



Dean D. Efstathiou,
Acting 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
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MAY 28, 2008
General Wm. J. Fox Airfield
4555 West Avenue G
Lancaster, CA 93536-8401**

COMMISSIONERS

EVELYN JEROME ALEXANDER
CHAIR

PENELOPE CORNWALL
SECRETARY

CLYDE G. BAILEY
MEMBER

GEORGE G. BUTTS
MEMBER

ANGELO R. CARDONO
MEMBER

BOBBY E. CHASE
MEMBER

DENNIS C. LORD
MEMBER

CLINTON SIMMONS
MEMBER

ARON A. WOLF
MEMBER

IN ATTENDANCE

Chair Evelyn Jerome Alexander
Commissioner Clyde G. Bailey
Commissioner Bobby Chase
Commissioner Dennis C. Lord

OFFICIALLY EXCUSED

Secretary Penelope Cornwall
Commissioner George G. Butts
Commissioner Angelo R. Cardono
Commissioner Clint Simmons
Commissioner Aron A. Wolf

LOS ANGELES COUNTY - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS STAFF

Mr. Richard L. Smith, Chief, Aviation Division
Mrs. Miriam Gomes Oprüşan, 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. Patrick Di Leva, Aviation Division
Mr. George Prewitt, Fox Field Airport Association

CALL TO ORDER

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

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Chase led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION BY THE COMMISSION**1. Minutes of the Meeting of April 30, 2008**

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

2. American Airports - Project Manager's Report

Mr. Scott Wardle commented that due to the recent price increase of crude oil, aviation fuel prices may reach \$6 dollars a gallon at the County-owned airports.

Mr. Jason Morgan reported on events at Whiteman Airport. Hangar inspections of the "N" row are complete. Annual fire extinguisher servicing will take place from July 12 through July 20, 2008. Informational brochures are being developed to help educate airport users and tenants of their responsibilities while driving on the airport. Mr. Morgan announced that the America's Heroes Air Show will be held in July 2008 at the Hansen Dam Recreational Center. Whiteman Airport will share a booth at this event with several aviation organizations from the area. The tentative date for the Challenge Air Event is October 18, 2008, and the first planning meeting is scheduled for May 29, 2008, at 4 p.m. Mr. Morgan and the Airport Operations Supervisor will be speaking at a local elementary school in an effort to encourage students to pursue aviation careers. A Whiteman Airport staff member was recently awarded a \$3,000 career scholarship from the San Fernando Valley 99's.

Mr. Jared Fox-Tuck reported on events at Brackett Field Airport. Annual fire extinguisher servicing was completed in May 2008. Annual fuel station filter replacements were also completed in May 2008. The County tractor is currently inoperable and expected to return to service in two weeks. The Wings of Freedom event was successfully held at the airport with minor limitations due to weather. Improvements have been made to the women's restroom in the administration building. The air conditioning unit in the administration building has been repaired and is in working

condition. An antique navigational chart dated from 1944 was donated to the airport and it will be placed in the pilots' lounge for public view. The Brackett Field Airport Pilots' Association will host its annual barbecue on June 7, 2008.

Mr. Andrew Marino reported on events at Compton/Woodley Airport. The EAA Young Eagles hosted an event at the airport on May 17, 2008. The wind sock post was painted and a larger windsock will be installed. Concrete steps between the fixed based operators have been repaired. A new pressure washer was purchased. A new airport sweeper was purchased by the County, and training was held on May 19, 2008. The new sweeper will be shared among the County-owned airports. The precision approach path indicator lights' (PAPI) transformer was repaired and the PAPI lights are back in service.

Mr. Rafael Herrera reported on events at El Monte Airport. Landscaping along Riverview Road is being updated. The consultant team for the Taxiway Development Project visited the airfield on May 13, 2008. Progress has been made on the hangar development located on the north side of the terminal building. Pre-school students from a local elementary school toured the airport on May 8, 2008.

Mr. Steve Irving reported on events at General Wm. J. Fox Airfield. The Pavement Rehabilitation Project, Phase III, is about 90 percent complete. Security cameras are being relocated in an effort to provide improved coverage at the airport. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has vacated the building adjacent to the administration building. The owner of the restaurant has expressed interest in relocating his facility to the vacant building.

Chair Jerome Alexander inquired about the plans for future use of the facility. Mr. Irving responded that several options are being explored.

3. County - Contract Administrator's Report

Mr. Richard Smith provided the Commission with copies of the Expense and Revenue Report for April 2008 and offered to answer any questions.

