Town of Haverhill
Dean Memorial Airport Zoning Commission
MEETING MINUTES
J.R. Morrill Building
2975 Dartmouth College Hwy.
No. Haverhill, NH 03774
Wednesday, April 8, 2026
5:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM by Mark Maholchic.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:
Maholchic asked for nominations for Chairperson for a one year term.
MOTION #1: Vice Chair Bjelobrk nominated Susie Tann, seconded by O'Shana.
Voice Vote: All in favor, none opposed, one abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Tann asked for nominations for Vice Chairperson for a one year term.
MOTION #2: Tann nominated Matthew Bjelobrk, seconded by O'Shana.
Voice Vote: All in favor, none opposed, one abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

TERMS OF OFFICE FOR COMMISSION MEMBERS
Tann pointed out that the Terms of Office for Commission members are on the agenda.

MEMBERS OF THE AIRPORT ZONING COMMISSION (AZC):
Chair: Susie Tann
Vice Chair: Matthew Bjelobrk
Member: Mark Maholchic
Member: Zach Henson
Ex officio: Rod O'Shana
Airport Manager: Dennis Cunningham

IN-PERSON VISITORS: Chair Tann welcomed Eli Vasconcelos, DMA Scholarship applicant and Jordan Long, FAA Certified commercial pilot and flight instructor, and balloon pilot with Spirit Ballooning based in Connecticut. Cooper Brunet, DMA Scholarship applicant arrived later.

ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE: Vice Chair Bjelobrk (Present), Maholchic (Present), O'Shana (Present), Cunningham (Present), Henson (Absent/Unexcused), and Chair Tann (Present). A quorum was met.

RESIGNATION: Zach Henson has officially resigned due to moving out of Haverhill.

AGENDA APPROVAL
Chair Tann stated that the Agenda sequence may not be able to be followed tonight due to giving preference to our guest speaker, Jordan Long and our scholarship applicants.
Tann asked for a motion to accept the Agenda as amended.
MOTION #1: Vice Chair Bjelobrk made the motion and seconded by Maholchic.
Voice Vote: All in favor, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES REVIEW
Chair Tann asked for a motion to approve the meeting Minutes from **June 11, 2025** and **August 13, 2025** as written. The AZC did not meet during the month of July 2025.
MOTION #3: Vice Chair Bjelobrk made the motion to approve the, seconded by Maholchic.
Voice Vote: All in favor, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANT INTERVIEW

Tann introduced Eli Vasconcelos and thanked him for applying for a scholarship.

Vasconcelos stated that he has been around aviation his entire life. "I don't remember my first flight; I was three years old and I went with my parents. My mom wrote in my logbook, as kind of a joke and I still use that same logbook. Both my parents are private pilots. My dad works for the FAA. Aviation is their whole life, so it has become my whole life as well." Vasconcelos explained that he is ranked first in his class of 56 seniors at Woodsville High School.

Vasconcelos explained that he is attending Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida next year for aerospace engineering and hopes to take flight lessons while he is in college. He intends to use the scholarship money for tuition. Vasconcelos continued to expound on his engineering internship at New England Wire Technologies. He explained that it is called an extended learning opportunity and that he works with their engineers on his aviation project. He went on to say that he is mostly on the computer designing things. "I designed and printed my first iteration of a little glider; it's about 12 inches by 15 inches. Initially it was too heavy and it didn't fly but I'm working on fixing that in the next model. I'm also working on a little propeller for fun. It is a big challenge to try to find the right wing shape and balance between lift and how heavy the model is. That's definitely been the biggest challenge." Vasconcelos will be there until June.

When asked about being persistent, committed, calm under pressure, and attentive Vasconcelos talked about how he will be pursuing engineering and flying concurrently. With those endeavors he will come under pressure especially at exam time. Vasconcelos stated that he thinks being able to handle that stress is important, but also when you are in the air, anything can happen, so it's important to have the right instincts. Vasconcelos went on to say that he is taking flying lessons out of Laconia and has about 30 hours right now; 25 hours with his instructor. Prior to that he flew with his parents and had built up some hours with them. When asked about his long term career plans he explained that he wants to finish college but after that he is not sure which

direction his life will take. "I don't know if I want to pursue flying as a career or engineering, but I know that engineering in college is the way to achieve my future goals." When asked about a service academy Vasconcelos stated that it might be an option later on.

