

MINUTES
CITY OF SAN DIEGO
AIRPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting of May 14, 2013
Montgomery Field Terminal Building

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Buzz Gibbs (Kearny Mesa Community), Scott Hasson (Tierrasanta Community) *excused*, Bob Hitchcock (Brown Field Aviation User Group)

GUESTS PRESENT: Rick Beach, Nici Boon, Bud Booth, Mark Cicali, Bob Golo, Randy Ogata, Ray Richmond, Tom Ricotta, Larry Rothrock, Ivor Shier

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Cooper, Ernie Gesell, Paul Mehrlich, Brandi Mulvey, Roy Nail, Wayne Reiter, Mike Tussey

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Fink called the meeting to order at 3:07 P.M. A quorum was present.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the April 9, 2013 meeting were approved unanimously, with the following change: Page 3, from “Ms. Boon replied that the motion is for the Council to certify the EIR” to “Ms. Boon replied that the motion is to support the Council’s certification of the EIR.” Vice-Chair McGill abstained from the vote, due to his absence at that meeting.

Chairman Fink commented that this is the first change to the minutes in recent memory, and commended Mr. Reiter for the job done in capturing the meeting discussions in the minutes.

3. PUBLIC INPUT

Larry Rothrock announced the EAA, Chapter 14 at Brown Field hosts Young Eagles flights the second Saturday of every month, where kids are offered free flights, ground school, food, and computers equipped with flight simulator. Last Saturday, 39 kids were flown, 21 of whom were Boy Scouts, with only eight pilots. Mr. Rothrock asked for any available EAA members who may donate their time to be Young Eagles pilots to contact him, or show up at the EAA on the second Saturday of the month, so that a younger generation may be inspired to be aviators.

Ray Richmond announced Crownair’s recent designation as a Gold Service Center for Eclipse Aerospace. This means five aircraft based at the airport, along with 35 aircraft in the region will be using Crownair’s center for service. The Eclipse jet is a great platform for Montgomery Field, and the designation represents a progressive step toward making improvements. Mr. Richmond asked for everyone’s support in making the Eclipse operators feel welcome.

4. NEW BUSINESS

Brown Field Tower Closure Update – Airports Deputy Director Mike Tussey

The contract tower at Brown Field was slated to be closed on June 15, due to sequestration. Numerous lawsuits were filed from airport operators and interest groups, including the City of San Diego, against the FAA after the announcement was made to close 149 contract towers nationwide. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals had been scheduled to hear the matter on June 5 to decide the merits of closing the towers, when Congress passed legislation providing the FAA discretion to fund the towers through September 30 (using AIP funds). What happens after September 30 is unknown.

Mr. Tussey thanked those who encouraged their elected representative to support the legislation. If there is another tower closure announcement that includes Brown Field, the Mayor and City Attorney may decide to file another lawsuit.

MYF Subcommittee Report – Chairman Fink

Chairman Fink provided a written summary of the most recent subcommittee meeting, which he read:

- 13 people, including representatives from the FSDO, tower, AAC, pilots, Corporate Helicopters, Crownair, developers and the Airports Division attended the meeting, which occurred on May 2.
- A new name was given to the subcommittee: *MYF Operations Committee (MOC)*
- Topic of discussion: Helicopter Operations, which was discussed at the previous AAC meeting. Some people have raised issues regarding the safety of Midport and helicopter overflights.
- Corporate Helicopters gave a presentation on their standard approaches that they coordinated with the control tower and airport.
- Recommendations:
 - Status to be reported on by the City at the next AAC meeting:*
 - The City adopts the procedures diagram and narrative of the *Corporate Helicopter Operations Bulletin*, and includes it in the *MYF Helicopter Operations Policy*.
 - The City includes the above-described procedures on the airport website.
 - The City include in the Airport/Facility Directory (A/FD) note section, a link to the airport website containing the *MYF Helicopter Operations Policy*.
 - The City distributes the *MYF Helicopter Operations Policy, Diagram and Procedures* to the local FBO's.
 - Gibbs and Crownair educate their tenants on the *MYF Helicopter Operations Policy, Diagram and Procedures*.
 - Distribute the *MYF Helicopter Operations Policy, Diagram and Procedures* to all MYF helicopter instructors, to include in their training syllabus.
 - MYF Tower will instruct/request transient helicopter pilots to follow the *MYF Helicopter Operations Policy, Diagram and Procedures*.

Longer Term Fix:

- Recommend move all helicopter operations to the Spiders area, southwest of the Rwy 5 threshold.
 - Relocate Fire/Rescue helicopter operations to the area between SDPD and Spiders.
- Next meeting: reconvene in late May or June on the next topic, or series of topics. Members should email Scott Hasson for issues that merit topic priority.

Chairman Fink reminded everyone of the Committee's advisory-only status, and that the aforementioned items are only recommendations, before asking for a motion to adopt the subcommittee's report.

Mr. Ryan made a **motion:** *For the AAC to adopt the MYF Operations Committee Report.* Vice-Chair McGill seconded the motion; there was no discussion.

