

**CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
AIRPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**Meeting of February 10, 2015**

**Montgomery Field Terminal, 3750 John J. Montgomery Drive, San Diego, CA 92123**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** J. H. Aldrich (Montgomery Field Aviation Lessee), Jackie Ander (Serra Mesa Community), David Borcalli (MYF Tower), Jim Demeaux (Clairemont Community), Chairman Buzz Fink (Special Expertise), Buzz Gibbs (Kearny Mesa Community), Lisa Golden (Otay Mesa Community) *late arrival*, Scott Hasson (Tierrasanta Community), Bob Hitchcock (Brown Field Aviation User Group), Rich Martindell (Special Expertise), Vice-Chair Chuck McGill (Montgomery Field Aviation User Group), Tom Ricotta (Brown Field Aviation Lessee), David Ryan (Special Expertise)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**GUESTS PRESENT:** John Barnes, Gerald Blank, Nici Boon, Bob Golo

**STAFF PRESENT:** Grace Chao, Paul Mehrlich, Brandi Mulvey, Rod Propst, Wayne Reiter, Andy Schwartz, Cybele Thompson

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Fink called the meeting to order at 3:03 P.M. A quorum was present.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the January 13, 2015 regular meeting were approved unanimously, as written.

**3. NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**4. STAFF & DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

MYF General Update – *Acting Montgomery Field Airport Manager Paul Mehrlich*

- Matt Schmitzer has been deployed as part of his military obligations, and is expected to return in August. During that time, Mr. Mehrlich will assume the acting airport manager role for three months, succeeded by SDM Airport Ops Assistant Jose Castillo for the remaining three months.
- Staff removed an obstruction near the approach end of Runway 23.
- Staff is obtaining estimates to slurry seal Flattop. Tenants will be notified in advance of the project, and will be offered free parking at transient until the slurry seal is dry.
- Staff is planning to have a contractor repair a pothole near the self-serve fuel island.
- Later this week, staff will provide a tour for environmental staff to explore ways to adjust the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) boundary to facilitate airport development.

### MYF Tower Update – *MYF Tower Manager David Borcalli*

- Vehicle deviations remain a concern, as two more recently occurred. Mr. Borcalli questioned why FBO's are not securing gates and fences under their control. Dr. Aldrich wanted to confirm the FBO's role in the deviations before assigning blame. Mr. Gibbs commented that rain tends to cause gate failures, requiring them to be locked in the open position; but, the gates have minimized the number of deviations that once occurred. Vice-Chair McGill asked when the deviation occurred. Mr. Borcalli replied last Saturday.

Chairman Fink asked if the airport maintains an inventory of spare parts for the gates. Mr. Mehrlich replied the airport uses South Bay Fence for gate repairs, who maintain some parts on inventory, while other parts need to be ordered. Chairman Fink suggested keeping critical parts on-site to reduce repair times. Mr. Mehrlich will look into it.

- The Runway Safety Action Team is scheduled to meet again during the week of March 9. Mr. Borcalli desires to close out any existing action items, and will be conducting outreach to the local flying clubs and flight schools.

### SDM General Update – *Brown Field Airport Manager Andy Schwartz*

- Four of the five vehicle gate motors have been upgraded, which should reduce failures and repair costs.
- Dogs roaming freely on the airfield have been a persistent problem. Staff has reached out to tenants to ensure dogs are kept on a leash. Mr. Ricotta asked if the problem is related to north-side tenants or the south-side aviation tenants. Mr. Schwartz replied both. Ms. Ander asked if tenants have been notified in writing that failure to keep pets on a leash will result in consequences. Mr. Schwartz replied yes. Chairman Fink added that certain consequences, such as fines, need council approval and that educating the tenants is key to gaining compliance.

Mr. Ricotta asked when the next airfield mow will take place. Mr. Schwartz replied next month, as there are only three mows per year and they need to be spread out over that time.

Mr. Hasson commented on decreasing number of operations at Brown Field, and inquired if there is a plan to attract more air traffic to the airport. Mr. Schwartz replied the airport is looking at the possibility of an airport day, but pointed out the operations are more related to commercial activity than flight instruction. Mr. Hasson added the cost of fuel at Brown Field is generally cheaper and worth promoting, and that an airport day is a good idea. Mr. Martindell stated the fuel prices are easily accessible on the internet. Mr. Gibbs added a weather anomaly last January may account for the increased operations at MYF. Mr. Ricotta stated there is a new flight school starting at Brown Field in March. Chairman Fink added the Navy static line jumping has been suspended for approximately 7 months, but should resume next month. Both activities should boost the operations at Brown Field.

