



GAIL FARBER
Director of Public Works

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

AVIATION COMMISSION

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION

January 25, 2012, Meeting
Brackett Field Airport
1615 McKinley Avenue
La Verne, CA 91750-5846
(909) 593-1395

COMMISSIONERS

CLINTON SIMMONS
CHAIRMAN

DENNIS C. LORD
VICE CHAIRMAN

PETER AMUNDSON
SECRETARY

GEORGE G. BUTTS
MEMBER

ANGELO R. CARDONO
MEMBER

BOBBY E. CHASE
MEMBER

PENELOPE CORNWALL
MEMBER

HARVEY HOLLOWAY
MEMBER

ARON A. WOLF
MEMBER

VACANT
MEMBER

IN ATTENDANCE

Chairman Clinton Simmons
Vice Chairman Dennis C. Lord
Secretary Peter Amundson
Commissioner George G. Butts
Commissioner Bobby E. Chase

OFFICIALLY EXCUSED

Commissioner Angelo R. Cardono
Commissioner Penelope Cornwall
Commissioner Aron A. Wolf
Commissioner Harvey A. Holloway

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS STAFF

Mr. Dennis Hunter, Deputy Director
Mr. Richard L. Smith, Chief, Aviation Division
Mr. Aaron Walsh, Airport Project Coordinator

AMERICAN AIRPORTS CORPORATION - AIRPORT SERVICES DIVISION STAFF

Mr. Scott Wardle, Regional Director
Mr. Chris Brooks, Manager, El Monte Airport
Mr. Rafael Herrera, Manager, Compton/Woodley Airport
Mr. Steve Irving, Manager, General Wm. J. Fox Airfield
Mr. Andrew Marino, Manager, Whiteman Airport
Mr. Cyle Woodruff, Manager, Brackett Field Airport

GUESTS

Mr. Sheldon Bresin, Brackett Airport Association
Ms. Carmen Sainz, Department of Regional Planning
Ms. Renee Jackson, Aviation Division Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Simmons called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Simmons led the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

A. November 30, 2011, Minutes

The minutes were unanimously carried and approved.

B. American Airports Corporation - Project Manager Report

Mr. Wardle invited the airport managers to report on current events.

Mr. Andrew Marino reported on Whiteman Airport events

- **Management and Maintenance**

General maintenance and landscaping was performed. Mr. Marino highlighted the plumbing repairs made to the restrooms, as well as the ongoing weed abatement program.

- **Projects**

Mr. Marino reported that the large stanchion and parking area light fixtures were rewired in December and are now working properly. A security gate that also required repairs was brought back on line after a fault was found in the loop sensor.

Four backflow devices were overhauled and have been recertified for another year.

The County of Los Angeles' Aviation Division (AVI) has completed the widening of Airpark Way and the monument sign is currently being installed. Mr. Marino reported that there was little or no impact to any airport tenants during construction.

- **Development and Activities**

Avgas sales were down in 2011 from 2010, and Jet-A sales were up 3 percent. Hangars are at 84 percent capacity and tiedowns are at 99 percent.

Chairman Simmons inquired about the number of non-aviation use hangars at Whiteman Airport. Mr. Marino answered that approximately four County hangars were currently occupied by non-aviation tenants. Mr. Wardle explained the location of the vacant hangars and their approximate dimensions.

- **Meetings and Events**

Mr. Marino attended the Learning for Life event at Van Nuys on December 6, 2011, as well as the Whiteman Airport Association holiday party on December 8, 2011.

Mr. Chris Brooks reported on El Monte Airport events

- **Management and Maintenance**

A few aircraft are still in the process of being relocated due to the crack-sealing project. The project required a large number of aircraft be moved from their assigned parking locations but most have been returned.

The airport continues to feel the impact of the last wind storm on November 2011. Reports of minor hangar damage previously undiscovered have been sporadically turning up. All issues are being addressed as they are received.

Mr. Brooks reported that the State of California Airport Inspector came in December to look at the airport and conduct a permit inspection. The results were good and no issues were reported.

- **Projects**

The El Monte Airport staff added reflective gravel around the base of the windsock, enhancing the visibility of the visual aid and providing an additional layer of safety.

An electrical fault was tracked down and repaired in the main terminal building. Five stanchion lights that were not working were also repaired.

- **Development and Activities**

Hangar occupancy was down only slightly at 92 percent with about 25 percent non-aviation use. Jet-A sales were up 35 percent in 2011 from 2010, while total Avgas sales and airport operations remained about the same for both years.

- **Meetings and Events**

Two elementary schools took a field trip to the airport in January.

February 26, 2012, is the scheduled pilot fly-in and static display that occurs every month on the fourth Sunday.

Commissioner Butts commented that he visited El Monte Airport for a meeting in January and complimented Mr. Brooks and his staff on how well the terminal was being maintained.