Mr. Smith announced that the position of Assistant Chief, Aviation Division is currently open and applications are being accepted. Negotiations are being held with the selected consultant for development of Minimum Standards for Commercial Aeronautical Activities at the County-owned airports.

Mr. Smith informed the Commission that a formal request was sent to American Airports Corporation (AAC) to initiate proceedings to vacate the

midfield area adjacent to the taxiway in preparation for the Aircraft Parking Ramp Project at Whiteman Airport. Two tenants are currently located on that parcel. One of the tenants will relocate to the south side of the airport service road. The flight school has not yet decided on a location. Mr. Smith noted that AAC has been working for quite some time to accommodate the flight school.

Chair Jerome Alexander asked if the flight school has the same flexibility to relocate as the other tenant does. Mr. Smith stated that many options were made available to the flight school including the use of a 50 by 50-foot hangar on an interim basis until a new facility is built.

Mr. Wardle added that several hangar options were offered to the tenant and it is now up to the tenant to make a decision.

Mr. Smith continued his report and stated that the initial project proposal was received for the Lighting and Signage Relocation Design Project at Brackett Field Airport. The initial fee estimate was \$154,000. Fee negotiations will take place over the next few weeks.

A draft drainage study including recommendations for the design of the Pavement Rehabilitation Project at Compton/Woodley Airport was received from the project consultant. The draft is currently being reviewed by the Department of Public Works' Hydrology section.

The contractor for the Monument Entrance Sign Project at General Wm. J. Fox Airfield has informed the County that the concrete-form liners used to construct the sign are expected to be delivered on May 30, 2008.

The Whiteman Airport Master Plan Update Independent Fee Estimate was received and approved by the FAA. The contract will be reviewed by the FAA, and once approved, will be awarded to the consultant. A Notice to Proceed will follow within a week of contract award. Mr. Smith added that the contractor may attend the next Commission meeting and provide information regarding the Master Plan Update.

Revised plans for the Airpark Way Entrance Improvements at Whiteman Airport have been approved by the City of Los Angeles, and the process of selecting a Job Order Contract should begin soon after obtaining a permit. The cost of the project is estimated at \$123,480.

Mr. Smith provided the Commission with a slide presentation regarding the 2008 Airport Customer Service Survey, which was conducted from March 28 through May 13, 2008. Out of 1,300 surveys mailed to airport tenants and 200 forms that were hand-carried to the County-owned airports, 408 responses were received. The average overall score for all

five airports was 3.73 points out of 5 points possible. A score of 5 represents the highest in overall satisfaction.

Chair Evelyn Jerome noted that the results for Compton/Woodley Airport under the contract focus areas had a slight drop from the previous year.

Mr. Smith stated that Compton/Woodley Airport has some challenges in its operations and usually receives a lower rate on appearance and amenities due to these issues. Mr. Smith also added that future projects to improve airport appearance and amenities are being explored.

Chair Jerome Alexander pointed out that lighting, markings, and airfield guidance systems also received a lower score when compared to the previous years. Mr. Smith explained that Compton/Woodley Airport has faced some problems with the PAPI lights and pilot-controlled lighting system, which may have caused the lower score under this category.

Mr. Smith observed that the survey results raised some concerns under the categories of airport safety, security, appearance, and amenities for all five County-owned airports. Therefore, Mr. Smith stated that some proactive steps will be taken in order to improve these crucial areas. In terms of security, new signs will be posted on the access gates stating that drivers are responsible for ensuring the gates close completely behind them. With regards to airport appearance and amenities, plans are being made to improve public viewing areas, which will include new picnic tables, airport informational panels, runway diagrams, and broadcasting the air traffic control frequency.

4. Annual Rate Adjustment

Mr. Smith presented the proposed rate adjustments for hangars and tiedowns at all five County-owned airports.

Mr. Smith informed the Commission that the contract between the County and AAC calls for an annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase in the monthly contract minimum payment made to the County. The increase is 3.28 percent and AAC has requested an increase in the hangar rates at the airports by the same 3.28 percent. A \$10 monthly increase for single-engine tiedowns at Whiteman Airport was also requested by AAC. Mr. Smith stated that demand for aircraft tiedowns at Whiteman Airport continues to be high, and the cost for a tiedown will remain well below that being charged by neighboring airports.