AIRPORT MANAGER'S REPORT
-Deferred

NEW BUSINESS
Balloon Festival Discussion
-Cunningham introduced Jordan Long, Manager of the Post Mills Airport who is also an airline pilot and frequently flies hot air balloons. The discussion is paraphrased below.

- Jordan explained that Dennis brought up this idea of doing a balloon festival at DMA so he put together a proposal that goes through all the details of what he envisions. Jordan asked "What are you looking for in terms of a balloon festival?" Bjelobrk answered that a festival would utilize the airport, make the airport more accessible to the public and give something to the community that is amazing.
- Cunningham explained that we have an Airport Awareness Day in September and that has been the only activity we've had for years.
- O'Shana asked how many balloons would fit in our location? What would the costs be?
- Jordan explained that the number of balloons is unlimited in terms of the number that the airport can accommodate. He went on to say that, "We host a balloon festival with 30 at Post Mills and we are 10 times larger than the Quechee Green and they have 30 balloons as well. You can fit a lot in a small space. But more balloons, more cost as well."
- Jordan stated "A hot air balloon festival is a double-edged sword because these are balloons, unlike traditional aviation where you're landing back at the airport, you fly off into the community. So you land on somebody's property and say, hey, nice to meet you. I'm a pilot; lets talk aviation. Let's talk about what event we're part of, and we're bringing aviation to the community rather than trying to drag people in. So that's the benefit of the hot air balloons versus airplanes in terms of community facing."
- Cost is also double-edged.
  - Income from parking and admission should not be relied upon due to a possible weather cancellation.
  - Make it a free event, charge for concessions, have a cooler worth of water to generate a little bit of income.
  - Get volunteers from the community to do food trucks or whatever you want to sell.
  - If you invite pilots to do tether rides you take 20% or maybe 30%, whatever the number is that is decided on. Tether rides generally charge $20 per person for a five minute ride. You can take up four people at a time; that's $80 and you can generate a fair amount of income. That's a big reason why some of these pilots come to these events because they have a line of people for tether rides. It is popular but it comes with some problems; like deciding how high? Jordan said he likes a short tether and has done big events at 100 feet.

At 200 feet things start to get interesting and he feels that 100 feet is probably a good way go.

- DMA has a 5 acre parcel for the event and we are looking at July or August. The parking would be right behind it and not part of the 5 acres.
- After you take off, you land wherever. The issue with the airport is the proximity to the state forest. Balloons are non-directional aircraft and they have to have enough landing spots. So that is a limiting factor. Jordan has written up a solution that's more pilot focused and he could do a test flight to check out this situation. The question is, are there enough landing spots?
- What are the solutions? In a weekend you have 4 flight opportunities: Friday night, Saturday morning, Saturday night, and Sunday morning. It's a big Friday or Saturday night activity for the kids.
- The balloons fly in the afternoons and this is when you will have the biggest crowds. Jordan said that the focus is drawing people to the airport, static events in the afternoon and music.
- It's a visual thing; people can walk among the balloons, getting a sense of what it's all about. Walking among the balloons; the balloons were all inflated and have a lantern effect at night.
- It is a good idea to start planning now because the balloon pilots are filling up their schedules with events especially in our area.
- Jordan said that balloonists tend to travel and he could probably wrestle up 10 balloons but to have maximum impact, we might be looking at 2027.
- The more time we take, the more income can be generated because hopefully we can get sponsors for the different days and times of day like sponsoring the night glow.
- How many balloons should be invited in order to make an impression and hopefully generate some income for the airport? Jordan thought at least 10 but you have to have the right pilots who are cohesive and working together for the event.
- What do the pilots want? They want a chance to commune with other pilots, an opportunity to fly safely in a beautiful area, somewhere that is not home, and the ability to offset the high operating and travel costs incurred by a balloon event. To attract safe and enthusiastic pilots will require offsetting their travel and operating costs, at a minimum, propane will need to be supplied free of cost to all attending pilots (estimated to be 100 gallons per pilot). The pilots generally do not charge the sponsor for coming to the event but Jordan recommends it. It is smart (and maybe a requirement) to offset room and board through discounts from local motels and B&Bs; there are about ten pilots in Vermont and New Hampshire put together. Can someone offer a discount or sponsor a pilot overnight?
- Other ideas: coupons to local restaurants or 20% off, gifts to the pilots like gas cards are not a bad idea. Generally, you budget for a pilot and 2 crew people. Jordan estimates $500 per attending balloon would be the cost. And that's just a rough estimate of what it is going to take to get somebody to show up. He would also recommend that any left over money be given to the pilots as a cash donation.
- Jordan's thoughts about the feasibility of the area in general: He recommends drawing up the pilot list and keeping in mind that some pilots will say no due to the terrain; some pilots may just want to give tether rides or provide a static display and then there are a few adventurous pilots who want to go off.
- Weather conditions of the day are a big factor and we build the mission off of what we have.

