



Dean D. Efstathiou
Acting Director of Public Works

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

AVIATION COMMISSION

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331
Telephone: (626) 300-4602
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov>

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**LOS ANGELES COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2008
El Monte Airport
4233 Santa Anita Avenue
El Monte, CA 91731-1697**

IN ATTENDANCE

Chair Evelyn Jerome Alexander
Vice Chair Penelope Cornwall
Secretary George G. Butts
Commissioner Angelo R. Cardono
Commissioner Bobby Chase

OFFICIALLY EXCUSED

Commissioner Dennis Lord
Commissioner Clinton Simmons
Commissioner Aron A. Wolf

LOS ANGELES COUNTY - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS STAFF

Mr. Richard L. Smith, Chief, Aviation Division
Mrs. Miriam Gomes Oprüsan, Staff Assistant, Aviation Division

AMERICAN AIRPORTS - AIRPORT SERVICES DIVISION STAFF

Mr. Scott Wardle, Regional Director
Mr. Jared Fox-Tuck, Manager, Brackett Field Airport
Mr. Andrew Marino, Manager, Compton/Woodley Airport
Mr. Steve Irving, Manager, General Wm. J. Fox Airfield
Mr. Rafael Herrera, Manager, El Monte Airport
Mr. Jason Morgan, Manager, Whiteman Airport

GUESTS

Mr. Don Hagopian, Whiteman Airport Association
Ms. Shellie Hagopian, Whiteman Airport Association
Mr. Ken Hanson, San Gabriel Valley's Airport Association
Mr. Bill Logan, Whiteman Airport

Mr. Gabe Lopez, El Monte Airport
Ms. Alice Marshall, Brackett Field Airport
Mr. Denny Marshal, Brackett Field Airport
Mr. Richard Munslow, El Monte Airport
Mr. Albert Ramirez, El Monte Airport
Mr. Les Slifkin, San Gabriel Valley's Airport Association
Mr. Scott Stevenson, San Gabriel Valley's Airport Association
Mr. Gilbert Viramontes, San Gabriel Valley's Airport Association

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Jerome Alexander called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Butts led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

1. Minutes of the Meeting of August 27, 2008

Commissioner Butts made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Cardono. The minutes were approved and adopted as written.

2. American Airports - Project Manager's Report

Mr. Jared Fox-Tuck reported on events at Brackett Field Airport. Security lighting and restroom upgrades are taking place in 50 aircraft hangars that reverted to the County after expiration of a 25-year lease agreement. Mr. Fox-Tuck reported on an incident involving two 18-year old females who hopped the perimeter fence and ran across runway 25R/8L. They were detained before reaching runway 25L/8R.

Public Works' Road Maintenance Division completed pavement repairs on a portion of the ramp located north of Eagle Helicopters. Waste disposal dumpsters were relocated to the south side of the airport in an effort to reduce garbage truck traffic.

The Pomona Police Department has acquired a second MD-500E helicopter. The alternators and batteries were replaced in the airport's ARFF vehicle, the AVGAS truck, and the airport operations truck. A new emergency exit door was installed in the terminal building. Mr. Fox-Tuck announced that the Harvey Mudd Alumni Association will host its annual Fly-in on September 27, 2008.

Mr. Jason Morgan reported on events at Whiteman Airport. Mr. Morgan provided an update on the aircraft hangar developments at the airport. The exterior of the main building was finished and painted, and construction of 36 additional hangars will follow soon. Six new aircraft hangars located by Airpark Way and Orbital Way intersection are nearing completion. The pilots lounge has been upgraded with new seating, cable TV, and a direct phone line. Repairs to the boom lighting around the airport are scheduled for next week. Whiteman Airport has some aircraft hangars and tiedowns available for lease.

The Explorers are back at Whiteman Airport providing low cost flight lessons. Mr. Joel Latham who is the Aircraft Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) manager will be relocated and two new managers will be assigned to the ATCT at Whiteman Airport.

Mr. Morgan reported on an incident involving a vehicle that crashed into the fence by the Airpark Way and Orbital Drive. The vehicle damaged a section of the perimeter fence and a hangar support column in the crash. No injuries were sustained and the fence was repaired immediately after the accident.

