

October 8, 2025

Supervisor Horr opened the special meeting at 5:00pm. Rollcall was taken, and Councilperson Bacon, Luce, and Supervisor Horr were present. Absent were Councilperson Infantino, and Colella.

Guests included: Alexander Moore, Jim Peters, Damon Flick, Bryan Metler, Gerald Welch, Jr., Ann Lafford, Rick Lafford, Craig Phelps, Brian Woodhams, Aimee Zimmer, and Gene Moffat.

Pledge to the flag led by Councilperson Bacon.

Supervisor Horr stated made the public aware that the reason for this special meeting was for an update on the airport. Councilperson Bacon stated that he had meeting along with Rick Lafford with the FAA on October 2, 2025. The meeting was in response to a letter received from the FAA saying that there will be no funding for the coming years until the town decides on future plans for the airport.

Ann Lafford asked what items they wanted to address. Councilperson Bacon stated there were four items they requested in the letter. 1. FAA reviews of the NOTAM system shows that the airport has not issued NOTAM's for runway closures for the month of September; 2. The Town has requested information on airport closure procedures and to advise on this status; 3. The FAA asked for the status of tree obstruction adjacent to runway 32, including pictures, diagrams, and surveys; 4. The FAA asked for the status of the Town and LMC negotiations regarding the potential solutions to relocate crane operation. They wanted a response within 15 days, and Supervisor Horr asked for and was granted an extension until the end of October.

Since sending a letter to LMC regarding our potential new zoning laws, The Town has received four FOIL requests from LMC. Negotiations are continuing with LMC, but all suggestions and solutions have been rejected so far. These suggestions included moving their crane operations to a different part of the facility that would not impede the direct flight path, and a different type of crane they could use for operations. They say that changing any part of how they handle materials would severely impact their operations. LMC will fight for why the community needs LMC more than the airport. LMC has stated to Supervisor Horr that they are preparing to provide information to the Community on the negative financial impact the airport has on the Town Budget vs. the positive impact LMC has on the community.

Supervisor Horr is working on financial feasibility of the airport. If the airport were to close, the town would have to pay back a portion of DOT Funding, and Federal Grant Funding. Supervisor Horr is trying to estimate what the impact and liability would be on the town.

The five-year plan for the airport is still being worked on. The local share of projects planned for the next five years would be approximately \$200,000-\$300,000. That would be to do crack repair and resealing of the runway. Eventually the runway would have to be dug up and resurfaced with the town share of that project estimated at \$700,000-\$1,000,000.

Supervisor Horr's short term plan would be to postpone the public hearing that was set for October 21, 2025, regarding the changes to our current zoning law. We need to gather more information and produce more solid financial numbers. Supervisor Horr would like to produce a financial plan to present to everyone. He would also like to make sure we are taking all the steps necessary to amend the zoning law.

Supervisor Horr asked if there were any questions from anyone in attendance. A question was asked What would the Town do if they closed the airport? Supervisor Horr stated that they would sell it and try to get enough money to pay off the liability that the Town currently owes. Supervisor Horr is still trying to estimate that liability. Councilperson Bacon stated that the FAA makes the final determination whether you close an airport or not, and if you

sell it, the Town does not get to keep the money. The money goes back to the FAA. Selling it may not be the best option.

Brian Woohams asked if the Town made any money on the NYS Festival of Balloons, or the Tractor Pull. The Town did not make any money from the festival or tractor pull. Supervisor Horr did state that he had been approached by the company that expressed interest 2 years ago that wanted to do a balloon festival at the airport. They gave up 2 years ago as they faced pushbacks from the community. They are interested again but will not do it on Labor Day weekend.

Rick Lafford gave a brief history on the Fixed Based Operator at the airport. LMC leased the airport from the town for the past 8-10 years for \$2400 per year. All fuel sales and hangar rental fees went to LMC during that time. During that time LMC did little to no maintenance. C&S was the engineering firm for the town at that time. C&S should have told the town every time they took a grant, there should be zoning in place to protect the airspace around the airport. While LMC were the Fixed Based Operators they were building their heavy steel business. During this time, they began using the cranes for the first time off the end of the runway. To anybody's knowledge they did not ask for any permits from the town to use cranes in this airspace.

Rick Lafford also stated that the town was misled by their engineering firm at the time and did not need to do some of the things that the town was given grant money for. The biggest one that was not needed was to shorten the runway and move the taxiway.