- September is traditionally very favorable. A local balloon pilot has done as many as 60 flights in September alone, in the morning and evening. October is about 50-50 and the summer months are good.
- It was agreed that we will spend some time at our next meeting discussing the emailed information that Jordan has provided and that Cunningham will be the point of contact.
- Jordan added that the way he gets around the weather, especially here in the upper valley is to go early in the morning. His flight windows, especially in the summer, are early morning or late evening, landing at sunset.
- Jordan recommends having static events in the afternoon and then in the morning, pilots can fly. A breakfast or a couple of coffee machines was suggested during the morning hours.

PENDING ISSUES (The numbers below coincide with the number on the Agenda.)

1. Airport Awareness Day

-The Commission chose September 12, 2026 for the event and no rain date. Last year we had a rain date that was not well attended despite all the work and the volunteers who showed up to participate including Lynn Perry and his family. We only had 16 Young Eagles when normally we have about 50; that was a single data point but it was a very strong data point. Dennis will contact the Black Hawk and get the signature from the Town Administrator for this year's event.

2. Balloon Festival (see above)

3. Land Lease Rates

-Tann stated that at our last meeting we concluded our discussion about the land lease rates with the question, "What will the rate be per square foot?" It is $.12 cents now and the going rate is $.31 cents in the New Hampshire/Vermont, area. We didn't reach a conclusion other than to say that we will revisit it.
-Discussion:

- Going to the Select Board with the above numbers.
- We need to increase the price per square foot despite the airport's conditions and aeronautical limitations. Increasing the square foot price to $.20 was proposed; this reflects a one third increase in the cost of everything else in the valley.
- What would the cost be for each hangar based on the square footage?
- Regarding the HADC hangar: would we include the entire hangar or should every hangar tenant have a separate lease?
- What leases are we referring to? Cunningham replied, "You can make them one lease that would cover five. If you want to do it separately there are six lessees. Cunningham continued to explain that presently Mr. Currier covers everybody in the hangar; he has six spots. When the bill comes in from the Town based on the square footage of the entire hangar he divides it by six; that's his responsibility, not ours because it's privately owned.

- There is a problem with the Town having a hybrid situation; there are tenants that have a lease agreement for the land because they put up a hangar at their own expense and then there are the Town owned hangars.
- A lot of the leases are long term because you need time to recoup the money invested in building a hangar. If the lease is long term, you can raise the rent on the Town owned hangars, but then you don't want to be out of proportion with what the market calls for. We have a ceiling here. If you have a lease agreement for the land and pay the taxes, that's it. We have no more say in it, because they put the expense forward to put up a structure that the town didn't pay for.
- Historically, did the Town contribute any money to have the private hangars built?
- We only have two hangars that belong to the Town. A Hangar, the old one and C Hangar, the new one that has two hangar tenants.
- At this point we don't know if we can even raise the rates, but we can go to the Select Board and say that we have a financial situation that needs to be solved. We recommend $.20 cents per square foot. We think it is executable. We can ask the Select Board to figure out if they can do it and they can seek legal counsel if needed.
- O'Shana suggested that he can bring our recommendation of $.20 per square foot to the Select Board. O'Shana can present copies of the leases for the Town owned hangars.
- Tann asked if everyone was in agreement with $.20 per square foot?
- Bjelobrk responded that we should know what the lease says and if raising the price per square foot is allowed. Bjelobrk went on to say that our airport doesn't have a lot of the amenities of other airports. We can't compare DMA to the others; for one thing we have no taxiways so we don't want to bump up against that ceiling. Bjelobrk said that it would be better to encourage use to the airport and have it build organically. It's been a while, but we have made strides over the years; having the fuel go to automatic has increased fuel sales and now we have an A&P mechanic who will bring more traffic to the airfield. We don't want to price ourselves out of the market or scare anybody off. We need to remember that we intend to tack on the airport non-airfield maintenance fees as well.

