mr. Rick Gay – Destin FBO, Atlantic Aviation is not doing specialized maintenance, which is subcontracted out. Would like to get away from the flight instruction and maintenance and do what needs to be done to bring our airport into the 21st Century.

Ms. Patti Brown – A new manager, who is a pilot and has experience, is needed to oversee just Destin and Crestview. Some airport tenants have spoken out and have received character assassination in emails and threatened with lawsuits. The required 48-hour notice for inspections isn't fair, when so many of the pilots do not live here full time. Do not sign these rules and regulations and listen to and work with the lessees and owners.

losing your hangar lease if caught parking next to your hangar. The last three times I landed at the airport there was no VASI lights, no taxiway lights working. It's the only airport I have landed at that you can't find taxiway lights. I don't know how many months they have been out of commission. Those are things we should be focused on, not who can work on the aircraft and who is limiting who, as far as Vertol being the only one that can work on the aircraft on the field. People that own aircraft need to be able to call in people that have worked on their aircraft over the years, as long as they hold the credentials to work on it.

Mr. Quinn Ducharme – Everybody tends to be afraid to speak out about certain things. We have a lot of people that have contacted me on a daily basis asking about issues and problems they are hearing about what is going on at the airport. Its people making phone calls and asking real questions and they are concerned. It is very important that citizens should be able to voice their opinions without the fear of being reprimanded and threatened with their hangar leases. I understand the County wants to protect their liability against possible future lawsuits due to malicious activity or by a mechanic on the airfield, but I have never heard of one single lawsuit from somebody getting injured or killed in an aircraft and suing the County because some mechanic wasn't qualified to work on that airplane. I have heard of several lawsuits involving the County, costing hundreds of thousands of dollars, plus millions of dollars in defending those lawsuits. We should be focusing on the money being spent in litigation, instead of money we have spent on the rewriting the Minimum Standards and Rules & Regulations.

Ms. Kelly Vanden Bossche (speaking on behalf of Eric Stegemann) – Owner of Tribus Aviation, LLC and is the lessee of a \$7,500 plus a month hangar with the County [*Note: Lease is with Atlantic Aviation not the County*] at the Destin Executive Airport. We operate multiple turbine and piston powered aircraft. The changes to the draft after the public comment period made us feel very positive of where we were going. We were later appalled to see the rules were changed immediately before the meeting to approve them without discussion with the tenants of the airport. The team at FBO have an excellent reputation. Atlantic Aviation staff were threatened that their license within the County would be revoked should they continue to comment about the concerns of the tenants and owners at the Destin Executive Airport. Our staff has witnessed aircraft owners trying to get maintenance from the company. On at least three occasions since November, transient aircraft owners who needed approved maintenance were turned away by Vertol staff. During regular business hours, an aircraft owner called repeatedly and no one answered. Atlantic brought the aircraft owner to Vertol's door, even though locked, there were individuals inside. The pilot attempted knocking and calling again with no response. Another individual worked on his aircraft, otherwise he would have been stranded at DTS. On another occasion, Vertol told a pilot it might be a month before they could work on his plane. When he asked why, he was told our A&Ps are too busy working on our military aircraft in Crestview. For over a year, Vertol displayed a banner on their hangar stating they are a 145 Part Repair station in Destin. This implies that the company is a service center for Cirrus, Cessna, and Piper, which they are not. A major executive and a Cirrus owner decided to have Vertol do his annual inspection. The inspection took two months, much longer than a new Cirrus annual inspection should take. Vertol charged the owner more than three times the going rate for the inspection. When asked why it took so long, again he was told the A&Ps are in Crestview. The availability of maintenance at any airport, but particularly one as heavily trafficked as Destin, is vital. It is in the best interest of Destin to allow other FAA approved A&Ps to operate at the airport to fill in gaps that Vertol is unwilling or unable to service.

Business Items

RESULT:	Meeting Minutes from the 04/10/2023 meeting were approved.
MOVER:	Richard Russell, Seat 1
SECONDER:	Don Harrington, Seat 3
AYES:	Unanimous

Commissioner Ketchel recognized the Okaloosa County Aviation Board with its beginning in 2017 and the progress, support, and accomplishments achieved with the Airports Director. With appreciation for the service provided, Commissioner Ketchel made a motion to dissolve the Okaloosa County Aviation Board. Don Harrington, seconded the motion. With discussion and much gratitude, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Hallion adjourned the meeting at 2:16 pm

APPROVED:

By: _____

Name: Dr. Richard P. Hallion

Title: Chairman

Date: _____

APPROVED:

By: _____ 

Name: Tracy Stage, A.A.E.

Title: Airports Director

Date: 1.28.23

*These minutes are a summation of the meeting.