Mr. Morgan stated that the tenants and users of Whiteman Airport have requested the airport Master Plan Update meetings be held in the evening. The Whiteman Airport Association will hold a Fly-in Pancake Breakfast on September 28, 2008, at Santa Paula Airport. The Challenge Air Event will be held on October 18, 2008.

Chair Jerome Alexander encouraged the pilot community to volunteer their time for the Challenge Air Event.

Mr. Steve Irving reported on events at General Wm. J. Fox Airfield. The Airport Pilots' Association sponsored its annual Fly-in Pancake Breakfast on September 20, 2008, with great attendance. The airport will participate in the Salute To Youth Event that will be held on September 26, 2008, at Palmdale Plant 42. The Pavement Rehabilitation Project, Phase III will be complete upon installation of tiedown chains next week.

Mr. Andrew Marino reported on events at Compton/Woodley Airport. The windsock located on the east side of the airport was replaced. The fuel truck received a new water pump, new belts, and new tires. A new toilet was installed in the pilots' lounge restroom. New security cameras were installed throughout the airport. The soil remediation project, which was scheduled to start on September 15, 2008, was rescheduled in an effort to avoid conflict with the annual Compton/Woodley Air Fair.

Mr. Marino reported on an incident that occurred on September 14, 2008, around 5:20 p.m., involving an aircraft that landed hard on runway 25L. No damages to the airport were reported and no injuries were sustained.

The Compton/Woodley Airport Air Fair will be held on Saturday, September 27, 2008, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Activities will include skydiving, fly-bys, among others. The EAA Young Eagles will be operating out of the EAA hangar.

Mr. Scott Wardle informed the Commission that Mr. Frank Profit was offered a hangar and is expected to sign a lease agreement soon.

Chair Jerome Alexander inquired if the City of Compton has moved forward with the installation of security cameras along Alondra Boulevard. Mr. Richard Smith answered that he was not aware of the City's progress and that he placed a call to the City Manager but had no heard back from them.

Chair Jerome Alexander, on behalf of Mr. Jack Kenton, asked for an update on the status of the GPS approach study by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the lack of security lighting at the Court House. Regarding the GPS approach study, Mr. Smith answered that a survey work was conducted by the County and the FAA is coordinating the design of the approach. Regarding the security lighting, Mr. Smith stated that there are lights on all four corners of the Court House building which meet the federal standards for obstruction lighting.

Mr. Rafael Herrera reported on events at El Monte Airport. Landscaping improvements are being made to the east side of the airport. A punch code lock was installed on the access gate to Universal Air Academy. A new unit box was installed for mail service at the airport, as requested by the Post Office.

Mr. Herrera reported on an incident involving a C-172 aircraft, based at El Monte Airport. The aircraft encountered problems while attempting to land at Burbank Airport. No injuries were sustained. Mr. Herrera finished his report by thanking Fast Aviation for sponsoring a pancake breakfast at the airport.

3. County - Contract Administrator's Report

Mr. Smith provided the Commission with copies of the Expense and Revenue Report for Fiscal Year 2007-08, and offered to answer any questions. Monthly reports are not yet available due to the implementation of a new County-wide Financial Accounting Software Program.

Chair Jerome Alexander inquired what “transfer to M01” means. Mr. Smith explained that the Aviation Division is responsible for two funds; the Aviation Enterprise Fund and the Airport Projects Improvement Fund. Excess funds are taken from the Enterprise Fund and transferred to the Capital Projects Fund, which finances airport capital improvement projects. The amount of \$1.9 million was transferred in the beginning of the fiscal year to finance Capital Projects.

Commissioner Cardono commented that the County airport community is fortunate to have such funds available to keep the airports open and well maintained.

