

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority

Friday, September 11, 2020

11:00 a.m. / John P. Walsh Conference Room and also via Conference Call/Teams

Pursuant to notice duly given and posted, the Annual Board meeting of the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority was called to order on Friday, September 11, 2020 at 11:02 a.m. in the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority's John P. Walsh Conference Room located in the Syracuse Hancock International Airport by Chair, Ms. Jo Anne Chiarenza Gagliano.

Note: The Authorities Budget Office (ABO) has waived the in-person meeting requirement during this public health emergency. During this public health emergency, in the event board members are unable to meet in person, the Governor's Executive Order 202.1 permits the board to consider the use of telephone conferencing, "to the extent necessary to permit any public body to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings and authorizing such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed."

Members Present/Telephone Conference:

Ms. Jo Anne Gagliano – Chair
Mr. William Fisher – Vice Chair
Dr. Shiu-Kai Chin – Finance Officer
Ms. Latoya Allen
Dr. Donna DeSiato
Mr. Michael Frame
Mr. Kenneth Kinsey
Mr. Michael Lazar
Mr. Michael Mirizio
Mr. Robert Simpson
Mr. Michael Quill

Members Absent:

None

Also Present/Telephone Conference:

Onondaga County Executive Ryan McMahon
Mr. H. Jason Terreri
Mr. John T. Carni
Ms. Robin Watkins
Mr. Brian Dorman
Ms. Debi Marshall
Ms. Joanne Clancy
Ms. Cheryl Herzog

Mr. R. John Clark
Ms. Linda Ryan
Mr. John McCain
Ms. Selena Nicolson
Ms. Jennifer Sweetland
Ms. Elana Essig

Roll Call

As noted, all Board members were present.

Ms. Gagliano started by welcoming everyone to the scheduled Annual meeting of the Board at 11:02 a.m. Chair Gagliano invited everyone to join her in reciting the Pledge of Alliance in commemoration of this solemn day of 9/11.

Chair Gagliano shared her pride in the SYR airports' efforts, accomplishments and challenges during the past year with both record high travel numbers and then with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Chair Gagliano touted the formation of the Airport Accessibility Committee and thanked the SRAA Board and all staff who made it possible to continue the safe, secure operation of the airport during this time. Chair Gagliano advised that Executive Director Terreri will give an update on the state of the airport during this past year and welcomed and introduced Onondaga County Executive Ryan McMahon to the meeting.

Onondaga County Executive Ryan McMahon thanked everyone and acknowledged that everyone has gone through a lot during this past year with both unprecedented success at the airport and also the hope of re-building on that pre-pandemic success and getting to the back-end of this current challenge. CE McMahon reviewed with the group the positive steps the county has taken to help control the local outbreaks of the virus and he is excited for what is to come in the both the aviation and hospitality industries. CE McMahon stated how proud he is of our airport facility in SYR compared to other facilities and how far SYR has come recently. CE McMahon congratulated and thanked everyone for getting through the anxiety and public health and physical challenges we have faced with our families and community and he is looking forward to future success.

Presentation of the 2020 Annual Report to the Community

Executive Director Terreri thanked Chair Gagliano and the board for all of their assistance and County Executive Ryan McMahon for attending the meeting and offering thanks and encouraging words for our staff, board and community.

Director Terreri noted that this was the first full fiscal year that he has been at the airport and thanked the dedicated group at the airport for working so hard during what is the most challenging time in his lifetime so far with this pandemic. Director Terreri noted that SYR is coming through this and will recover with the continued help of the Chair, the board and most importantly all of the staff at the airport, whether it be SRAA staff, City of Syracuse Staff, our airline and rental car partners, custodial and operations staff, everyone especially who are essential employees at SYR and noted that this Annual Report to the Community for 2020 is dedicated to all of those professionals.