Vice-Chair McGill asked if the operations reported are only for when the tower is open and how are operations counted when the tower is closed. Mr. Reiter replied the tower keeps the official traffic count when it is open. Mr. Borcalli added flights receiving services are counted automatically.

Noise and Special Projects – *Airport Program Manager Wayne Reiter*

- The monthly operations report displays information requested by the Committee last month, including fiscal year-to-date revenue and operations numbers. An anomaly in the FY14 monthly tiedown total is the result of Pacific Wings being invoiced last year for tiedown fees they collected and kept, which should have been sent to the City. There was follow-up discussion about the revenue, which is apparently accrued revenue.

Mr. Ryan asked what is included in “Other” revenue. Mr. Reiter replied commercial operating permit fees and reimbursements from damage to airfield lights and signs.

- A group of Cub Scouts are coming to the airport this Friday for a tour. Mr. Reiter requested anyone willing and able to allow the use of their aircraft as a static display would be appreciated.

Airport Property Update – *Supervising Property Agent Brandi Mulvey*

- Three properties at MYF are being prepared for RFP – Coast, Spiders and National Air College.
- Interviews for an additional property agent will occur in the next 2 – 3 weeks.
- Staff continues to work on comments for the proposed Crownair lease. In the meantime, Crownair is expected to utilize temporary structures while the storm-damaged buildings are demolished.
- At Brown Field, work continues on a solar lease for the Metro Airpark project.

Ms. Ander expressed frustration at how long the leasing issues have been taking. Chairman Fink replied the City used to have more property agents working on these matters. Real Estate Assets Director Cybele Thompson introduced herself.

Vice-Chair McGill asked if the Montgomery Field RFP’s will include a full-service fixed base operator (FBO). Ms. Mulvey replied it is unknown at this time, staff is discussing options. Mr. Hasson indicated he would like AAC input in that discussion. Mr. Propst added there is no current master plan to assist in the process, but will seek AAC input.

Mr. Mehrlich broached the idea of placing Flattop and Marigold tenants on month-to-month billing, as the rental agreements were month-to-month. Many tenants pay on a quarterly, semi-annual and annual basis. Dr. Aldrich and Vice-Chair McGill felt there was no reason to change the current billing cycles. Mr. Ricotta recognized the potential legal problem with month-to-month tenants paying annually, creating in-essence a one year lease. Mr. Gibbs explained an example used at Palomar airport, where a long term lease was created for multiple hangar owners. Mr. Propst stated, in terms of City leasing, the length of the term is generated by the capital improvements built, but he would be willing to listen to any proposal submitted.

SDM Metro Airpark Update – *DPC Project Manager Nici Boon*

- Progress continues on the grading/drainage/infrastructure/utilities permitting packages.

- As mentioned, negotiations continue on the solar leases, to be followed by the main ground leases for phase I. Groundbreaking with permit approval is still anticipated to occur by the end of this year.

#### MYF Capital Improvement Projects

Mr. Mehrlich gave a brief update on the Runway 5-23, Twy G project, which is currently waiting on the environmental release from the FAA. Staff will be giving the contractor a tour in the morning, followed by a pre-construction meeting in the afternoon.

#### SDM Capital Improvement Projects

Mr. Schwartz gave a brief update on the Runway 8L-26R project, which is also waiting on the environmental release from the FAA. The project is expected to begin in approximately 1 year. During construction, the runway will be reduced in length to 5,500 feet of usable runway with a 600 foot displaced threshold, and will last approximately 3 – 4 months. Mr. Hitchcock expressed some concern over the operational limitations during the shortened runway. Ms. Golden was curious about the largest aircraft capable of using the shortened runway. F/A-18's are not expected to be able to use the shortened runway.

#### Self-Funded Projects

Mr. Schwartz gave an update on the ADA project, otherwise known as the barrier removal project. The project is expected to begin in June and will refurbish the restrooms to meet ADA standards, as well as the entrances and parking lots surrounding the terminal building. Ms. Golden questioned the high cost associated with this project. Mr. Hitchcock asked if an ADA survey was conducted. Mr. Reiter replied the project was designed by a consultant who specializes in ADA compliance. Chairman Fink added this project is being coordinated with the City's ADA compliance office, which has been patient up to this point, but expects the airport to perform on its obligations to comply.