Mr. Smith provided an update on Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds and the implementation of user fees on general aviation and the air traffic control system. The Aviation Community has unsuccessfully requested Congress to pass a 3-year AIP authorization. Due to the Country’s current financial crisis and a Congressional debate over a \$700 billion bail-out bill, the Congress decided that the FAA funding issue could wait until next year. The House of Representatives just passed a bill that extends the current aviation taxes on fuel and airline tickets, giving the FAA approximately \$8 billion to provide funding through the end of March 2009. Mr. Smith commented that due to these compelling issues, the user’s fee issue is not likely to be brought into discussion at least until March 2009; however, with a new President and a new Congress coming, new AIP funding bills must be introduced.

Mr. Smith informed the Commission that a meeting to discuss the discontinuance of United Airlines flights from Palmdale Regional Airport will be held next week in Palmdale.

Mr. Smith provided updates on the current projects at the County-owned airports.

Four proposals were received for the Development of Minimum Standards for Aeronautical Activities at the County-owned airports. The County is in the process of fee negotiations with the top-ranked consultant.

The design contract for the Lighting and Signage Relocation project at Brackett Field Airport has been reviewed and signed by the consultant. A Notice to Proceed will be issued upon contract review by County Counsel.

The Pavement Rehabilitation Project at Compton/Woodley Airport is progressing. The County’s drainage recommendations were incorporated into the draft design in order to address the unique drainage characteristics at the airport.

The Administration Building Refurbishment Project at El Monte Airport is expected to start in late October and should take from five to seven days for completion.

The County has received Caltran's comments regarding the draft design for the El Monte Airport Taxiway Development Project. As soon as the FAA provides its input, a meeting will be held with the consultant to go over the final design. The County expects to solicit construction bids and apply for FAA and State grants for this project in the Spring.

The Pavement Rehabilitation Project, Phase III, at General Wm. J. Fox Airfield is expected to be complete next week.

The contractor for the Monument Entrance Sign at General Wm. J. Fox Airfield will submit a proposal as to how the surface imperfections on the sign will be remedied.

Mr. Smith stated the next meetings to discuss the Whiteman Airport Master Plan Update will be held in the evenings in an effort to provide airport users an opportunity to provide their input during the process. He also informed the Commission that updates for the Whiteman Airport Master Plan are currently on the Commission webpage.

4. El Monte Airport Additional Items

Mr. Smith provided an update on the helicopter noise issue at El Monte Airport. A meeting was conducted with a few constituents living on the north side of the airport. Mr. Smith stated that several meetings have been held in the past 12 months in an effort to minimize the impact of helicopter noise in the surrounding community. As a result of these meetings, the training pattern for helicopters has been adjusted to avoid consecutive operations and low-flying helicopters over residential areas. The new procedures will be released in the form of a Letter of Agreement (LOA) that will be mailed out to flight schools that use the airport for training activities as well as transient traffic.

Chair Jerome Alexander inquired if the LOA will request flight schools to limit consecutive operations. Mr. Smith answered that the LOA will request that operators make no more than three consecutive trips around the traffic pattern.

Commissioner Cardono asked for an update on the search for alternate helicopter training sites in the County. Mr. Smith answered that after an extensive search for suitable training sites, two potential sites were identified in the San Gabriel Valley. The first is the previously discussed

Santa Fe Dam and the second option is a parcel identified north of the 210 freeway and east of the 605 freeway. Both sites are owned by the US Army Corps of Engineers, which has been against the idea of allowing helicopter training in the Santa Fe Dam.

Chair Jerome Alexander mentioned that during a prior meeting, two gentlemen, who live north of El Monte Airport, stated that the LOA would not resolve their concerns related to helicopter noise, and eventually, more complaints might be raised in the future. The aviation community is willing to change its habits in terms of operations to better accommodate the residents needs; however, she stated, the residents should also show some willingness in terms of accepting the compromise that has been offered by the aviation community.

Commissioner Cardono expressed concern regarding the search for a suitable site for helicopter training in Los Angeles County. He expressed discomfort with the fact that such a large County does not have an available site to accommodate helicopter training. Commissioner Cardono emphasized the search for a suitable site should continue. He suggested the County continue its efforts to communicate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to review their position regarding the Santa Fe Dam.