The motion was voted on, with the following results:

- For the motion: Chairman Fink, Vice-Chair McGill, Mr. Martindell, Ms. Ander, Ms. Golden, and Mr. Ryan
- Against the motion: None
- Abstention: Mr. Aldrich

The motion passed 6 – 0, with 1 abstention.

Chairman Fink stated the mission of the *MYF Operations Committee: To identify issues and recommend solutions to issues affecting MYF; to ensure the continued viability and continued existence of general aviation at MYF.*

5. STAFF & DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

MYF General Update – MYF Airport Manager Ernie Gesell

- Three mandatory hold position signs south of Rwy 28R (two on Rwy 23 and one on Twy G) are unlit due to an electrical problem. Staff is troubleshooting.
- Three Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations (V/PD's) have occurred this year. One occurrence involved an aircraft detailer, operating without a commercial operating permit, towing an aircraft with a vehicle using a handheld radio in the cab of the vehicle. The tower issued a hold instruction, which apparently was not followed by the driver, resulting in a conflict on the taxiway with another vehicle towing an aircraft.

Mr. Gesell encouraged tenants to inform visitors and vendors of where they can and cannot go on the airport. The upcoming access control system project will hopefully address this situation and reduce or eliminate further V/PD's.

- Helicopter overweight issues at Midport have been raised recently. Apparently, some operators claim to have not known about the 6,000 pound maximum certificated takeoff gross weight restriction, although it has been listed in the A/FD for a number of years.

- The current City policy for helicopter operations has been uploaded to the Airports website. Once approved, Corporate Helicopters' procedures will be added to the policy and uploaded to the website.

A note was submitted (to the National Flight Data Center) and accepted, which will add to the remarks in the A/FD: the airport website and the presence of the helicopter policy on that website.

- An R-22 helicopter landed on the transient ramp on row two, illegally. Mr. Gesell met with the pilot, who was unaware of a problem, and coordinated with Corporate Helicopters the relocation of the helicopter to Midport.
- A solution to the helicopter issues is being researched by staff, in coordination with Corporate Helicopters, Mercy Air and others, to accommodate the needs and desires of the helicopter community. Midport remains constrained by a 6,000 lb. weight limit, per the FAA certification.

Mr. Ryan asked why the FY13 landing fees are, according to the April Operations Report, triple the total for FY12. Mr. Gesell replied he was unsure of the reason, but airport staff, specifically Michael McKelvey, painstakingly checks the logs and researches data for commercial operators. Additionally, the Treasurer moves money to and from different accounts, which may lead to an unexpected change, positive or negative, in the dollar figures shown in SAP. It was noted by Committee members the totals for both airports are up, signaling a possible increase in traffic as a cause for the increase.

MYF Tower Update – *MYF Tower Manager Tom Dray*

Furloughs were canceled after one week, and to stay tuned for the next fiscal year. Chairman Fink asked when we may hear about plans for the next fiscal year. Mr. Dray's opinion was that there will be a continuing resolution, accompanied by political posturing.

Mr. Tussey noted the funding used to halt furloughs and avert the tower closures is the same money used to fund airport construction projects (grants). As a result, it is possible we may lose some of our grants for construction projects.

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

- The Spring 2013 Newsletter has been released.
- A resident in Clairemont brought up an issue of concern, and requested that it be mentioned at the meeting today. The issue is: a pilot can, conceivably, attempt to avoid penalties for violating the noise ordinance by not announcing their identification over the CTAF when the tower is closed. The tower/CTAF frequency is recorded in the noise office, and is the primary means of identifying aircraft, which is required for a penalty to be assessed, should a violation occur. It was explained to the resident, that while it is not a requirement to operate a radio when the tower is closed, it is not in the best interest of the pilot, or those flying in the area, to intentionally not self-announce on the CTAF.

Mr. Ryan asked if the security guard logs aircraft movements at night. Mr. Reiter replied the guard does not (although the guard is supposed to be monitoring the frequency).

MYF/SDM Property – Supervising Property Agent Brandi Mulvey

- Progress continues at Brown Field, with one more tenant being evicted. A 5,000 sq. ft. building located at the entrance to the airport will become available for lease on a short-term basis, with a preferred aviation-related use.
- Work on a solution for the helicopter situation at Montgomery Field continues.
- Pacific Wings has been given notice for termination, which is set for June 14, in order to make the site ready for a different use. They are currently on a month-to-month agreement.
- Lease discussions continue.

DPC Brown Field Update – Project Manager Roy Nail

- At the previous AAC meeting, it was reported that the soonest the project would go before Planning Commission was May 23. That date has slipped to June 13, tentatively.
- The Final EIR will be distributed to individuals who commented on the Draft EIR, Planning Commission staff and others, two weeks prior to the Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Martindell asked if there will be any notice given before the project goes before any subcommittees with the City. Mr. Tussey replied the first formal public meeting will be the Planning Commission, followed by Council; he will put out a notice when the dates are set.