Mr. Brooks replied to a question presented by Mr. Wardle regarding the health of the new pilot shop in the terminal building. He said they are doing well, but that the proprietor had hoped for a little better turn out over the holidays. Vice Chairman Lord added, saying he was looking forward to a continued partnership with the hobby shop for future events at Compton/Woodley Airport, which may increase their sales opportunities.

Mr. Steve Irving reported on General William J. Fox Airfield events

- **Management and Maintenance**

AVI supplied a new DVR for the security camera system at the airport.

Runway signs were purchased to replace several that were addressed during a Runway Safety Action Team inspection. Mr. Irving reported that more than a few have been installed, but others are still awaiting the additional preparation work needed before the entire job can be completed.

Several heaters have been keeping the plumbing warm in the restrooms to avoid pipes freezing and cracks from developing in the cold temperatures. Tenants have appreciated the heated bathrooms.

- **Projects**

Mr. Irving reported that AVI's crack-sealing project is complete. This will conclude the second part of the two-phase project.

- **Development and Activities**

Hangar occupancy was reported slightly up from December and the total airport operations were also up from last year.

- **Meetings and Events**

Secretary Amundson inquired about the Airport Master Plan meeting he attended on January 10, 2012, and what the total attendance turned out to be. Mr. Irving reported four or five additional people had showed toward the last part of the meeting.

Mr. Rafael Herrera reported on Compton/Woodley Airport events

- **Management and Maintenance**

General maintenance and upkeep have continued around the terminal building, which included the replacement of the awning and repainting the viewing deck. Weed abatement continues on the airfield.

- **Projects**

Mr. Herrera reported that the Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) is now up and operational; and Mr. Smith offered to send the Commission the telephone number and radio frequency information for not only Compton/Woodley Airport but all the AWOS stations at the County airports.

- **Development and Activities**

There were a total of eight hangar vacancies at the airport. Four of those were end-row units designated for storage only. November and December 2010 fuel sales were down about 2 percent compared to the same time last year.

- **Meetings and Events**

The airport hosted a commercial filming for a Domino's Pizza.

Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum hosted an open house for the Los Angeles Unified School District. Over 500 students attended.

Vice Chairman Lord shared that he attended the Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum's dinner for the premier of the Red Tails movie. The movie honors the Tuskegee Airmen.

Mr. Cyle Woodruff reported on Brackett Field Airport events

- **Management and Maintenance**

The aircraft/rescue/fire-fighting vehicle that was reported down for repairs last meeting is now up and operational.

Weed abatement on the airfield continues.

An Air Quality Management District (AQMD) inspection in December revealed some small issues with one of the above-ground storage tanks. Mr. Woodruff reported that airport staff was considering converting the gas storage tank to diesel in order to comply with vapor-recovery system requirements and permit fees being imposed by AQMD. This option is still

being reviewed. Mr. Wardle elaborated further saying that the tank was actually an auto gas tank that was not in use anymore.

- **Projects**

The Brackett Field Airport AWOS installation is near completion.

A drain pipe in the women's restroom was replaced, and some finishing work was just completed. Chairman Simmons inquired why new plastic piping materials were not used in the section replaced. Mr. Woodruff indicated that the contractor advised using the cast iron since it would work better with the other cast iron piping already in place and still in use.

- **Development and Activities**

Global Aviators Academy has been adding lots of improvements to their new facility, including improvements to areas outside their leasehold, which Mr. Woodruff said has made the appearance of the building look much better.

Hangar occupancy is down slightly from December. Fifteen percent of the County-owned and-operated hangars are currently rented to non-aviation tenants.

Jet-A sales were down 25 percent in 2011 from 2010 and Avgas was down 18 percent.

- **Meetings and Events**

Mr. Woodruff shared his experience at the airport Christmas Party last December, which he stated was well-attended.

- **Miscellaneous**

Mr. Woodruff also shared that an aircraft incident occurred in December, resulting in wing damage to an airplane that lost directional control on landing. One wing hit the ground after touchdown, but the airplane was able to taxi back to its hangar under its own power. No injury or damage was reported.

C. **County Contract Administrator's Report – Mr. Richard Smith**

- **Expense and Revenue Report for September**

Mr. Smith started by making two introductions: First, the new AVI Secretary, Ms. Renee Jackson and the new Airport Land Use Commission Section Head with the Department of Regional Planning, Ms. Carmen Sainz.

Mr. Smith provided the Commission with copies of the revenue and expense report and offered to answer any questions. Chairman Simmons inquired about both the leaking underground fuel tank monitoring at Compton/Woodley Airport, as well as expenditures for County Counsel. Mr. Smith replied that he met with the County's Geotechnical staff and said he is confident that their oversight of the contractor was appropriate. He mentioned that they were working within the parameters set by the State of California. Mr. Smith contributed the increase in the expenses for County Counsel to the consultations needed on the airport master planning process for Whiteman Airport and General William J. Fox Airfield.

