

**MINUTES
CITY OF SAN DIEGO
AIRPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting of October 8, 2013
Experimental Aircraft Association, Brown Field**

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. H. Aldrich (Montgomery Field Aviation Lessee), Tom Dray (Montgomery Field Tower), Chairman Buzz Fink (Special Expertise), Lisa Golden (Otay Mesa Community), Bob Hitchcock (Brown Field Aviation User Group), Rich Martindell (Special Expertise), Vice-Chair Chuck McGill (Montgomery Field Aviation User Group), David Ryan (Brown Field Aviation Lessee)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jackie Ander (Serra Mesa Community) *excused*, Buzz Gibbs (Kearny Mesa Community) *excused*, Scott Hasson (Tierrasanta Community) *excused*

GUESTS PRESENT: Nici Boon, Pete Grootendorst, Bob Johnson, Tom Kelly, James Kennedy, Ron Lee, Tom Ricotta, Kevin Roche, Joe Russo, R. Ryan, Dan Wood

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Cooper, Ernie Gesell, Roy Nail, Wayne Reiter, Mike Tussey

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Fink called the meeting to order at 3:10 P.M. A quorum was present.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the September 10, 2013 regular meeting were approved unanimously, with Ms. Golden abstaining, due to her absence at the meeting.

Chairman Fink noted Mr. Rothrock commented at the last meeting there was no Brown Field representation present. Today, both the tenant and community representatives for Brown Field are present.

3. PUBLIC INPUT

None

Airports Deputy Director Mike Tussey suggested allowing the Brown Field Tower update to occur, out of sequence, to allow the tower manager to return to his duties.

SDM Tower Update – SDM Tower Manager Dan Wood

- Mr. Wood gave a recap of sequestration as it relates to the closure of contract towers. *Brown Field Tower is a contract tower.* When sequestration went into effect earlier this year, SDM Tower was on the initial list of towers to be closed. Various tenants and users submitted letters to the FAA and DOT explaining why the tower should remain open; however, it remained on the closure list. Shortly before the closure occurred, the federal government diverted funding from the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) to fund contract towers through the end of the fiscal year, September 30. There has been no further communication from the FAA or DOT since.

As September 30th and the government shutdown approached, the federal government labeled air traffic controllers as essential employees, without distinguishing between contract and FAA towers. When the partial shutdown occurred, all air traffic controllers remained on duty, which is the condition as it exists today.

When the shutdown ends, it is unknown what will happen with contract towers. The Senate and House have both passed budgets that include funding for federal contract towers. However, the government has been operating via continuing resolutions since 2009, and it is unknown if continuing resolutions account for contract tower funding.

Mr. Tussey commented the City of San Diego submitted a formal response to the FAA Administrator, followed by a lawsuit, or motion to stay, filed with the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. When the decision was made to fund contract towers earlier this year, the lawsuit was dropped. Should the FAA or DOT decide to close the tower once again, the City is prepared to file another lawsuit with the 9th Circuit, contingent on the direction of the Mayor. As Mr. Wood pointed out, communication from the FAA and DOT regarding this matter has been non-existent.

- All of the radios, antennas and wiring associated with the frequencies used by the tower have been upgraded, hopefully resulting in better quality transmissions. 126.5 will not be reinstated as the primary local frequency; it took a year and a half to make that change, so it will not be switched back.
- The tower recently signed a letter of agreement with SOCAL TRACON relating to IFR departures. The Diverse Vector Area for SDM was changed, which previously allowed IFR departures from heading 260 – 320, and now requires IFR departures between heading 280 – 300. This change means the tower cannot clear F/A-18's departing IFR to fly runway heading after takeoff.

Mr. Hitchcock asked why the UHF frequency was changed. Mr. Wood replied the request came from the military 13 years ago to change the frequency to 225.4.

