

OST-02-11446

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
SOCKETS

02 OCT 21 PM 12: 00

Email received from: Gerald R. Harrington
Blair County Airport Authority Member

Sent to: Dennis J. DeVany, Chief of the EAS & Domestic Analysis Division, X-53
John McCamant, EAS & Domestic Analysis Division, X-53

Subject: EAS at Altoona, PA

Date sent: September 8, 2002

Dennis & John

I have reviewed the fax for Colgan Air versus Shuttle America.

As a member of the Blair County Airport Authority my views of our selection, preference to use Colgan air has not changed.

I believe that Colgan Air offers the best overall package to the residents and visitors of Blair County.

My reasoning is Shuttle America has recently emerged from bankruptcy, and in the post September 11th era, in which many airlines have either declared or are on the verge of declaring bankruptcy. Since USAir has already declared bankruptcy and that is the airline we work with in this Shuttle Service, I feel Colgan which seems to be on better financial footing than Shuttle America would better serve our needs.

Also, Colgan Air has made it clear and is willing to commit to marketing the airport and its airlines, whereas Shuttle America has not made nor was willing to discuss and commit to any such thing.

Shuttle America is also a sister company of our current carrier Chautauqua Airlines as we all know has never signed a contract, and not acted in the best interest of Blair County or the BC Airport.

Colgan is also in my opinion offered a better schedule and option of flights, as a local business person that does fly from Blair County it has not always been easy to get to my location without leaving a day earlier than needed or driving to Baltimore or Pittsburgh to the current lack of a decent flight schedule.

After meeting personally with representatives of both airlines I am much more comfortable with Colgan, they did not work around issues, answered questions and seemed much more sincere and concerned for the needs of the residents and visitors of Blair County.

I understand an issue raised by local travel agents is the use of a 19 seat aircraft versus the Shuttle America 33 seat aircraft. Being from an aviation family and have flown on many small aircraft I felt that a 19 seat would be uncomfortable and feel cramped, until I actually boarded and sat on one that Colgan Air flew into Blair County to view. I am a rather large person 6-2,250lbs and never felt discomfort on this aircraft.

Colgan Air has agreed to upgrade to the larger aircraft if and when ridership increases. I believe they are sincere in that commitment and feel they will increase ridership from Blair County based

on their commitment to market the airport, something Chautauqua (never did) and Shuttle America will not commit time, money or resources to.

In summing up, I was appointed to the BCAA to help make decisions that benefit the Airport, Residents, Visitors and Businesses of Blair County. I feel that my support of Colgan Air as a replacement carrier is in that best interest.

Thank you for taking the time to review my comments. I hope we soon learn of Colgan Air being named the airline to serve Blair County.

Sincerely,

Gerald R Harrington
Blair County Airport Authority Member