

Aviation Advisory Committee  
June 18, 2008  
Milton, Florida

The Aviation Advisory Committee met on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Carlos Diaz and members Theodore Elbert, Mike Harris, and Randy Roy (NAS Whiting Field representative). Also present were the County Administrator (Hunter Walker) and County Engineer (Roger Blaylock). Chairman Diaz called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Aviation Advisory Committee member Marty Martin arrived late.

Elbert moved approval of the minutes from the April 16, 2008 meeting; Harris seconded, and the vote carried unanimously. (4-0)

**Pensacola Flight Watch, Inc.**

Dale Holbert gave an update on the Aviation Discovery Park at Pensacola Regional Airport. He said the sky shade structure has been installed. Holbert said the structure looks good and provides needed shade. He said the 5 remaining Honoree Columns and Plaques will be installed the 1 st week in July.

Holbert said the Super Unicom at Peter Prince Airport is still not working. He said this is the prime communications radio for the airport and needs to be fixed.

Holbert said he is not sure if the Beacon at Peter Prince Airport has been realigned.

**FBO Issues**

Diaz said Davis Glass can not attend tonight's meeting but wanted some information passed along. He said an electrician set up the wiring for the emergency generator for the fuel pumps at Peter Prince Airport. Diaz said jet fuel and gasoline can now be provided in the event of an emergency.

Diaz said the person that installed the Super Unicom at Peter Prince Airport and was very familiar with the system is no longer available. He said the FBO has tried to locate someone to work on the system, but no one seems to know the system. Diaz said the Super Unicom works intermittently and does not have much of a range. He asked if staff can contact the company that sold the Super Unicom system to see if there is something that can be done to fix the problem or if a new system can be purchased.

Holbert said the Super Unicom operates within one mile. He said the system used to operate 7 to 10 miles out. Holbert said Blaylock indicated there may possibly be an avionics expert that can fix the system. Blaylock said the person he had look at the Super Unicom system is a radio expert and he said he has not heard back from that person. Holbert asked if there is a avionics expert at Peter Prince Airport that can possibly look at the system. Diaz said there is a fully certified avionics person at Peter Prince Airport. He said that person can be asked to look at the Super Unicom system. Holbert said the problem with the Super Unicom system seems to be a range problem. He said the system is useless at the current range.

Blaylock said he will follow up with the radio expert that works under County contract. He said he will attempt to contact the manufacturer of the Super Unicom system. Blaylock said he will find out the replacement cost if no other alternatives are available to fix the problem. Blaylock said the problem sounds like a transmitting issue. Elbert said an antenna problem should be able to be identified quickly. He asked about the beacon problem at Peter Prince Airport. Diaz discussed the alignment problem with the beacon. Blaylock said the beacon is fixed. Lease Fees at Peter Prince Airport Walker said the new hangars are coming online and the Board will need to take action. He said it is being recommended the lease fees for the new hangars be set at \$225.00 per month. Walker reviewed current hangar lease fees for the older hangars at Peter Prince Airport. (Attachment in file) Elbert said he thought staff was going to prepare some type of information about hangar lease fees and the airport budget. Walker said the capital budget and expenditures from the last couple of years were provided at the last meeting. Diaz discussed information that was provided at the last meeting. Blaylock provided a list of current (last 20 years) capital projects that have been ongoing at Peter Prince Airport. (Attachment in file) He said the list does not include any operations or maintenance at the airport. Blaylock briefly reviewed the capital projects list and the cost associated with the projects. He said Peter Prince Airport became an Enterprise Fund in 1998. Blaylock said rental fees from the hangars go toward the match for future projects. He said future projects on the horizon for Peter Prince Airport are additional hangars. Blaylock said the County has an 80/20 match for an additional \$400,000.00 (of which the County will provide \$100,000.00) for additional hangars in the DOT (Department of Transportation) budget. He discussed the cost associated with building hangars. Blaylock said the County will be requesting the DOT funds and a JPA (Joint Participation Agreement) will be entered into for additional hangars. He said there are not enough matching funds to do the run up aprons on each of the four quadrants on runways 18 and 36. Blaylock said any additional safety improvements at Peter Prince Airport will have to be funded 100% out of Peter Prince Airport funds. He said the County borrowed the match funds for the new T-hangars and said that loan will be retired through lease fees. Diaz asked the time it will take to retire that loan. Blaylock said 3 to 5 years. He said any additional improvements will have to be accomplished by "pay as you go" method or through a loan to be retired with hangar fees.