Mr. Tussey asked if the new IFR departure headings will negate the current F/A-18 noise abatement departure procedure, and what percentage of F/A-18 departures are VFR. Mr. Wood replied the new Diverse Vector Area applies only to IFR departures. If the F/A-18's depart VFR, they can use runway heading. As for the VFR percentage, Mr. Wood explained it is difficult to determine, since there is no pattern established, and actual weather conditions are no factor.

Chairman Fink thanked the tower staff for providing friendly, accommodating services to the general aviation community.

4. RECOGNITION

Mr. Tussey thanked Mr. Martindell, Mr. Hasson and Nici Boon for their support and project management, respectively, of the Brown Field development at City Council yesterday. Mr. Martindell attended the meeting and gave a presentation, while Mr. Hasson provided a prepared statement, which was read into the record.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Fink asked the Committee if they wanted to have a December meeting. After a brief discussion, the Committee decided not to meet in December.

6. STAFF & DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Tussey thanked the EAA for hosting the meeting, and for the public outreach events sponsored by the EAA, such as Young Eagles.

Former EAA President and current EAA member Bob Hitchcock, welcomed those in attendance, noting what he described as the greatest view of the airfield from the EAA's vantage point, and offered a tour of the facility, as well as refreshments.

Mr. Tussey mentioned there are five controllers staffing SDM Tower, with an average experience level of 26 years each, and it would be a tragedy if the tower were to shut down. He reiterated the City's position last spring, and contended that if the Interim Mayor and City Attorney followed last year's course of action, and should the FAA/DOT decided to close contract towers, a lawsuit would be again filed with the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mr. Hitchcock asked about the previous stay and if it had been put in place. Mr. Tussey replied the motion to stay was a legal action filed by the City with the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals with reasons why the tower should not close, stating the FAA did not follow its own procedures. The action was never heard because funding was reinstated, preventing the tower closures.

SDM General Update – SDM Airport Manager Chris Cooper

- A newly revised GPS approach with improved minimums, similar to a precision approach, was recently commissioned for Runway 8L. The difficulty in obtaining such an approach, which had been long-pursued, rested on uncontrollable factors, such as high terrain to the east, the international border and North Island traffic. These factors were overcome by restricting the speed on the missed approach to 210 knots, resulting in a highly accurate RNAV (GPS) instrument approach to SDM Rwy 8L, associated with an eye-crossing array of technical jargon and associated acronyms: Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS), LPV (Localizer Performance with Vertical guidance) or Area Navigation. (RNAV) Global Positioning System (GPS) approach.

There are currently two instrument approaches to Brown Field: a VOR approach from the north, with minimums of 700 feet and 2 ¾ miles; and the LPV, with minimums of 200 feet and ¾ mile visibility, which is precision-equivalent. By comparison, the SAN ILS minimums are currently 336 feet and 1 mile visibility. The defining element for both the pilot and the FAA is the visibility, and the difference between ¾ mile at SDM and 1 mile at SAN on a high speed final approach, is a critical one. Aircraft have to be certified with the proper equipment to use the LPV approach.

- Cal Fire used Brown Field as a temporary re-load base for fire-fighting aircraft during the red-flag warning last weekend. Two S-2 tankers staged at Brown Field, dropping retardant on the fires at Camp Pendleton and Lakeside. The event showed Cal Fire Brown Field is capable and ready to accommodate fire-fighting activities, including large aircraft. After Brown Field, the nearest airport that can accommodate large fire-fighting aircraft is San Bernardino.

- Various maintenance and repairs have been ongoing. The restroom in the terminal was vandalized recently.

Mr. Tussey mentioned staff at Brown Field has filled several 40-yard dumpsters with weeds. Mr. Cooper added delays in executing the mowing contract resulted in excessive tumbleweed growth, putting staff behind in weed abatement, and that twelve 40-yard dumpster have been filled.

