

HATS (Hanscom Area Towns Committee)
Thursday, February 25, 2010, 7:30 PM at the Lincoln Town offices

Attending: Mike Rosenberg - Bedford Selectman, Bob Dominitz – Lincoln Planning, Richard Canale – Lexington Planning, Lisa Mustapich – Bedford Planning, Col David Orr – HAFB 66ABW/CC, Tim Higgins – Lincoln Town Administrator, William Moonan – Bedford citizen, Nancy Nelson – Minute Man National Historical Park, Dorothy Steele – Massport

Discussion w/Col Orr RE: Update on Base Mission, Civilian Employment Opportunities, Housing. Col. Orr is finishing his second year as the wing commander. This was a busy week for the base. On Feb. 25 twelve soldiers were welcomed home from deployment. There was also an African American Heritage luncheon, and 10 enlisted members were promoted. The colonel mentioned union issues with the fire department. The 12 member shifts work 48 hours on. There are 40 assigned to the fire house. They provide mutual aid and support for not only the base, but also Massport and area towns.

The *Boston Globe/Business Journal* listed HAFB as 39th in the top 100 best places to work in 2009. Hanscom was 82nd in 2008. The base is a major employer in the state, eighth in big businesses. There are 10,000 employed on base. The base is rolling out the Acquisition Excellence Program, hiring 1,000 civilians over the next three years. There will be 3,000 career transactions, meaning some contractors or military will become DoD civilians. Most of the jobs will be professional. The website is escarreers.com.

The Massachusetts Joint National Guard HQ will break ground in the spring. The building will be finished by early 2011. The HQ will house 400 weekend drillers, and 100 full-time employees. The MJNG will come from Milford, led by MG Carter. The Lexington and Concord armories will remain open. There are 5,000 deployed from the area Army National Guard units. April 2 is the ribbon cutting for the new acquisition building, which will house 130 employees. Phase 2 seeks additional congressional support.

The base provides \$4.8 billion in economic impact, which includes salaries and programs. Contractors are not included in these figures. There are approximately 3,000 contractor employees affiliated with HAFB. The new housing project by Hunt Pinnacle is proceeding. There are 270 new homes being built, for a total of 735 units by August 2011. The base has an occupancy rate of 83%. Five hundred active families live on base. The private developer hopes to entice 150 active military to move onto the base. In addition to HAFB, the developer is also building base housing in Arizona, Florida and Georgia. The other bases are less costly to build, but Massachusetts pays the highest housing allowance, so it's the most profitable for the developer. The base is not meeting occupancy rates so the base has begun to open the tiered eligible tenant list. There are seven steps in the tiered list. There are currently nine civilian families living on base. Retirees are also eligible. Civilian DOD workers and retirees already have access to the base. For security reasons, the base does not want to open housing to the general public. Civilians who live on base get a 30-year lease. Lincoln provides support to the on-base schools. The high school students attend Bedford. Bedford and Lincoln are seeking state aid to provide additional funding. The school partnership has existed for 45 years. Lincoln gets no property tax for the base residents.

Col. Orr said 160 active families live in Bedford, only a few in Lincoln, 51 in Lexington, and 38 in Concord. The base provides support to the VA; the Band of Liberty performs throughout the area. The colonel promised that he would submit the finished commuter study; he realizes the Hartwell

Avenue Corridor traffic is being reviewed. To improve traffic flow near the base, the colonel streamlined the Vandenberg search pit and gate ID check process. He noted there have been no recent complaints about the Route 2A/access road intersection. Lexington is looking at Hartwell Avenue transportation issues. Perhaps a round-about will replace the jughandle. Lexington wants to reduce traffic on Wood Street and add bike lanes to Hartwell Avenue. The base and Lincoln Laboratories are not in the development district, but all benefit from smoother traffic in the area. HAFB has not looked at opening the Airport Road gate in Lexington. The traffic has been flowing well through Vandenberg because of the improvements to entry procedures. The fence between the National Park and HAFB is not perfectly located on the boundaries. The two organizations may look at correcting this in future.

HFAC meeting: The Feb. 16 meeting was cancelled. At the March meeting the "State of Hanscom" Airport will be presented. Topics include vegetation management, the security fence in Bedford and the civil air terminal HVAC and roof repairs. Bedford Town Manager Richard Reed is working on replacing the noise monitor on DeAngelo Drive. The monitor was damaged by a truck several months ago. The location appears to be the best placement. Massport has no update regarding when the monitor will be up and running. The monitor is very technical and can pinpoint which plane made the noise.

Dorothy confirmed that The Edge sports facility arena is interested in leasing some of the land at the Massport-owned former Air Force trailer park on Hartwell Road in Bedford. Massport at Hanscom provided some support for the charter flights to the Vancouver Olympics.

The next HATS meeting will be March 25. The National Park will be highlighted at the April meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.