Diaz said income generated through hangar lease fees does not meet obligations of the airport when hangar depreciation is included. He asked where funds collected at the airport are placed. Blaylock said the funds are placed in a restrictive fund to be spent at Peter Prince Airport. Diaz asked if there is any money in the fund. Blaylock said he is not sure of the exact amount of money in that fund but said it is a minimal amount. Diaz said hangar fees as currently structured will not come close to covering expenses when the depreciation is included. Walker said the County is not proposing lease fees cover all expenses at the airport. He said lease fees would not be reasonable if that was done. Walker said a survey was performed to determine how lease fees at Peter Prince Airport compare to other comparable airports. He discussed proposed rate changes for the older hangars at Peter Prince Airport. Walker said there are no proposed rate changes for the corporate hangars. He said staff felt proposals can be taken to determine the best rate possible for the corporate hangars.

Diaz said the shortfall in the depreciation is too large for the market to bear. He said increasing hangar fees is reasonable if

there is a specific project in mind but said he is hesitant because of the high skyrocketing cost of fuel. Diaz said the current cost of fuel is a tremendous financial burden on aircraft owners. He said adding the small increase to hangar rental rates at this time (which is a small raise that does not really affect the depreciation shortfall) is adding an unnecessary burden to pilots at the airport. Diaz said he felt the old hangar fees should not be increased.

Harris asked the size of the new hangars. There was discussion on the difference in sizes of the hangars at Peter Prince Airport.

Ralph Smathers discussed money from lease fees received at Peter Prince Airport (minus maintenance costs) being placed in an interest bearing account. He said he felt doing that will generate enough money to cover the cost of building new hangars in the future. Smathers asked if \$1,500.00 per month will cover expenses at the airport. Walker said that possibly may cover expenses but said he is not sure. He discussed maintenance costs at Peter Prince Airport not charged to the airport.

Smathers said the older hangars at Peter Prince Airport look good to him. He said the roofing may need some work but otherwise the hangars look to be in good shape. Smathers asked if the federal government paid for the hurricane damage to the hangars. Blaylock said FEMA paid for the uninsured losses that resulted from hurricanes. He said FEMA does not pay for losses for any damage caused by disasters that are not declared federal disasters. Blaylock discussed damage to hangars at Peter Prince Airport caused by a tornado. He said this damage was not covered by FEMA.

Blaylock said there is a Master Plan for Peter Prince Airport. He said the Master Plan shows another 97 hangars on the east side of the airport. Blaylock said matching funds for design and infrastructure at the airport come from revenue generated at the airport.

Smathers said he prefers the hangar lease fees not go up.

Diaz said he is not sure if there is a legal impediment for investing funds from the airport. Blaylock said the Clerk of Court is responsible for financing. Walker said under Florida Statute the Clerk of Court is responsible for managing money. He said the Clerk of Court does invest money. Walker said interest earned gets placed back into the fund. Diaz asked if there is a person tasked with being an investment manager for monies that can be invested by Santa Rosa County. Walker said yes. He said the Santa Rosa County investment planner is extremely conservative. Walker said the County participates in State operated loan pools. Smathers said there may be restrictions with investing money, but the money should be invested to get a return. Walker said he is aware these are tough times but said rates have not gone up since 1998. He said the rates at Peter Prince Airport are lower than that of comparable airports.