Brown Field Development Update – Project Manager Roy Nail

Yesterday, the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Site Development Permit (SDP) and Leasehold Development Agreement (LDA) were approved by City Council. The approval was a major milestone for the project, as it has been six years in the making, with over \$14 million invested by the developer in soft costs. Going forward, the LDA has guidelines and timelines for the four phases. The developer has to submit full-blown, detailed construction drawings for Phase 1 within the next 18 months. Construction will commence within 42 months of the effective date of the LDA.

Mr. Hitchcock questioned the 42 month timeline for construction, and if it could occur sooner. Mr. Nail replied the 42 month timeline was the maximum for construction to commence, but that it could begin sooner. He suggested keeping the magnitude of the project in perspective. The project encompasses 330 acres, with biological impacts, vernal pools, burrowing owls, etc. Plus, there is the possibility of a challenge to the EIR.

Chairman Fink asked what the timeline is to challenge the EIR. DPC Project Manager Nici Boon replied it is 30 days from the date of Notice of Decision (NOD). The NOD is filed by the City to the State Clearinghouse, which begins the clock; currently, NOD is October 23/24. The reason NOD is not today is because there is a required second hearing on the ordinance that accompanied the entitlement documents. Ms. Boon added the filing of a CEQA lawsuit does not prohibit the developer from moving forward with the permitting phase.

MYF General Update – MYF Airport Manager Ernie Gesell

Mr. Gesell summarized the status of operational contracts, which have been met with challenges during the past year:

- Mowing contract: Previously held up by the former mayor; it is up and running with Powerland presently mowing the airfield.
- Security guard contract: Re-bid due to the previous bidder not being qualified; it is temporarily up and running via a contract extension.
- Sweeping contract: Challenged by the City's street sweeping staff. Airport staff does not feel the City crews meet the training and experience requirements necessary to sweep the airside. A contract amendment allows Cannon Pacific to continue sweeping the airside; a sweep is scheduled for the end of this month. Landside sweeping is on hold until an agreement with City street sweeping staff can be reached.

MYF Tower Update – MYF Tower Manager Tom Dray

Mr. Dray apologized for being late to the meeting. The federal budget battle has not affected the tower operationally, and he does not anticipate it doing so. The tower building modernization project is fully funded, but on hold because the FAA on-site engineer is not.

Noise and Special Projects – *Airport Noise Abatement Officer Wayne Reiter*

- Mr. Reiter attended the Serra Mesa Community Council meeting last month, as requested by Jackie Ander, to respond to residents' questions and concerns about helicopter noise. Ivor Shier of Corporate Helicopters also attended the meeting on his own accord, and provided insight to his business, as well as answered questions.

- The Quarterly Noise Report for July – September has been released.

Tom Ricotta asked about noise complaints related to F/A-18's. Mr. Reiter replied the number of complaints have gone down since NBC 7 ran a news story on the topic last month; however, F/A-18 operations have decreased since then, save for last weekend.

Mr. Tussey added airport staff previously met with Miramar officials to develop noise abatement procedures, which reduce but not eliminate the noise. The new IFR departure procedures are likely to reduce the effectiveness of those procedures, causing a noise impact to the residents.

Mr. Tussey mentioned one of the regular noise complainers attended the City Council meeting yesterday to make a statement, during the Metro Airpark hearing. Councilmembers had been briefed about F/A-18 operations at Brown Field, and the City's obligations to the federal government under the Grant Assurances and quitclaim deed to allow those types of operations, within reason. F/A-18's are well within the weight-bearing and wingspan capability of the airport. In addition, it appears that deployment of personnel from Miramar overseas may have resulted in the shutdown of Miramar air operations Saturdays and most of Sundays. In order to meet training requirements, civilian airports were seen by the military as an attractive alternative, not just at Brown Field, but airports across the country.

Mr. Gesell commented he watched the Council meeting and heard the residents' concerns, noting they seem to continuously focus on the noise and safety of the airport and the airplanes, without considering, or us defending, the fact Brown Field is one of the oldest airports in San Diego and that area is one of the newest communities. He questioned how a residential community and schools could be built so close to the departure end of the primary runway.