Mr. Demeaux asked for an update on the terminal building cameras, which were discussed previously, to reduce vandalism to the restrooms. Mr. Schwartz replied this project will move toward addressing the vandalism problem by installing hand dryers in the restrooms. Ms. Ander advised not using paper towels at all, using hand dryers exclusively.

#### Deputy Director Remarks – Deputy Director Rod Propst

- Mr. Propst and Ms. Chao met with the City's Executive Team this week to present the budget. Airports is projecting \$4.8 million in revenue and \$4.6 million in expenditures, which puts \$200,000 into the fund balance.
- As mentioned earlier, an additional property agent will be added to assist Ms. Mulvey. Interviews for the Brown Field senior airport operations assistant will take place this week. There are 19 full-time equivalent employees budgeted, which represents 33.8% of airport expenses and is within the limit for public sector employment.
- Staff met with representatives from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to discuss their offices at Brown Field, which do not meet their current standards. The airport is on the hook for bringing those offices up to standard without financial assistance from CBP. Such a project would require 25 – 30% of the annual budget, even for a temporary fix.

Mr. Propst is not prepared to commit that much of the airport budget to provide temporary facilities. More to follow on this topic.

- Mr. Propst made a request for aviation-related photos to place in the airport administration offices.

Ms. Golden questioned why the federal government doesn't pay for the upgrades to CBP. Mr. Gibbs explained how the tenants at Palomar airport were assessed a fee to help pay for the part-time Customs services there, in addition to the user fee.

Mr. Hasson asked if a Customs facility could be incorporated into the Metro Airpark project. Mr. Propst replied that topic has not been discussed yet. Such a project is complicated due to CBP's vast requirements, along with the infrastructure improvements and potentially extensive environmental review. That being said, the current facility is unacceptable given it is the second busiest landing rights facility behind Ft. Lauderdale.

Mr. Hitchcock asked what would happen if there were no CBP at Brown Field. Mr. Propst replied it provides a service to the travelling public, increases the number of operations for the airport, and generates revenue through fuel flowage and landing fees. Mr. Hitchcock asked if there is a timeline CBP has provided for the City to make the upgrades. Mr. Propst replied there is no timeline, but CBP would like to have seen the improvements two years ago.

Ms. Ander asked if there are grants available for this type of project, then suggested contacting a congressman to request funding. Mr. Reiter is researching possible grant opportunities.

Mr. Hasson asked Ms. Boon if DPC would entertain the idea of building a facility for CBP. Ms. Boon replied they would be open to discussing it. Chairman Fink added that the solution must be fair to the other FBO's on the airport.

Mr. Demeaux stated there are costs and benefits associated with CBP and asked if a return on investment analysis has been done. Mr. Propst replied an analysis has not been done, but the return will be significantly less than the investment. Ms. Golden felt the solution rests with federal financial assistance.

Ms. Golden asked how Metro Airpark impacts the existing terminal building at Brown Field. Ms. Boon replied the proposed development does not impact existing aviation tenants or City facilities, including the terminal building. Ms. Golden suggested, rather than fixing the restrooms now (as part of the ADA project), doing a refurbishment of the entire building at one time. Mr. Propst replied the City is at risk due to the non-compliance, and the ADA project needs to move forward now; however, there is an opportunity to improve the terminal that should be pursued.

Bob Golo asked for the square footage of the current Customs office. Ms. Mulvey replied 425 square feet, and CBP is asking for 3,000 square feet. Mr. Golo suggested offering a compromise of 1,500 square feet. Mr. Propst replied he will discuss it at his next meeting with CBP staff.

## **5. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Ricotta announced a Challenge Air event he is hosting at Brown Field on Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup>. This event uses volunteer pilots to fly challenged kids who would otherwise not have the opportunity to do so. Volunteer pilots are needed for the all-day event.

Vice-Chair McGill announced the closure of the San Diego Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) from February 23<sup>rd</sup> – March 6<sup>th</sup>, due to training.

The next meeting will be on March 10, 2015 at Montgomery Field. The Committee discussed having the next meeting in the conference room, rather than the lobby.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 P.M.

Respectfully,

Wayne J. Reiter