

[Response to Report by Dr. Mike Jones, Swelbar-Zhong Consultancy, Audit of the Governance and Operations of the Logan/Cache Valley Airport \(LGU\)](#)

On behalf of the Airport Authority Board we appreciate Dr. Jones' report and the extensive effort of interviews and authorship required to put it together. We will be posting a complete copy of the report and this response on the County website following this meeting.

We acknowledge there are many things we can do to improve LGU, both financially and operationally, and that is one reason we commissioned this report. We were aware of some of the issues raised by Dr. Jones, but wanted an outside aviation professional's perspective that could potentially confirm our thoughts and even identify issues we might not be seeing. Dr. Jones came highly recommended and provides consulting services to many airports and we felt he could provide us with the insight we were looking for. Historically, when weighing the options of either expanding service levels or limiting expenditures, the priority of the airport board has been to limit expenditures.

We'd like to share the good news - that we have always balanced the airport financial budget at LGU and currently have reserve funds. In direct contrast to this, a recent legislative audit report from April, 2024 finds Ogden City has been operating their airport at a loss for more than a decade, amounting to \$15M of taxpayer funds to cover expenditures.

As we've reviewed the report findings and recommendations over the past few weeks, there are many good recommendations in the report which are actionable, some fairly quickly, others which may take considerable time and effort. We look forward to engaging with airport users as we move forward with the process of evaluating the recommendations and their impact upon the airport users. There are some items where we disagree with Dr. Jones' assessment or recommendations. We have created an Executive Committee and a Lease/Logistics Committee, and recommend forming a Safety Committee, including airport users, to address the appropriate items in the report. The Executive Committee has already begun an initial conversation with Utah State University, which could be impacted in a significant way if certain of the recommendations are implemented, and will continue to reach out to other airport users on these topics. John Kerr and Holly Daines also met with Senator Chris Wilson to make him aware of some of the recommendations and possible needs at LGU.

In light of the report, the Executive Committee has a list of recommendations to the full Board for consideration, but in the interest of time we will distribute it in writing.

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Audit of the Governance and Operations of the Logan/Cache Valley Airport  
(LGU)

July 11, 2024

Prepared by Executive Committee Members:

John Kerr, Chair

Brett Hugie, Vice Chair

Holly Daines

Recommendations 1, 2 and 3 regarding governance. We suggest this be on the agenda for the next Airport Authority Board meeting for a Workshop (public discussion among board members) and that Board members schedule a future Public Hearing to receive input on the topic. Serious consideration should be given to Dr. Jones' recommendation to change the governance of the airport. This is a thorny issue, and may take several months for the full Board to determine an appropriate plan for the future. If a plan to change the governance structure were to be adopted, the new group would address implementing appropriate recommendations as they see fit.

Recommendations 4-9 regarding management, goals, vision, mission statement and milestones. The governing board should begin to address these items.

Recommendation 10, regarding having the Airport Authority meet at the airport. The board should immediately work toward implementing this recommendation.

Recommendations 11-12 regarding revamping ground leases and discussing airport-owned hangars. Lease/Logistics Committee members Karl Ward, Jeannie Simmonds and Ryan Snow, with the assistance of County Attorney Taylor Sorenson, have prepared a new draft for board consideration.

Recommendations 13-14 regarding support of USU's flight school and discussions on the cost of Part 139 Funding. Committee members John Kerr, Brett Hugie and Holly Daines have already had initial conversations with Utah State University administration, and will continue that dialogue.

Recommendation 15 to initiate a landing fee program. This item, i.e. a potential contract with Vector to provide the billing service to collect landing fees, was already under discussion prior to Dr. Jones' report. We recommend discussing his proposed landing fee schedule at the next public airport meeting as a Workshop item (discussion among board members/staff), then have a Public Hearing at the following meeting to allow for input from airport users. After the Public Hearing,

the board can then make a decision on whether to implement a landing fee, what those fees will be and if approved, begin implementing a contract with Vector. If approved, we recommend fees for the flight schools be implemented January 1, 2025. The Board may wish to consider implementing fees for other users before that date.

Recommendation 16-17 and 24 regarding ramp and overnight fees, fuel revenues and potential upgrades. John Kerr has already reached out to Leading Edge (the airport FBO) to begin a conversation about these topics

Recommendations 18-20 and 25 regarding infrastructure repairs, taxiway, lighting and a control tower. One of the board subcommittees will meet in the next few weeks with Armstrong, our Master Plan consulting engineers, to assess the recommendations, what is already planned as part of the capital plan, what needs to be prioritized and whether any additional funding might be available. The Board will also need to consider the recommendations of the FAA Part 139 Inspection which was conducted June 24-26.

Recommendations 21-22 regarding airport security and the self-storage problem at the airport.

We recommend the airport board direct the airport manager within the next two months to:

1) obtain two bids for upgrading security at the entrance gate and bring that information back to the board;

2) check with other airports to see if there are training materials for a driver training program which LGU could utilize and come back to the board with a recommendation on how to implement such a program;

3) provide a list of recommendations to the board to update our policies on hangar storage and a proposal on when to begin inspections to enforce said policy. This is a challenge for every airport in the country and the FAA, who has offered 3 different guidelines in the past 5 years. We do have a formal inspection program in connection with the fire marshal. Informally, the manager does a cursory inspection whenever he happens upon an open hangar. The general guideline is evidence of "aviation use" as called for in the lease. We need to encourage lessees to bring themselves into compliance.

Recommendation 23 regarding the radio and radar issues. Changing the frequency is relatively easy, but those involved are of the opinion that the congestion would immediately migrate to the new frequency. Separate frequencies for USU and the rest of the world would create confusion. This needs to be discussed with airport users as soon as possible to determine the best course forward.

Recommendation 24 (referred to above.)

Recommendation 25 regarding Highway Access. Airport Road, which is 2500 North, is a UDOT road from Main Street to 1000 West (SR252). The County and Logan City have a

quarterly meeting with UDOT and we will bring this to their attention at our next meeting. Holly Daines will ask the Logan City public works department to place traffic counters to get data on usage at that intersection.

Recommendation 25 regarding a control tower. This is very expensive, aspirational and long term. We will discuss with Armstrong the system Dr. Jones mentioned called a “contract tower” which is provided by the FAA. Five years ago, LGU did not qualify for a tower based on usage, so that demonstrates the increase in airport usage.

Recommendation 26 to create a “USU Aviation Campus.” We agree with Dr. Jones’ assessment that the USU Aviation program is a real asset, and we will continue discussions with the flight school and USU administration.

Recommendation 27 to market the airport. We will consider Dr. Jones’ suggestions, but we also acknowledge that he may not be aware of some of the excellent events that our airport users already sponsor, like “Women in Aviation Day,” fly-ins, open houses, training events, and 5K runs.

Recommendation 28 to build a vertiport. This idea can be explored with UDOT, Utah State University, Senator Wilson, and our local EP systems.

Recommendation 29 a visionary master plan. We will have discussions with Armstrong to see if adjustments should be made to the scope of the current in-progress master plan.

Recommendation 30 is to become an engine for aerospace innovation. We will have the airport board members reach out to Shawn Milne, Economic Development Director for BRAG (who obtained the grant to hire Dr. Jones, and we thank him for that) and to Kirk Jensen, Logan City Economic Development Director for assistance with follow up.

We appreciate all the time and effort Dr. Jones put into this report, and we have much to ponder about a direction going forward. As always – and as Dr. Jones mentioned – finding the funding for significant improvements is the biggest challenge. We invite you to join us as we go through the process of improving LGU one step at a time.

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