

Aviation Advisory Committee  
January 16, 2008  
Milton, Florida

The Aviation Advisory Committee met on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Carlos Diaz, Vice-Chairman Randy Compton, and members Theodore Elbert and Clay McCutchan. Also present were the County Administrator (Hunter Walker), County Engineer (Roger Blaylock), and Administrative Services Manager (Tammy Simmons). Chairman Diaz called the meeting to order at 5:00p.m. Marty Martin arrived late.

McCutchan moved approval of the minutes from the October 10, 2006 meeting; Compton seconded, and the vote carried unanimously. (4-0)

**Chairman/Member Issues**

Diaz said the wrecked aircraft that was parked between hangars at Peter Prince Airport has been removed by an aircraft salvage company. He said there are currently no wrecked aircraft at Peter Prince Airport.

Diaz said he has not had time to fully research the possibility of moving the runway lights to the end of the runway at Peter Prince Airport. He said he did find out there has to be 25 feet between the bottom flight path and the top of boxcars on the railroad tracks. Diaz said he felt the runway can be extended without having an effect on the railway. He said he will do more research on the possibility of extending the runway and discuss the findings at a later meeting.

Diaz welcomed new member Theodore Elbert to the Aviation Advisory Committee.

**Pensacola Flight Watch, Inc.**

Dale Holbert said he is not aware of any current safety issues at Peter Prince Airport. He said everything is working at Pensacola Regional Airport including runway 1735.

Holbert said most of the plaza and paving has been completed in the Aviation Discovery Park at Pensacola Regional Airport. He said base columns for a skyshade stretcher are being placed on the east side of the park to provide shade. Holbert said there are up-to-date pictures of the park on the Pensacola Flight Watch website. He said the park is being well used. Compton asked if the park is still going to receive radios for the control tower. Holbert said the person donating the radios has them but has not had a chance to install them. He said he is hoping the radios will be installed as fast as possible.

**FBO Issues**

Davis Glass said the rotating beacon at Peter Prince Airport has been inoperative for several weeks. He said they are waiting on parts.

Glass said 9 deer were observed on the east taxiway at Peter Prince Airport. He said this is a sizable herd.

Glass said Peter Prince Airport is heavily into initial flight training of military students. He said large classes are being put out every three weeks. Glass said the heavy training will continue until the end of March and then will slack off until the spring semester graduates come online.

Glass said Sunday morning an individual accessed airport property through the maintenance gate. He said the lock that was on the gate was stolen leaving the gate unsecured. Glass said the individual got into one of the Peter Prince Airport school aircraft, started the aircraft, and was taxiing up and down the runway. He said an employee spotted the aircraft and suspected something was wrong. Glass said the aircraft engine was running very rough. He said the individual parked the aircraft and shut it off. Glass said the employee questioned the individual about what he was doing. He said the individual gave his name and then left. Glass said the employee wrote down the individual's vehicle tag number and called the Sheriff's department. He said the individual was apprehended. Glass said he went out to the airport and checked the aircraft the individual was in. He said the engine was running rough because the primer was unlocked, and this is the only thing that prevented the individual from taking off. Glass said the individual stated to the Sheriff's department that he knew Glass and had his permission to fly anytime day or night. He said the individual's statement is not true. Glass said he does not know the individual and has never seen the individual before. He said computer records were checked to see if the individual has ever flown at Peter Prince Airport, and no records were found for the individual. Glass said the individual is currently in the Santa Rosa County Jail on attempted theft and burglary charges. He said procedures are being examined to determine how to secure aircraft tied down outside on the flight line. Glass said propeller locks are not preferred because the propeller and/or engine will be torn up if someone attempts to start an aircraft with a propeller lock on it. He said another method of securing aircraft is with a throttle lock or a padlocked chain on the tail tiedown. Glass said something has to be done to prevent this from happening again. He said all gates with access to the flightline are currently secured. Glass said he is not sure about the security of the access gate by the FBO building. He said an individual can currently reach inside this gate and grab the lever to open the gate. Glass said there is a keypad on the gate, and he would like the keypad activated. Blaylock said the keypad can be activated.

McCutchan asked if any additional information has been received as to why the individual was in the aircraft. Glass said no. McCutchan said company aircraft are secure, but he asked about individual aircraft tied down at the airport. Glass said aircraft owned by individuals are tied down with ropes and are not secure. McCutchan asked about the security of CAP (Civil Air Patrol) aircraft. Glass said CAP aircraft have locks. McCutchan asked if federal laws were broken with this incident. Glass said he is not sure if unauthorized use of an aircraft is a federal crime. He said he contacted TSA (Transportation Security Administration), and they did not know if it was a federal crime either. Diaz said he spoke with several attorneys about the vagueness of the statutes concerning aircraft. He said he was told it depends on the situation. Diaz said he felt the TSA is very busy with airliners and does not have time to chase everyone that wants to take a joy ride in small aircraft. He said this is a local crime unless there is an overriding suspicion that an incident involves a major crime of terrorist activity. McCutchan asked if Peter Prince Airport FBO will press charges. Glass said yes. Diaz said he felt Peter Prince Airport FBO does not need to press charges because the State should be pressing felony charges. Walker said an incident is considered a state crime once an incident is reported and law enforcement becomes involved. Glass said he spoke with TSA about safe guards established for

identifying individuals who fly aircraft on a rental basis. He discussed documentation that an individual has to produce in order to rent aircraft at the airport.