Ms. Golden commented she has a house off the departure end of the runway and was aware of the Grant Assurances. She does not have a problem with the F/A-18's, or with the regular traffic using the airport.

Chairman Fink added airport staff, along with Tom Ricotta, did a good job working with the Marines to mitigate the noise, but the bottom line is Brown Field is a long-established airport. Residents' deeds contain language disclosing the presence of the airport, and there will be noise associated with the airport.

Mr. Tussey explained that for the most part, residents near Brown Field have accepted the civilian air operations and much of the military air traffic, but the F/A-18's are significantly louder. That being said, the F/A 18 flights lie beyond the jurisdiction of the City of San Diego, and there is little the City can do change the situation.

Joe Russo offered a response to Mr. Gesell's question of why residential communities build so

close to airports: Developers will note how safe an airport is in order to justify building closer to the airport, as well as a general lack of understanding of airport operations and contours by decision makers. Once the development is built, and the developer collects their money, they leave, and let the City and airport deal with the problem.

Mr. Tussey ruefully agreed that Mr. Russo's sentiment seemed to often be the case, noting the airport noise contours are based on the little understood, State law imposed, Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), rather than much more widely perceived Single Event Noise Exposure Level (SEL & SENEL). The CNEL line denoting compatible land use and non-compatible land use results in some residents being recognized as noise impacted, while their nearby neighbors may not get the same recognition and benefits.

Mr. Reiter provided a true-to-life example of this concept by announcing that a large residential development was planned for the area north of Brown Field between the airport and POGGI. A letter to the City of Chula Vista was written by Mr. Reiter, regarding the draft EIR associated with the project, commenting that future residents will most certainly be impacted by noise and low-flying aircraft, despite statements in the EIR claiming the project is outside of the airport influence area and noise (CNEL) contours. The EIR claims noise and overflights will be mitigated by disclosure statements. Ms. Boon noted the former Director of the City of San Diego's Development Services, Kelly Broughton, is now the Director of the City of Chula Vista's Development Services, should anyone wish to submit a comment.

MYF/SDM Property – Supervising Property Agent Brandi Mulvey

This item was skipped. Ms. Mulvey could not attend the meeting, as she is recovering from ACL surgery, and is working part-time.

Capital Improvement/Consultant Project Update – Airports Deputy Director Mike Tussey

- SDM Rwy 8L/26R Design is at 20%. A significant milestone will be when the design reaches 30%.
- SDM Rwy 8L/26R construction will be in two phases once the design is complete, followed by Twy Alpha rehabilitation, contingent on grant funding.
- MYF Access Control go-live expected mid-December. Those requiring access need to turn in their application to Mr. Tussey or Mr. Gesell.
- MYF Rwy 5/23, Twy G will be bid for construction in 3-4 months.
- ADA design for SDM and MYF is at 90%. Construction of SDM restrooms, sewer and parking lot access expected this fiscal year. MYF construction next fiscal year. Self-funded; money budgeted for this fiscal year, but not FY15.

Grants for MYF Rwy 5/23 Phase II, Twy C and Localizer mitigation subject to sequestration. There will be a meeting with the LAX FAA tomorrow to discuss the ACIP, grants and proposed projects.

Airports is in the process of changing project engineers. Michael Maria has been reassigned.

Mr. Ricotta asked when construction of the Brown Field restrooms will occur. Mr. Tussey replied this fiscal year, which ends June 30, 2014, contingent on City processing.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Fink asked for an update on filling Committee vacancies. Mr. Tussey replied Interim Mayor Todd Gloria's staff expressed a desire to break the logjam created by the former mayor. It is unknown when the appointees would go to Council, or indeed if they need to go to Council at all, referencing other planning committees' practices.

Chairman Fink asked if the EAA would be hosting any of the mayoral candidates, as previously done. Mr. Russo said he would bring it up at the next board meeting. Chairman Fink would support the action.

The next meeting will be on November 12, 2013 at the Montgomery Field Terminal.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Wayne J. Reiter