Mr. Smith acknowledged Commissioner Cardono's comments and explained that the search for a site for helicopter training has been concluded in the San Gabriel and San Fernando Valleys. Mr. Smith agreed with Commissioner Cardono that Los Angeles County is a large county; however, finding a viable place that will actually redirect helicopter training from El Monte Airport is pretty challenging because the areas available are too far from the airport. The real challenge is to find an area close enough, so that helicopter operators will find it appealing. Mr. Smith also added that the County will continue searching for suitable sites to alleviate the impact of helicopter training at El Monte and Compton/Woodley airports.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT – OPEN FORUM

Mr. Gilbert Viramontes asked for an update on the discussions regarding the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase.

Chair Jerome Alexander explained that the CPI is a mandatory increase required by the contract between the County and American Airports Corporation (AAC), and a change in the CPI increase would require a contract amendment. Chair Jerome Alexander took the opportunity and asked if the County is considering such an amendment.

Mr. Smith explained that an amendment of such nature is very unlikely because one of the main concerns when private and government agencies draft contracts is to make sure that those contracts contain a mechanism to cover increasing costs year to year, and one of the most common tools used nationwide to adjust rates is the CPI. This is the only mechanism the County has to cover its operational costs.

Chair Jerome Alexander acknowledged Mr. Viramontes' concerns and added that for every grant received from the FAA and the State for projects at the airports, the County is responsible for funding a percentage of the total cost, which comes from the revenues generated from aircraft hangars and tiedown rentals.

Mr. Viramontes also expressed concern regarding the fuel prices at the County-owned airports.

Mr. Scott Wardle answered that fuel price decreases are expected as soon as the high priced inventory in the tanks is depleted.

Mr. Les Slifkin, a third-party tenant, expressed concern regarding the annual rent increase and the hangars that will revert to the County. He asked if tenants will be informed about the new rates and payment instructions.

Mr. Wardle answered that notices are sent out to tenants in advance; however, it is contingent upon the participation of the master lessee providing the third-party tenants' mailing list in order to have the notices delivered. Mr. Wardle added that rent fees from reverted aircraft hangars will be paid to the County and tenants will receive correspondence from AAC as well as a copy of a County lease at least one month before the new lease agreement takes effect.

Mr. Slifkin also expressed concern regarding security at El Monte Airport, especially the south gate that has never been locked. Mr. Wardle stated that AAC would not have any objection in providing locks to subleases gates; however some airport operators have concerns regarding walk-in traffic that would be directly affected by the locked gates.

Mr. Smith stated that the Transportation Security Administration is conducting an overall assessment of possible threats at general aviation (GA) airports and will come up with solutions to mitigate those threats. These solutions will most likely result in new security procedures being adopted at all GA airports.

Mr. Don Hagopian suggested the meetings for the Whiteman Airport Master Plan Update be held during the evening. Mr. Hagopian expressed concern regarding a tree located on the first house near the end of runway 12 at Whiteman Airport. The tree has passed the phone pole's height, which creates safety issues for aircraft while on final approach. Mr. Hagopian also informed the Commission

that Mr. Walter A. Fuller, aircraft control tower manager at Burbank Airport, was among the fatal victims of the Metro Rail accident which occurred on September 12, 2008, in Chatsworth.

Mr. Albert Ramirez expressed concern regarding security at El Monte Airport and suggested installing a key pad on the south walking gate.

Mr. Bill Logan expressed concern regarding non-aviation users that are currently occupying hangars at the County-owned airports. He pointed out that aviation users produce more revenues for the airports than non-aviation users.

Chair Jerome Alexander stated that the Commission supports aviation use in all County-owned airports and mentioned the valuable opportunity that Whiteman Airport tenants and users will have during the Airport Master Plan Update to provide their input and discuss the future needs of the airport.

D. THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE AVIATION COMMISSION WILL BE HELD ON:

**Wednesday, October 29, 2008, at 7 p.m., at
Whiteman Airport
12653 Osborne Street
Pacoima, CA 91331-2192
(818) 896-5271**

Chair Jerome Alexander adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m. in memory of Mr. Walter A. Fuller who tragically died in the Metro Rail crash.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary George G. Butts
Los Angeles County Aviation Commission

MGO

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