



# TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **The East Hampton Town Board Votes To Delay Deactivation of the East Hampton Airport and Activation of the New Private-Use Airport After Receiving Assurances from the FAA**

For the past several months, the Town has had regular communications with the FAA regarding changing the status of the East Hampton Airport from public-use to private-use. On January 20, 2022, the Town Board voted to deactivate the East Hampton Airport and activate a new, private-use airport at the same site that the East Hampton Airport was located. Following this change in status, the Town intends to implement a balanced prior permission required framework. The Town and FAA continue to work cooperatively to complete the deactivation and activation process in a timely and efficient manner, with the shared goal of the Town opening a safe private-use airport in the manner that is least disruptive to aviation.

The Town has on several occasions met with the FAA to discuss logistics regarding the deactivation and activation process. Over the past few weeks, the FAA and the Town have addressed several unique issues raised by the Town's desire to retain an airport with enhanced local control, including Town ownership of all navigational aids in use at the East Hampton Airport; Town control of all communication aids in use at the East Hampton Airport; utilization of a private air traffic control tower at the private-use airport; and a process to facilitate air-to-ground communications at the new private-use airport.

During the most recent meeting, the FAA noted that it expects to have all of its internal processes completed for opening of the new private-use airport, except for introduction of instrument flight procedures, no later than May 19, 2022. Indeed, upon completion of its Aeronautical Study, the FAA anticipates that the air navigation facilities currently available at the East Hampton Airport will be available upon activation, with the caveat that instrument flight procedures may not be immediately available. Specifically, all weather, navigation, and communication aids should be operable and available; the private air traffic control tower will be in place consistent with how and when it has operated in the past; new agreements with TRACON will be entered into; the Town will obtain its own Ground Communication Outlet ("GCO") for real-time communication with air traffic controllers; and the new airport will be available for safe use by operators. Regarding instrument procedures, the Town will work with a qualified third-party vendor that has been approved by the FAA to design and implement Special Use Instrument Procedures. The Town and FAA are optimistic

that the Special Use Instrument Procedures will be available at some point during the 2022 Season. The Town continues to work with the FAA to make this a reality.

The FAA also requested that the Town coincide opening of the new private-use airport with FAA charting cycles. The FAA issues new navigational charts on 28- and 56-day schedules. According to the FAA, the first applicable charting cycle date to occur after the FAA will have all of its internal processes completed for activation of the new private-use airport is May 19, 2022. By coinciding activation with the FAA's charting cycle, it will facilitate clearances to and from the new private-use airport by air traffic controllers, allow flight plans to be filed by pilots, and allow the FAA to circulate notices to air missions and other FAA publications related to the new private-use airport.

Based on the FAA's stated timeline and request that the Town coincide opening with a charting cycle, the Town has decided to postpone deactivation of the East Hampton Airport until 11:59 p.m. on May 17, 2022. The new private-use airport will open at 9:00 a.m. on May 19, 2022. This timeline has been discussed at length with the FAA and the FAA has indicated that it does not foresee any obstacles with the new, private-use airport opening on May 19, 2022. At the meeting between the Town and FAA on February 16, 2022, the FAA agreed that this postponement will enable the FAA to complete internal processes aimed at delivering a safe and solid foundation from which to operate a private-use airport and will also allow for reinstatement of instrument flight rules procedures at the private-use airport as soon as practicable.

The Town has decided to pursue this option in a good faith effort to work cooperatively with the FAA in an attempt to mitigate as many disruptions to aviation as possible. Regarding the progress made by the Town and FAA, Supervisor Van Scoyoc stated that "The Town continues to work cooperatively with the FAA to ensure that the new private-use airport opens with all safety and as many operational capabilities as possible. The Town appreciates the FAA's dedication to addressing novel issues raised by the Town's unique situation in a timely and careful manner." The Town and FAA will continue to work together to address this novel situation.

As the Town has stated publicly in the past, the proposed prior permission required framework that will apply to operations during the 2022 Season at the new private-use airport will be discussed and subject to public comment beginning in early March 2022.