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Do-over of airport hearing needed

FOE OF RUNWAY PROJECT NOTIFIES COUNTY OF LACK OF LEGAL NOTICE

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November 04, 2014 7:48 pm • By Don Lehman (9) Comments

QUEENSBURY -- Warren County officials will have to hold a second public hearing on the environmental assessment report on a proposed county airport runway extension after foes of the project discovered there wasn't proper public notice of last month's hearing.

The Oct. 23 hearing at Queensbury Town Hall lasted for nearly four hours and was supposed to focus on a "draft environmental assessment" of the proposed runway extension. Instead, opponents of the project used it as another opportunity to voice concerns about the project.

Days after the hearing, Queensbury engineer Travis Whitehead — who attended the hearing — notified the county that he was unable to locate the legal notice that was required to be published in The Post-Star to advise the public of the hearing.

Despite the fact 90 or so people attended the hearing, and no one who wanted to attend has indicated they weren't aware of it, the county is obligated to hold the hearing again.

Whitehead said the rules have to be followed, and he pointed out having to re-do the hearing will not cost the county any money.

Whitehead opposes the extension. He gave a presentation at the hearing that indicated the 1,000-foot extension to the main runway is flawed, and the $8 million extension is not necessary based on airport usage.

"That's the same kind of game they're playing, because they know how to use all of the loopholes," Whitehead said.

Warrensburg Supervisor Kevin Geraghty, chairman of the county Board of Supervisors, said the engineering firm hired by the county for the airport assessment, C & S Companies of Syracuse, neglected to place the legal ad as required.

The company will foot the bill for any additional expenses, and will ensure proper notice of the additional hearing is made, he said.

"It wasn't done intentionally. It was an oversight," Geraghty said. "It's unfortunate we have to do it, but we have to do it right."

Geraghty pointed out that the meeting was publicized on the county website and in a news item that was published by The Post-Star.

"Is it going to change anything? I don't think so. Maybe we'll get three or four more people," Geraghty said.

The comments made by people who attended the Oct. 23 hearing will be entered into the public record for the additional hearing.

No date has been set.

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Tags Travis Whitehead, Kevin Geraghty, Queensbury, Warren County, Airport, Runway, Hearing

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