Mr. Wardle stated that the tiedown rate increase proposed for Whiteman Airport is actually the remaining portion of a \$20 increase requested in

2007. Prior to 2007, tiedowns at Whiteman Airport had not been adjusted for at least 15 years.

Commissioner Lord expressed concerns regarding the below target scores that Compton/Woodley Airport obtained in the Airport Customer Service Survey, and found it challenging to justify a rate increase to the tenants at Compton/Woodley Airport that, according to him, are based at an airport under substandard conditions. Commissioner Lord acknowledged the CPI increase is driven by a contractual obligation for AAC to meet the County's increase each year. However, he wondered if he could support that type of increase continuously without seeing some improvements at Compton/Woodley Airport. He concluded by saying that the survey results for Compton/Woodley Airport do not reflect or warrant a continued increase.

Mr. Smith acknowledged Commissioner Lord's concerns and noted that many of the improvements done at the airports are usually unseen such as sewer lines, electrical feeds, lighting, and pavement rehabilitation. He mentioned that it is understandable that airport users may question where the investments are made. He stated that in an effort to illustrate projects of this nature in a more effective manner, Aviation Division is currently developing an annual newsletter that will address descriptions of all projects at the County-owned airports. Mr. Smith also indicated that all the apron pavements around Compton/Woodley Airport are currently being redesigned, and the next project will be the redesign of the runway and taxiways. Construction of these ramp areas are estimated at \$20 million.

Chair Jerome Alexander noted that the survey results provide the public's perception of the airports without reflecting the actual reality. She acknowledged that a strong communication with airport users should take place to keep the airport community informed about the investments that are being made in the airports. She emphasized that better communication with airport users can play an important role in changing their perception. Due to the fact the survey results revealed a low level of satisfaction in certain areas, Chair Jerome Alexander suggested that the County forgive this year's increase in the minimum contract payment.

Mr. Wardle commented that the main issue is not the rent increase, but the services that will be provided with the new increase. Therefore, once AAC has details about what improvements the airport users want to see, he suggested finding a way to allocate funds to make the necessary improvements without necessarily freezing the rent.

Mr. Smith mentioned that despite the activities that are currently going on at the airports and the focused areas that are chosen for improvements

every year, it is impossible to negate the reality that costs go up and exceed any increase the County receives from the contract. Mr. Smith stated that it would be fiscally irresponsible for the County not to recover some of these costs that increase annually.

Chair Jerome Alexander heard from a member of the public regarding the annual adjustment.

Mr. George Prewitt expressed concern regarding the rental increase and supported a better communication with airport users.

Commissioner Chase sympathized with the General Aviation (GA) community and explained that rental increases are necessary to meet the continuous increase of expenses. He also supported the distribution of a newsletter to enhance communication with GA pilots.

Commissioner Lord expressed his opposition to the recommendation for the hangar rental increase and inquired as to how the annual budget would face challenges due to this decision.

Mr. Smith stated that the minimum payment increase is part of the contract between the County and AAC, and explained that AAC, as a County contractor, is responsible to annually recommend rates at the airports.

Mr. Wardle noted that AAC is not the only entity that will be punished by the non-approval of the hangar rental increase, adding that the requested 3.28 percent increase does not cover the annual operating cost increases that range above 5 percent.

Chair Jerome Alexander and Commissioner Lord suggested AAC provide justification for the hangar rental increase for further discussions.

Mr. Wardle suggested discussing the contract and budget impact next year before the minimum payment increase and requested the approval of the 2008 increase.

The Commission debated the merits of the annual rate adjustment and due to the lack of quorum and supportive documentation; the Commission approved continuing this item on the agenda for the June 25, 2008, meeting.

5. Election of Vacant Officer Position

Chair Jerome Alexander made the following nominations: Penelope Cornwall, Vice-Chair and George Butts, Secretary.

On motion by Commissioner Lord, seconded by Commissioner Chase, the nominations were approved.

6. General Wm. J. Fox Airfield Items

No additional items for General Wm. J. Fox Airfield.

7. Commissioners' Airport Tour

The Commission agreed to cancel the General Wm. J. Fox Airfield tour.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT – OPEN FORUM

No further comments were heard from the public.

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

**Wednesday, June 25, 2008, at 7 p.m., at
Brackett Field Airport
1615 McKinley Avenue
La Verne, CA 91750-5837
(909) 593-1395**

Commissioner Lord made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Chase. Chair Jerome Alexander adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary Penelope Cornwall
Los Angeles County Aviation Commission

MGO

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