4. Revisiting last meeting, the commission planned to increase hangar rates, which hangars?

-Cunningham wanted clarification that it was A Hanger (Mr. O'Donnell's hanger). Tann stated that we arrived at a decision to increase Mr. O'Donnell's rent to $100.00 per month and the other hangars were increased by 10% which brought them to $330.00 per month.

5. Discussion about the airport non-airfield maintenance fee:

-Cunningham stated that the letters to the hangar tenants have not been sent out yet.
-Tann reminded the Commissioners that at the last meeting we talked about inviting the pilots to get their input. It was agreed to invite them to our next meeting to have an in-person conversation. It will give them an opportunity to see what we are dealing with and to voice their opinions as stakeholders.

6. Letter to hangar tenants notifying them of the increases

-It was agreed that Cunningham should incorporate notification of the airport non-airfield maintenance fee in his mud season letter. The final numbers should be verified by Tann and a letter should go to the Select Board for approval before it is sent out.

7. The runway edge identifier lights repair will start up again in the first week of May

-Due to the weather last year, the repair had to be postponed for this year. Roy Electric, our local electrician, will complete the repair.
-O'Shana asked if Cunningham had an estimate for the cost of repairs. Cunningham replied that last year it was $400 for five hours of work and he will get a new estimate when Roy Electric knows what repairs are needed this year.

8. Mud Season Letter

-It was agreed that Cunningham should incorporate notification of the increases in his mud season letter.

9. Picnic tables need to be readied for summer use

-Maholchic volunteered to help Cunningham with the project.

10. Shingles are falling off the exterior wall of A Hangar

-Because the shingles are so old there is concern about the shingles possibly being asbestos.
-Tann suggested finding out how to identify and deal with the potential problem of asbestos.
-O'Shana volunteered to look at the shingles, take some pictures and get a professional opinion.

11. Post asphalt pile cleanup

-O'Shana has spoken with Cody Burnett, Head of Maintenance about the cleanup. When the weather warms up and the land thaws Burnett will use a york rake to smooth things out. This will be the parking area if we have a Balloon Festival.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANT INTERVIEW

Tann welcomed Cooper Brunet.

Brunet stated that a lot has happened between now and when he was last here. For starters, he got his private pilots license and his instrument rating. He also got his tail wheel and some complex endorsements. He is currently working on his commercial rating. Recently he had a field work and internship class that gave him the opportunity to work with VTrans. Presently VTrans is

trying to implement standardized safety management systems at all the state airports, because generally aviation traffic has increased about 15% in the last year in Vermont. Cooper has been reaching out to all the major players and airports north of here including the EAA and Civil Air Patrol. Last week he was at Rutland and presented to their chapter as well as their flight school and asked them to designate a safety officer. Airports now have a form that they post up in their FPO to enable anonymous reporting of any violations or safety concerns. This allows VTrans to look through the information and commit a safety system that helps to keep the airport safe. Cooper went on to say that he formed an aviation club at his school. There was one in the works last year, but it fell through so Cooper budgeted the money to get a partnership with Lightspeed Aviation which is a big headset company and he secured 30 headsets for all the students in his program as well as enough money to purchase a simulator. It's not FAA approved, but students can at least practice for procedures. So, that's a work in progress right now, but he is very excited for the simulator to be operational. Cooper did all this while he maintained a 3.5 grade average. It was noted that Cooper's letters of recommendation were outstanding.

Cooper talked about how he intends to use any scholarship money that is awarded. He is interested in a Commercial multi rating. He was thinking about doing the multi program out in Nashua, New Hampshire as one possibility. He is up in the air right now about being able to get a multi at Burlington because his school is changing their Part 41 Program. Vermont University was originally partnered with Vermont Flight Academy but is changing to Infinity Flight Group which is a company based out of New Jersey. It is uncertain what the training is going to look like so he wants to secure the chance of getting his Commercial multi rating now. Any scholarship money would go to the rest of his commercial training and a little bit of his CFI credential. Cooper plans to remain at the University of Vermont regardless of any changes.

Cooper stated that his training as been great and has actually gone a lot better since last year. He felt like part 61 was a massive VFA. He had a program deadline of March 16th and there were 3 kids in his program but they all made it. Part 141 has been really nice and streamlined. His Commercial studies have been a blast as he has been flying all over the northeast. He is going to be landing in Haverhill soon. He has been able to go to a lot of places in Massachusetts and he will fly to Niagara Falls next week. He is in Stage Three of his Commercial studies, and there are 4 stages. Scholarship money would go toward Stage 4. His commercial tuition is split up: $25,000 1st semester and $10,000 for summer semester. Cooper's total time to date is 180 hours.