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

The solar-powered lights currently installed along Rwy 28L will have to be removed, as they do not conform to FAA standards, despite dialogue with the FAA requesting their approval.

SDM General Update – SDM Airport Manager Chris Cooper

- The announcement to fund the control tower through the end of September provided relief for airport tenants and users.
- The design for Rwy 8L/26R rehabilitation has commenced. As part of the information gathering, the consultant will require core samples of the runway to be taken. The runway will need to be closed during this process, as there will be 30 cores drilled, each 10 feet deep. The closure is scheduled to occur June 3 – 7, from 2000 – 0400, nightly, and will affect Rwy 8L/26R only. Rwy 8R/26L is a lighted runway and will be open.
- Airport mowing is complete.

Chairman Fink asked if the design will include a modification of the weight-bearing capacity of the runway. Mr. Cooper replied it will not, as it would trigger an environmental study. Mr. Tussey added a request was made to the FAA to change the weight-bearing, but doing so would require an EIR, which would be an unfunded, lengthy project with no certain outcome.

Chairman Fink commended Brown Field staff for self-renovating the Operations office, in order to save the airport money.

Capital Improvement/Consultant Project Update – Continued

Mr. Martindell asked if there is an office of responsibility within the FAA where aviation users may voice their displeasure over the decision to remove the solar lights. Mr. Tussey replied the decision was made at the FAA Airports District Office (ADO), Western-Pacific Region.

Mr. Tussey feels it was the right decision to use the solar lights during the Rwy 28R project, in the interest of safety and liability avoidance, even though the airport will likely eat the costs of the solar lights. The lights will be auctioned in 6 -7 months.

Chairman Fink noted that the ADO, who ordered the removal of the solar lights, also approves grants for airport improvement projects. Mr. Tussey agreed and added that while the airport lost the lights, it gained approximately \$5 million for runway improvements at MYF, despite sequestration. Airport projects that do not include a runway are not likely to be funded this year.

Other airport projects:

- MYF Rwy 5/23 Rehabilitation: \$5 million, may begin this Fall
- MYF Twy C and Runup Design: \$1 million grant may get canceled.
- MYF Rwy 28R Localizer Site Mitigation: \$450,000 grant may get canceled.
- SDM Rwy 8L/26R Design: In progress, \$731,500 grant, HNTB.
- SDM Rwy 8L/26R Construction: Grants postponed one year, design not complete.
- MYF/SDM ADA improvements: Design in progress, emphasis on SDM.
- MYF Access Control: \$475k grant received, Mayoral signoff today.

Vice-Chair McGill asked for an explanation of the medical helicopter landing weight situation.

Mr. Tussey provided a summary:

- Midport is, and always has been, certified for helicopters that weigh 6,000 pounds or less.
- Some helicopter operators were apparently unaware of the weight restriction; using Midport, knowingly or unknowingly, in violation of the certification.
- Recent discussions have taken place with Corporate Helicopters, Mercy Air and Reach Air, regarding the use of Midport, and its limitations.
- Alternative sites are being explored by the airport, which may be able to accommodate helicopters exceeding 6,000 pounds, as an immediate and short-term solution. Such sites will require approval from the FAA, environmental, etc.
- Corporate Helicopters and airport property staff are working on a long-term solution in the area currently occupied by Spiders. An Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) appears to be progressing.

In addition:

- MYF has operational restrictions on fixed-wing aircraft, as well as helicopters.
- The airport cannot stop overweight aircraft from landing; however, once it lands and is identified, the operator is notified by Operations of the violation and assessed a penalty.

Chairman Fink asked if there are places on the airport where a helicopter exceeding 6,000 pounds can land. Mr. Tussey replied they can land on a runway, then air taxi to a parking space.

Such operations have the potential to create FOD and disrupt fixed-wing aircraft along the route. Mr. Martindell wanted to confirm the 6,000 pound restriction applied to the public-use helipad. Vice-Chair McGill and Mr. Tussey confirmed the statement, that the restriction applied to the FATO at Midport, not the runways; however, helicopters still need adequate space to park.

Mr. Ryan expressed encouragement, on behalf of the airport community, that the airport is looking for solutions.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Ander announced a concert, featuring a guitar ensemble, will take place at the Serra Mesa Library on Sunday, May 19 at 2:00 P.M.

Mr. Tussey recognized Rick Beach, who is visiting as part of a group touring the TRACON (Rick was unable to participate in the tour due to his Canadian citizenship). Mr. Beach is a former AAC member, who was on the Brown Field development selection panel, and championed the effort to reduce the height of the Sunroad building near MYF.

Mr. Gesell credited airport staff for expeditiously patching and painting the wall left exposed by the removal of the Select-A-Call panel this morning by the vendor.

Mr. Gesell mentioned the excursion of a Cirrus from Rwy 28R near Twy B earlier today, and, along with Mr. Tussey, credited airport and Crownair staff for removing the aircraft.

The next meeting of the AAC will be at Montgomery Field on June 11, 2013.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Wayne J. Reiter