Diaz said he is bothered by the ease at which an individual can access Peter Prince Airport. He discussed a gate at Peter Prince Airport being jacked up to allow access under the fence. Diaz said the airport is not secure. He said a security company representative came to Peter Prince Airport soliciting security cameras. Diaz discussed security camera systems and monitoring that is available. He said the security system would be quite expensive if the entire perimeter of the airport was monitored. Diaz said he felt the only other options would be to hire a security guard to remain at the airport from sundown to sunup while the FBO is closed or to enter into a formal agreement with the Sheriff's department to patrol the perimeter and occasionally the interior of the airport periodically throughout the night. He said fences and gates do not make the airport secure.

McCutchan said he wants the individual involved in the attempted theft of the aircraft to be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. He asked how the individual started the aircraft. Glass said the individual used a tractor key to start the aircraft. He said the Sheriff's Department currently patrols Peter Prince Airport twice a night up and down Airport Road.

Holbert said Pensacola Regional Airport's entire perimeter fence is sensor equipped. He said anyone that touches the fence sends an alert to the Pensacola Airport Police and the Pensacola Police Department. Holbert said the sensed fence is expensive, but it is a security alternative that can be used at Peter Prince Airport. Diaz said a sensed fence may be less expensive than security cameras. There was discussion on security cameras being inexpensive and effective.

McCutchan asked what is being done about the deer problem at Peter Prince Airport. Walker said eradication efforts were taken last year, but deer have apparently returned. Martin said NAS Whiting Field is also having problems with deer at their airport. He said NAS Whiting Field has implemented eradication efforts. There was discussion on rounding up the deer at Peter Prince Airport and removing them from the airport. Martin said at NAS Whiting Field Security counted over 100 deer sightings in one night. Diaz asked if there is currently an ongoing program to address this problem. Blaylock said no. Diaz said 9 deer were sighted at Peter Prince Airport the other day. He said deer can cause a tragic situation. Diaz said something needs to be done. Walker said staff will check into removing the deer from Peter Prince Airport. Blaylock said staff will also check the integrity of the fence around Peter Prince Airport for any openings the deer may be using. Glass said deer are not afraid of aircraft and they do a lot of damage to aircraft when hit. He said the deer need to be driven out of the airport fence. McCutchan said the deer will just come back in because the fence is too short. There was discussion on killing the deer at the airport to get rid of them.

### **Hangar Survey Review**

Simmons submitted hangar survey information to the Aviation Advisory Committee. (Attached in file) Diaz asked what the unknown airports refer to in the survey. Simmons said the unknown airports were surveys returned without airport names on them. McCutchan said the hangar rental rates at Peter Prince Airport are lower than most other airports. He asked how many people are on the hangar waiting list. Simmons said there are 103 people currently on the hangar waiting list. McCutchan asked who is responsible for raising hangar rental rates at Peter Prince Airport. Simmons said in the past hangar rental rates were recommended by the Aviation Advisory Committee and then brought before the Board of County Commissioners for approval. Walker said the Board of County Commissioners has to approve a rate resolution. Compton asked if raising hangar rental rates is being considered for a reason or just because the current rates are lower than other airports. Diaz said lower hangar rental rates are an attraction of Peter Prince Airport. He said the reasonable hangar rental rates at Peter Prince Airport are why there is a long waiting list. Diaz discussed locations and different airport amenities having an influence on hangar rental rates. He said he felt there is no need to raise rates to the top end of the scale. Elbert questioned how the County views the hangars. He asked if the County considers the hangars an enterprise to generate funds for the County or if funds from hangars are only to support the airport itself. Elbert said there is a system to determine hangar rental rates depending on the purpose of the hangars. He discussed things that should be used to determine hangar rental rates. Blaylock said the hangars at Peter Prince Airport were installed as an enterprise account to help match FAA and State grants for projects to improve Peter Prince Airport as well as for recurring maintenance costs of the airport. Elbert said it does not seem reasonable to base the hangar rental rates on hangar rental rates at other airports. He said the Peter Prince Airport hangar rental rates should be based on what it takes to satisfy the requirements the County has placed on the hangars. Elbert said a figure should be set based on what the cost is for maintaining the airport. Walker said the hangar rentals are set up as an enterprise account. He said any excess revenue over expenditures goes into the airport fund. Walker said General Funds have been used to subsidize the airport. He said the hangar leases have not been increased in quite some time. Walker said the County does not want to get into the business of subsidizing aircraft hangar rentals. Compton said he is not in favor of increasing hangar lease rates unless there is a need for the revenue. Glass said Peter Prince Airport is in Northwest Florida and discussed the cost of living in this area. He said the reasonable rates at Peter Prince Airport are an attraction, and the FBO is in favor of anything that enhances business at the airport. Glass said he felt the current rates at Peter Prince Airport are reasonable. Elbert asked if there is a published budget for this enterprise account. Walker said yes. He said it is included in the County budget. Walker said he will get a copy of the budget for the committee members. Elbert asked if the airport fund can be condensed out of the County budget. Walker said yes. Blaylock said he will get the committee members a copy of the Airport Master Plan that addresses proposed projects for the airport. Walker said he will bring the operating budget to the next Aviation Advisory meeting. He said the committee can review what has and has not been completed in the Airport Master Plan.

