



# CITY OF CONCORD

*New Hampshire's Main Street™*

## REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Carlos P. Baía, Deputy City Manager-Development

**DATE:** January 31, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Use of Concord Municipal Airport for Aerobatic Practice

### **Recommendation**

Accept this report to authorize the use of the Concord Municipal Airport for limited aerobatic flight practice.

### **Background**

Aerobatics entail stunts performed in flight with aircraft or gliders. Pilots that pursue this type of activity in our region typically do so in the airspace around the Hopkinton Dam. At the Airport Advisory Committee's December 17, 2019 meeting, the City's Fixed Base Operator and Airport Manager, David Rolla with Concord Aviation Services, proposed the use of the airport for this activity. Mr. Rolla felt that this activity would be better suited for the Concord Airport as it would provide a runway in close proximity. He also felt that it would generate additional business for the airport.

The aerobatic area is a three dimensional box of airspace that would be concentrated over the Concord Airport. Only the Airport Manager can "open" and "close" that box. The Manager would file "Notices to Airmen," NOTAMs, with the FAA at least 72 hours before advising the flying community of the upcoming aerobatic practice. Mr. Rolla, per the FAA, would ultimately be responsible for everything that happens during the time the "box" is open for this activity.

Per Mr. Rolla, the aerobatic "box" would only be open a maximum of 2 hours per session approximately 6-7 times per year.

The City's insurer did not have an issue with this practice if conducted under the auspices of the proper FAA authorizations.

## **Discussion**

The Airport Advisory Committee generally supported Mr. Rolla's proposal. However, one point of discussion was the fact that when the "box" for the aerobatic practice is open, departing or arriving fixed-wing flight traffic to the airport is diverted away from the box thus taking planes over a different flight path than usual.

The Committee expressed concern over this practice's impact on residents who currently don't have fixed wing planes fly directly over their homes. In fact, a recent trial run of the aerobatic "box" led to a resident complaint. The Committee felt it was important for Mr. Rolla to ensure that the public is well-informed and educated about this practice prior to it taking place.

Ultimately, the Committee voted to recommend Council authorization under the following conditions:

- 1) The current authorization from FAA for aerobatic activity will expire in 2 years. Mr. Rolla shall seek permission from the Airport Advisory Committee prior to re-application.
- 2) Mr. Rolla will provide City Administration and the Airport Advisory Committee with notice of any aerobatic exercises, at least, one week prior to it taking place.
- 3) All inquiries regarding the aerobatic exercise will be directed to Mr. Rolla.