

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

DAVID R PLYLER, Chairman
DON MARTIN, Vice Chairman
FLEMING EL-AMIN
TED KAPLAN
RICHARD V. LINVILLE
TONYA D. McDANIEL
GLORIA D. WHISENHUNT



J. DUDLEY WATTS, JR.
County Manager
DAMON SANDERS-PRATT
Deputy County Manager
RONDA D. TATUM
Deputy County Manager
ASHLEIGH M. SLOOP
Clerk to the Board

FORSYTH COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

January 18, 2019

Dr. Vivian H. Burke
Mayor Pro Tempore
Council Member, Northeast Ward
3410 Cumberland Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27105

Re: Wildlife Management – Smith Reynolds Airport

Dr. Burke:

As we discussed on the phone earlier today, Forsyth County is requesting your assistance in regards to wildlife management at Smith Reynolds Airport. Over the past couple years, the deer and turkey population has been increasing at the Airport and it has become a major safety concern. Just a couple months ago a jet was taking off and struck a deer. Fortunately, the pilot was able to abort and no one was hurt. To combat the issue, the County has been communicating with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Wildlife Services. Mr. James Capps, a Wildlife Biologist from their Raleigh office has investigated the issue and is requesting a modification to the existing city code to allow the USDA to use lethal techniques that are not currently allowed. The section of the code which applies is below;

For the purpose of eliminating deer within the boundaries of Smith Reynolds Airport, state and/or federal wildlife officers may discharge a shotgun at least 800 feet from any point on the airport's boundary line. Handguns or rifles shall not be used for the purpose of removing wildlife hazards within the airport's boundaries.

The USDA and the County would like a provision to the city code to allow USDA trained personnel to use suppressed rifles. Mr. Capps advised that they use this lethal technique at other airports and they are successful in controlling the wildlife. All parties involved understand the close proximity of the neighbors and safety would be of high concern. From my understanding, you were instrumental in passing the current city code which has been very helpful over the years. However, the current wildlife population has grown to a point at which a different lethal technique is essential to improve safety and possibly save lives.

Sincerely,

Mark Davidson

Mark R. Davidson, A.A.E.
Airport Director

cc: Dudley Watts, County Manager