McCutchan said he is concerned that the price of doing business increases every year, but the hangar rental rates have not increased. He asked how things at Peter Prince Airport can continue to operate without an increase in hangar rental rates. McCutchan said the increase does not have to be at a level of other airports, but improvements are needed at the airport. He said one example is the need for security at the airport. McCutchan said an increase is occasionally needed to meet expenses. Walker said recurring maintenance costs are small, but capital projects are a burden. Diaz said the budget needs to be looked at before making any decisions on hangar rates. McCutchan said a small increase in the rates can make a big difference to help the airport. Compton said he wants to see the need before increasing rates. Diaz said a plan for the airport is needed to determine if raising rates is justifiable.

Holbert said Peter Prince Airport is an enterprise operation. He discussed profits going toward airport improvements. Holbert said the airport has to produce a return over and above maintenance costs. He said there is a need to generate funds for the County's share of improvements at the airport. Holbert said funds generated at the airport are only used for the airport.

Diaz said there first must be a plan and costs need to be determined before rates can be set properly. Compton asked if rates

increased for a project at the airport are rolled back once the project is completed. Diaz said probably not. He said he prefers an assessment on hangar tenants for a security system rather than permanently raising hangar rates. Walker said the County does not charge the airport for everything involved for its support. He discussed things at the airport not paid for with airport funds. Walker said he will bring the figures back at the next meeting. Diaz asked Walker to email the figures to committee members prior to the next meeting to allow committee members time to review the numbers.

McCutchan said he is concerned with the recent security breach and the animal problem. He said higher and better quality fences, more secure gates, and a security camera system tied into local law enforcement are needed. Compton said he wants all needs shown before he will support raising hangar rental rates. McCutchan said the airport needs to be secured. Martin said rent for everything goes up over time, and expenses for Peter Prince Airport have gone up. He said not all funds currently spent at the airport are generated from the airport. Martin asked Blaylock to provide a list of projects from the Airport Master Plan that have been completed and projects that still need to be completed or started. Blaylock said he will get a list together for committee members.

Holbert said there is a significant disparity in the rates per square foot at Peter Prince Airport. He said the additional space on the T-hangars is comparably under priced. Holbert said hangars being built to a specific code can make a big difference in hangar rates.

### **Other Business**

Walker said Bryon Woram resigned and has not been replaced. He said a Chairman and Vice- Chairman need to be elected.

McCutchan moved for Diaz to be Chairman for 2008; Compton seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. (5 – 0)

There was discussion on Compton being Vice-Chairman. Walker asked if Compton will continue as Vice-Chairman. All members agreed Compton will continue as Vice-Chairman for 2008.

There was discussion on the number of vacant positions that need to be filled on the Aviation Advisory Committee.

McCutchan asked if the CAP (Civil Air Patrol) building is going to be taken down. Walker said yes. He said CAP still wants to lease the spot at the airport. Walker said the Board of County Commissioners approved the lease. Diaz asked if CAP is paying for the lease. Walker said CAP is paying \$1 per year for the lease. Simmons said the County is working with the utility companies this week to make sure the utilities are not damaged during demolition.

Martin said this is his last meeting representing NAS Whiting Field. He said he is retiring on January 31 st . Martin invited the Aviation Advisory Committee members and staff to his retirement party at NAS Whiting Field. McCutchan asked who will replace Martin. Martin said he is not sure. He said he may be working as a contract until a replacement is found. Walker asked if a replacement has been chosen for this position. Martin said no. He said there are glitches in finding a replacement. Diaz asked if Martin's replacement will be a civilian. Martin said he believes the replacement will be a civilian. There was discussion on when the Aviation Advisory Committee was formed.

### **Next Meeting/Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Aviation Advisory Committee is scheduled for February 20, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Aviation Advisory Committee at this time, the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.