



# City of Lanett

## Meeting Minutes City Council

401 N. Lanier Ave.  
Lanett, AL 36863

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Tuesday, January 2, 2024,

5:00 PM

Lanett City Hall

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### **Work Session -**

The City Council of the City of Lanett, Alabama, met on Tuesday, January 2, 2024, at the Lanett City Hall at 5:00 P.M.

Council members present were Tony Malone, Tamalita Autry, and Tifton Dobbs. Mayor Jamie Heard presided over the meeting, opened the work session, and welcomed everyone.

Mayor Heard started the meeting off by reminding everyone that Airport Manager Richard Carter has resigned but has volunteered to work part-time until the position is filled because the fuel must be checked daily. He asked if the Council wanted to fill the position right now, go with an FBO or choose other options.

Dobbs stated that we met in December with Carter, and we do not want to have a gap in operations and make sure we are consistent about FAA policies. He felt that if we went with an FBO that would be more costly. He stated that his suggestion would be to retain Carter on a part time basis. Heard stated that currently Carter was the only person certified to check the fuel. Malone stated that he felt it is essential to bring in an FBO. He feels that Carter needs training and the flight school is a liability. He wants to get an FBO asap. He asked Chris Busby, Executive Director of the Development Authority if he had spoken with anyone from FBO. Busby stated no, but he did make a call to GMC for assistance but was waiting for a return call. Autry asked what the timeline was for an FBO? Malone stated 6 months to a year. Autry stated that she was leaning towards an FBO. Heard stated that we are doing away with the current Airport committee and forming a new committee consisting of people more knowledgeable about airports. Mayor Heard stated that because of certifications, regardless of which route we went there would still be some type of gap. He stated that he would also reach out to councilmembers Tucker and Thomas for their comments.

Others contributing to the conversation were:

Pilot and retired military professional Brad Lynn who stated that an FBO would be there to make money. He stated that the gas price at the airport is the same as Lagrange but less than Auburn and pilots would come to Lanett and the city would benefit from it.

Mike Ballard, a tenant at the airport stated the importance of checking the fuel at the airport. He reminded everyone that under the previous administration, water was in

the tank and almost caused an accident. He also stated that there is a demand for hangars and gas at airports. He mentioned that some local airports currently have a waiting list. He also stated that some cities have an advisory board.

Local resident Scott Huguley mentioned that ITC operated two corporate airplanes that reported to him for 25 years out of Lagrange. ITC currently have planes and might be willing to locate here as well as John Souls Food. He said that an FBO is like a gas station with big money potential. He stated that if you outsource to an FBO they keep most of the profits because they are operating a business with lots of potential. You must hold them to a contract and inspect what you expect so we would need someone from the city to do so. He said that the main thing is to keep the airport open. Otherwise, we may be liable for returning the funds or we may not be able to get another bond.

Dobbs stated that we need the right information to operate, therefore we need to visit some other airports and examine their operations. Retired Executive Director of the Development Authority, Valerie Gray stated that she knew some pilots and could arrange for the council to visit some places such as Tuskegee, Ozark, and Enterprise, who all operate a successful airport. She stated that she would be happy to set up appointments for us.

Gray stated that it is especially important that we have someone there to welcome people to our community. She said that if someone from the CCDA gives advice to visitors at the airport then that is a liability. We need a city employee there.

Mayor Heard asked for a motion to adjourn, which was given by Malone and seconded by Dobbs. Heard stated that there being no further business to come before this council the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Attest:

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Jamie Heard, Mayor

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Deborah Gilbert, City Clerk/Treasurer