Councilperson Bacon stated again that they are looking into what grant assurances would have to be paid back if the airport were to close. He stated that we can pass strict zoning laws that would make the pilots and airport supporters happy, but it will not make LMC happy.

Ann Lafford asked if LMC was following the current zoning law. Did they file for permits accordingly? To the best of the Supervisors' knowledge, they have not. Councilperson Bacon suggested the Town hire an aviation attorney to help guide the town properly. Whatever decision is made about the airport, the town needs proper and more expert guidance than the four board members and supervisor.

Councilperson Bacon stated that if we do not adopt any zoning changes, it will make LMC happy but will not make the pilots happy. He also stated that the community may not be aware that the airport costs the town about \$50,000 per year to operate.

Rick Lafford mentioned that the point he was trying to make is that C&S engineering and LMC did not do things to bring income into the airport. There are things that could be done to generate more income at the airport, and the biggest thing for income at the airport is hangar rental.

Councilperson Bacon stated that building a new hangar would be a great idea for revenue, but unfortunately the town would need FAA support and money to do that, which puts the town on the hook for more grant assurance pay back for another 20 years.

Brian Woodhams stated the LMC is a business and by all definition the airport is a business. LMC cannot do something to impede the airport, and they are. They are closing the airport on a regular basis due to crane usage.

John Loungil stated that there are cost effective options due to the size of the contract that LMC has. They are choosing to not entertain any ideas that have been presented.

Rick Lafford stated that the town has been very good with being transparent with LMC and letting them know this is an issue and needs to be rectified.

John Loungil stated that they could sell the cranes that they have and buy shorter gantry cranes to solve the problem. He feels that LMC will continue operating the way they have if the town does not push back on them.

Supervisor Horr stated that there have been talks about redoing the runway that was closed and that way if the LMC is using the cranes only one runway would be closed, and the airport could still operate. This would be the perfect solution, but it comes with cost. This would also be another liability for the town down the road if the airport were too close. There are many things that need to be looked at and there is more work to be done before any decisions can be made.

John Longuil asked if maybe the town could try to get financial commitment from donors to go back to LMC and say the town would help subsidize buying a new crane as a short-term solution so the airport would not have to shut down on a regular basis, and we can begin applying for grants again from the FAA.

When Foster Wheeler operated, they did not have this issue because the area that they were moving materials was not off the approach and departure end of the runway. It was off to one side. That is what was offered to LMC as a solution, but they said it would not be convenient. They should be able to handle the materials in another area of their yard.

Supervisor Horr stated that LMC did state if they moved the area where they handle the materials, it would cut into their competitive advantage and make them equal to other competitors. LMC's handling of materials makes them cheaper than their nearest competitor. Changing how they operate would alter that competitive advantage. LMC is also adamant that a gantry crane would not be feasible for their operations.

Supervisor Horr does not want to hurt LMC operations, as they are one of the bigger employers in the area. They are growing and looking to hire more workers. Supervisor Horr does not want to push LMC out and have them move to another location. The pilots felt that it would be too costly for LMC to move their operations, and they would not relocate.

Councilperson Bacon asked when the FOIL requests that LMC turned in were due. The town has twenty business days to get the requested documents to them. October 14th would be when the first ones are due. We can ask for a time extension if needed to give us another 20 days.

Supervisor Horr is willing to work with everyone on a solution to this problem but needs to make sure the town is taking the proper steps to do so.

Ann Lafford asked who was going to be responsible for making LMC abide by the current Town and FAA zoning laws and regulations. If they are not in compliance, they need to be held accountable.

The board and Supervisor will be gathering information to answer all of these questions and to make the best decisions going forward to try and mitigate financial risk for all involved.

A motion by Councilperson Luce and a second by Bacon to cancel the public meeting regarding local law #2 regarding airport zoning that was scheduled for October 21, 2025, and postpone any action on Airport Zoning for 45 days.

Rollcall vote: AYES: Councilperson Bacon, Luce, and Supervisor Horr

NOES: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 3 TO 0

There was a brief discussion on holding a balloon festival next year at the airport, not to be held on Labor Day Weekend. It was decided that we would not commit to it at this time but would give the approval to go ahead and explore it further.

At 6:20 PM a motion by Councilperson Bacon and a second by Luce to enter into Executive Session to discuss an employee issue. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

At 6:30 a motion by Councilperson Bacon and a second by Luce to come out of executive session with no action taken. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

A motion by Councilperson Luce and a second by Bacon to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 6:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Tyler
Town Clerk/Tax Collector