- **Contract Tower Funding Program**

A quick briefing on the contract tower issue in Washington was given by Mr. Smith. He mentioned that Congressional discussion had been taking place about discontinuing the funding for the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Federal Contract Tower Program. It is of local importance because both Whiteman Airport and General William J. Fox Airfield have contract air traffic control towers. These two airports had representation on this issue as did all of the other members of the American Association of Airport Executives' (AAAE) Contract Tower Association. AAAE reported back from Washington last week and stated that a lot of noise was made on "the hill" and that the issue has been heard. AVI is hoping that Congress will give a multi-year authorization for funding, not only for the contract tower program, but for FAA spending in general to make it easier for grant acquisitions and project planning purposes. AVI has had to work with 22 partial-funding authorizations in recent years, making AVI's project schedule problematic.

- **Aviation Division Enterprise Fund**

The Aviation Enterprise Fund has now been placed in an interest-bearing account per a previous request. Mr. Smith stated that Public Works' Deputy Director, Mr. Dennis Hunter, was instrumental in helping make this process happen.

- **Whiteman Airport Strip Retail Center Update**

It is getting closer to the end of AVI's efforts to acquire the property. The developer's last sale price offered was right at \$3 million, but the second appraisal obtained by AVI came in a couple of weeks later at \$1.9 million. This disparity has caused problems.

The City of Los Angeles originally permitted this project. The County has been working with the City to get on its agency referral list when construction developments occur around the airport and are being considered for a City permit. Now when a development is referred to the County for comments, the project review will follow a checklist that

includes a proper notification to those agencies with jurisdiction over the site, such as any utilities, Fire Department, or in this case AVI.

- **Capital Projects Update**

The Whiteman Airport Master Plan CEQA initial study was being reviewed by the County's CEQA attorney. The attorney had a couple of concerns regarding how the consultant packaged a few of the items, specifically, noise and greenhouse gases. The attorney is working with the consultant to develop that section a little further. AVI is not quite ready to set a Board date until the CEQA process is complete.

The General William J. Fox Airfield Master Plan meeting was attended by representatives from the City of Lancaster's Economic Development Agency and Deputy Norm Hickling from Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich's office. Mr. Hickling complimented the results of the Master Plan document. Secretary Amundson attended the meeting, as well, and advised the Commission that he found the Master Plan forward looking with a good future outlook. Mr. Smith stated that the plan included some 65 projects over the 20-year planning period.

The slurry-seal project at Brackett Field Airport is complete. Only some punch-list items were being worked out. Total project cost was \$425,000.

D. Brackett Field Airport Items

No discussion.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT – OPEN FORUM

No comments.

III. OTHER ITEMS

Secretary Amundson stated he had received a letter from a pilot/constituent and requested that Mr. Smith address the topic regarding rising fuel costs at the County airports. Mr. Smith acknowledged that all the Commissioners were provided a copy of that letter and explained that AVI's contract with American Airports Corporation (AAC) provides them the responsibility of managing the fuel services at the airports. AAC has the decision to set the fuel prices and owns the inventory. Mr. Smith referred to Mr. Wardle to elaborate further. Mr. Wardle explained that they, in fact, have not changed the way they have done business over all these years and this subject seems to come up annually. Mr. Wardle said that the bottom line is that there are bills to pay and that the money has to come from some place. He cited a recent \$27,000 expense to replace a sensor on the underground storage tank at General William J. Fox Airfield and implied that the future for underground storage tanks was limited and future costs will be incurred when they have to convert these types of fuel dispensing systems to above-ground tanks.

Commissioner Chase stated that though he keeps his light sport airplane at Perris Valley Airport because the rent is cheaper, he has found that travel costs have not saved him any money. He asked about what the fuel flowage fee happened to be and was told that it was currently 30 cents. He made further comment that he might find auto fuel being made available to the light sport category of aircraft.

Chairman Simmons also remarked that AAC sometimes gets caught with inventory that has to be sold off before prices can come down.

Vice Chairman Lord said that he finds aviation fuel price complaints rise when the cost of auto fuel goes down. He mentioned that there has been litigation regarding the use of aviation fuels and a movement that stretches far beyond aviation. Vice Chairman Lord works for The Gas Company and reports that there is a movement to have electricity fulfill all home energy needs. This raises the question about costs for infrastructure and permits that will be needed in this new environment.

IV. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING WILL BE ON:

**Wednesday, February 29, 2012, 10 a.m.
Compton/Woodley Airport
901 West Alondra Boulevard
Compton, CA 90220-3528
(310) 631-8140**

Chairman Simmons adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clinton Simmons, Chairman
Los Angeles County Aviation Commission