AVIATION SCHOLARSHIP DISCUSSION AND DETERMINATION OF AWARDS
-Discussion included:

- Tann reported that the present amount available is $9,950.48. The gross income for 2025 was $6,055.95. The income for the month of February was $600.93, and for the month of January it was $326.80.
- Scholarship recipients in the past were most successful when they were enrolled in a college or other aviation program.
- We should spend the money when we have good candidates and we should not spend the money when you don't have good candidates. We should hold onto it and let it grow.

- Cooper is a known quantity. He's clearly been successful and Eli is right behind him. They are a year apart. Eli is first in his class, he is from an aviation family and he definitely has potential.
- We most likely will have more opportunities to give to Eli. Cooper is going to pick up his Commercial and his CFI in about another year and a half. We can see how Eli does at Embry-Riddle, and how he develops over the next year.
- The Commissioners agreed to allocate $9,900.00 and retain $50.48.

MOTION #4: Maholchic made a motion, seconded by Bjelobrk to allocate a total of $9,900.00 from the Frank Easton-Dean Memorial Airport Scholarship Fund income balance and award two-thirds to Cooper Brunet and one-third to Eli Vasconcelos.
Voice Vote: All in favor, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR 2026
The Airport Zoning Commission Rules Of Procedure were reviewed and the following changes were made:

-Added: Page 1
The Mission Statement

-Amended:

2026 Members	Term
Chair, Susie Tann	2027
Vice Chair, Matthew Bjelobrk	2027
Select Board ex officio, Rod O'Shana	
Member, Mark Maholchic	2027
Airport Manager, Dennis Cunningham	

-Added: Page 3 Article III MEMBERSHIP, A, 2
Members of the Commission may also serve on any other municipal board or commission, provided that such multiple membership does not result in two AZC members serving on the same board or commission, RSA 673:7,I.

-Added: Page 3 Article III MEMBERSHIP, C, 2
The chairperson of the AZC shall advise the Select Board that priority shall be given to alternate members, RSA 673:11.

-Added: Page 7 Article VIII OPERATING FUNDS
Funds for the conduct of business of the Commission shall come from the revenues of the Town of Haverhill and from any other available sources as determined by the Town of Haverhill Select Board, RSA 673:16.

-Additional discussion:
- Under OPERATING FUNDS the Rules of Procedure state, "Per Rod, Acting TA, there are no available funds for the AZC."

- O'Shana clarified this statement by saying that the town takes in taxes that go to the Town. What should go into the airport fund is the rent money and fuel.
- O'Shana stated that Mr. Dick Guy recently donated $500 to the airport and in a conversation with Bridget, Town Finance Administrator he told her to hold onto it because the Town administration has to figure out what to do with the donated money. The sewer pump station is an enterprise fund and it has streams. Woodsville runs one checkbook, but they have revenue streams that feed in and out of that one checkbook based on lines of accounting.
- O'Shana stated that whatever money the airport makes in the future should go into a separate account so that the residents can recognize a stand alone airport account. O'Shana doesn't want it mudded into the general fund but rather a completely separate. account so it can be identified.
- Presently revenue for the airport goes through the general fund. Everything goes to the general fund because the airport runs in a negative. It goes through specific lines of accounting to show revenues or expenses.
- The Commissioners thanked Mr. Guy and Tann asked if he had any thoughts on how he wanted his donation spent? Guy responded, "The operational income." Guy went on to say that the Town of Haverhill signed a formal agreement with the FAA, and it stated how the funds were supposed to be handled. It was a long time ago. O'Shana replied that he will look for evidence of this agreement.

MOTION #5: Tann asked for a motion to approve the Rules of Procedure for 2026 as amended. Vice Chair Bjelobrk made the motion, seconded by Maholchic.
Voice Vote: All in favor, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Tann asked if there was any other business or comments.

ADJOURN
MOTION #6: Bjelobrk made the motion, seconded by Maholchic, to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 PM.
Voice Vote: All in favor, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 5:00 PM at the JRMorrill Building.

Respectfully submitted,
Susie Tann
AZC Chairperson