A three-decade record was set in 2019 of 2.5M passengers. SYR has service to 24 non-stop

destinations. Even during the pandemic, we have not lost any of these service routes. New social media campaigns have been sent out to encourage the economic recovery process at SYR and the community region we serve. Director Terreri works closely with the community on events such as Honor Flight, Holiday Concert Series, Arise, Red Cross Blood drives, and the PET Program and Fly Guide Volunteer programs here at the airport. Director Terreri recounted how SYR went from an overflow parking situation to less than 100 cars parked at the airport during the pandemic. In the month of April for example, SYR had 4,400 people going through the checkpoint, which roughly translates to the average passenger traffic number for just one day in an average month of April. The SRAA took advantage of this low traffic period to work on terminal, concourse and runway improvement projects that would have been more difficult to complete during an average passenger traffic time period such as work being done on floors, deep cleaning, and working with partners on airport and operational improvements.

While there was a massive drop off in passenger numbers in April, since that time, we are on track to return to our 2015 levels by December. The airlines are continuing to add service and frequencies and are recovering well at SYR. One thing that is unique about SYR is that our split is about 60% leisure and 40% business, which is a healthy split. SYR experienced the number-one most liked and shared social media post in our history with our “We SYRiously Miss You” campaign which simply reached out to our community to let them know that we care and are thinking about them during this difficult time. The airport let people know via social/media what our safety plans at the airport are which include misting machines, social distancing markers, hand sanitizer stations, and air being purified by new UV-C lighting through the air vent systems. Director Terreri announced the person who most deserved the Employee of the Year for 2020, Jeffrey Zawacki. Jeff, in the Trades group, has brought a tremendous amount of knowledge to the airport, suggested the UV-C lighting and fully installed it along with meeting with other airports and community partners such as Syracuse University to instruct them about how to utilize this additional safety measure. Because of Jeff’s suggestion and implementation, SYR set the trend and was recognized nationally in the Wall Street Journal and newspaper/media articles for our ground-breaking approach to pandemic safety.

Director Terreri continued to update the board and community on current events and operations at the airport and again thanked all frontline staff of the SRAA and the Department of Aviation with the City of Syracuse. He thanked everyone for their hard work and professionalism that kept the airport running safely for essential travelers. Director Terreri introduced new staff: CFO Robin Watkins; Stephanie Zumbuhl, Grants Administrator; R. John Clark, General Counsel; Anthony Catalbiano, HEM Crew Leader-Maintenance; Aireyanna Kennedy, Security Assistant; Selena Nicholson, Management Assistant; and Al Overend, Director of Public Safety. Additionally, a special welcome was given to the Local 400a who joined the SRAA as employees this year and to the Trades group who are in negotiations to help us meet our goal of creating a unified workforce.

Director Terreri shared with the group that other new ideas were implemented this year and as such quarterly Town Hall meetings for increased transparency to staff and serve as a forum for questions, engagement and ideas. He noted exciting things coming up such as Taxiway and runway improvements, concession refresh and expansion including a new wine/craft beer bar concept and a full-service Dunkin Donuts. A Strategic Plan effort is underway to plan for the next 5-10 years along with a Master Plan for the next 20 years. The SYR airport needs to be in position to support community growth. The Exit Portals are being replaced in the fall with new Exit Lane technology which increases ease of travel and addresses the complaints regarding the portals. SYR is continuing discussions with new service carriers and destinations with a continued focus on increasing services for our community.

For the first time ever, SYR partnered with United Airlines and with Wings for All for an amazing event with 23 families to have them experience the process of simulated airplane travel in a brand new United aircraft. SYR was recently notified that we have been recognized and are the recipient of the Arc of Onondaga Achievement Award. Director Terreri explained how SYR used our resources to create a “Find SYRenity” video project by partnering with I Love New York, New York’s Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance, Visit Syracuse and Oswego County. SYR funded this national campaign targeting appropriate markets as they come off quarantine lists to bring people to Upstate and Central New York for all the outdoor environments and activities the region has to offer to assist in the recovery of all our catchment communities. This video is available on all SYR social media and web pages.

Adjournment

Having no other topics to discuss at the annual meeting, Director Terreri thanked everyone for coming and invited those who would like to stay to participate in our Regular Meeting of the SRAA Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.