

New Smyrna Beach City Commission Meeting
Jan. 22, 2019

1. The City Commission voted 5-0 to approve updates to the New Smyrna Beach Municipal Airport Master Plan and Airport Layout Plan, to move forward with nearly \$62 million in potential airport improvements over the next 20 years.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) still has to approve the master plan, and the city's Airport Fund would have to provide a share of funding for improvements. New Smyrna Beach's airport began as a grass strip, and was greatly expanded when the U.S. Navy acquired it and turned it into a military airfield in 1942. The Navy returned the airport to city ownership in 1947, with four intersecting runways. Only three of those runways are operational today. Runway 11-29 is the primary runway, at 4,319 feet long and 75 feet wide. Its pavement and nonprecision markings are in good condition. Runway 7-25 is 5,000 feet long and 75 feet wide, and is considered the secondary runway. Its pavement and visual markings also are in good condition. The remaining runway, designated 2-20, is 4,000 feet long and 75 feet wide. This runway's pavement and markings are considered to be in fair to poor condition.

In 2015, New Smyrna Beach hired a consultant to develop an update to the Airport Master Plan. FAA requires airports that receive federal grant money to do periodic reviews of their future development plans and determine if modifications need to be made to those facilities. Also, many changes have occurred at the Municipal Airport over the past several years. Those, plus changes in the aviation industry, led city officials to decide they needed to reassess the airport's expected growth and its long-term capital improvement needs.

With that in mind, the city's Airport Advisory Board and the Airport Plan consultant have reviewed potential changes to the airport and held public meetings to hear what members of the aviation community thought about the issues.

On Jan. 22, it was the City Commission's turn to have a public hearing seeking comments about future airport improvements. The work would be done in three phases, according to information in the City Commission agenda: Phase 1 would extend until 2022, and cost more than \$20 million. The second phase would run from 2023 to 2028 and cost over \$15 million. It would include extending Runway 11-29 to 5,400 feet, which will allow more medium-sized, corporate-type jets to use the Municipal Airport. Phase 3 will be accomplished between 2029 and 2035 and cost a little more than \$26 million.

Proposed airport enhancements also include repairs to hangars, improving taxiways, shortening Runway 7-25 and considering an extension of Runway 2-20. Changes presented in the airport's future plans are intended to address its anticipated growth and air traffic, as well as support the city's growth. Currently, the airport handles 25,000 pilots and passengers per year, and is ranked as about the second busiest of 26 comparable airports in Florida.

2. City Commissioners unanimously supported an ordinance establishing a new No Wake Zone on the Indian River from Mile Marker 43 at the north end of Yacht Club Island to the southern city limits of New Smyrna Beach.

The city's approval is just the first step in obtaining the new slow speed zone, however. New Smyrna Beach has asked the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to grant the request as well.

The city took this step because the section of river considered for the new No Wake Zone passes close to boats docked along the shoreline of Yacht Club Island. It intersects smaller bodies of water, streams and tributaries in the area that are navigable by canoes, kayaks, and other small watercraft. These smaller crafts are easily endangered by heavy wakes from larger vessels.

3. The City Commission appointed several citizens to the Turnbull Creek Land Preservation Committee.

Members will serve a six-month term. They were chosen for their interest in environmental issues, historic preservation, wildlife, biology, botany and/or water quality. The Committee will review information relating to the evaluation of which properties in the Turnbull Creek watershed are eligible for purchase with funds from the general obligation bond issue that voters approved in November 2018. Bond monies will go toward buying and preserving environmentally significant lands around Turnbull Creek.

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