



SAUGEEN MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

September 5, 2023

His Worship Chris Peabody
Mayor of the Municipality of Brockton
100 Scott Street
Walkerton, Ontario N0G 2V0

Dear Mr. Mayor: *Chris*

At a recent Saugeen Municipal Airport Commission meeting, we discussed comments attributed to you in the local paper a few weeks ago and I would like to provide clarification on the following points.

1. With respect to your comments on the deficit, please be advised that the airport deficit arose from the unanticipated purchase a fuel pedestal mandated by Measurements Canada as well as legal fees.
2. The legal fees evolved from two issues. First, the Saugeen Municipal Airport Commission received a workplace harassment complaint and under the Canada Labour Code had no choice but to hire a third party to investigate the complaint. Secondly, there was an ongoing dispute with a pilot who refused to sign our Access Agreement as required by the SMA Rules and Regulations and consequently he was denied access. Eventually the pilot agreed and signed the Agreement.
3. It was disappointing to read that we can "expect further freezes" from Brockton. West Grey and Hanover supported a budgetary increase in 2023 but because of the funding formula, they had no choice but to lower their 2023 increases as a result of Brockton's decision.

We have made significant progress in addressing the 2022 deficit. Ms. Connie Sancj, our fundraising co-chair, informed the Commission that \$39,000 has been pledged so far, with \$18,000 having been deposited in the fund. This year, we witnessed the emergence of two successful businesses at the airport: the Aviation Flight School and the Landing Gear Restaurant which now provide employment for four people. In my opinion, we have a jewel just waiting to unleash its economic development potential. Economic development staff from our three municipalities as well as Bruce and Grey counties recently attended a visioning exercise where they expressed that same optimistic outlook.

SMA pilots sponsored our recent Kids Fly event on Saturday August 26, attended by 123 kids and their parents. Lisa Thompson, M.P.P. also attended and was most impressed with the terminal and the number of hangars she visited at the airport. She endorsed our strategic approach on economic development and tourism and requested that we invite economic development staff from Huron County to join the initiative. We will follow up on her suggestion.

Hopefully you will reconsider your position on the airport and join us as we leverage this asset to promote economic development and tourism opportunities for the entire region.

Chris, as always please contact me if you have any questions or require information on the operational status of the airport.

Respectfully,

Dave Hocking
Chair
Saugeen Municipal Airport Commission