Diaz asked if the corporate hangars at Peter Prince Airport are rented. Walker said no. He said soliciting proposals for the corporate hangars was discussed at the last Board of County Commission meeting. Walker said staff is going to look at that issue again because concerns were expressed. Diaz said it will be difficult to attract a corporate person to an airport with less than 4,000 feet of runway. He said that needs to be worked on.

Harris said he was told there is a list of 80 people waiting for hangars. He asked the number of people that have dropped off the list due to the high cost of fuel, selling of aircraft, etc. Harris said he wants to know the number of legitimate people actually on the waiting list. Walker said he is not sure on the exact number of people on the waiting list but said the list is consistently purged.

Martin said he is concerned that the County is borrowing money for needs at the airport when the airport is suppose to fund itself as an enterprise. He said he felt the hangar rates need to be increased to help build a pot of money for future needs.

Walker said some of the roofs on the older hangars are old and weathered and are a concern. He said the only source of funds to fix the roofs will be the enterprise fund at the airport. Walker discussed not collecting rent or evicting anyone after past hurricanes. He said he felt the County has been very fair regarding the airport.

Elbert asked current thoughts concerning hangar rents and asked if the increase in rent is something that is definitely going to be proposed. Walker said the rate for the new hangars will have to be established before the hangars come online. He said older hangar rental rates have been a topic of discussion for a couple of months. Elbert asked if the new hangar rates will come close to balancing expenses with revenue. Walker said not with depreciation included. He said it will make the revenue and expenses closer. Elbert said depreciation is approximately 80 to 90% of the expenses. Diaz said revenue is on the positive side if depreciation is not included but said there is an enormous shortfall if depreciation is included. Walker said there are costs associated with depreciation that will escalate over time. He said repairs to the hangars will have to be performed when the hangars age.

Diaz asked how the rate for the new hangars was determined. Walker said the rate was set to cover the County's portion of the note for the new hangars over the next five years and then to cover repair and depreciation. Diaz asked if a vote by the Aviation Advisory Committee is needed for the new hangar rental rates to be presented to the Board of County Commissioners. Walker said staff prefers a recommendation by the Aviation Advisory Committee. Diaz said he does not have a problem with the rate proposed for the new hangars. He said he felt the Aviation Advisory Committee needs to reach a consensus or vote on this issue. Walker said the hangar rates can not be set at a rate to cover depreciation because the rate will be too high. Diaz said it will be approximately \$900.00 per month to meet depreciation.

Elbert said he would like to see the County admit there is intrinsic value to having the airport and place a dollar figure on that value. He said ideally expenses should match revenue including amortization but said that will put the whole burden on people renting hangars at the airport. Elbert said Santa Rosa County benefits from the airport being located in the County. Walker said there is benefit to a county having a general aviation airport. He said he is not sure how to attach a dollar value to the airport. Harris discussed the airport being important to a businessman located in the Santa Rosa Industrial Park. Elbert said the value of the airport must be factored in if the airport is to operate as an enterprise. Walker said it may be possible for budget staff to try to place a value on the airport. Elbert said the number can be arbitrary.

Roy said he felt it is a good thing to improve the hangars. He said it seems logical to increase hangar rates considering the amount it costs to maintain the hangars.

Martin moved for the Aviation Advisory Committee to recommend to the Santa Rosa County Commission that the rate for the

new hangars be approved as proposed tonight and the rates for the existing hangars be increased as proposed by Walker (\$25.00 increase for internal hangars/\$30.00 increase for end hangars); Harris seconded, and the motion passed by majority vote with Martin, Harris, and Roy in favor of the motion. Elbert opposed. Diaz abstained. (3-1-1)

### **Civil Air Patrol Request**

Walker presented a letter and pictures to the committee concerning Civil Air Patrol's request to locate a mobile response unit at Peter Prince Airport. (Attachment in file)

Lt. Col. Rogers A. Porter said he has assumed command of all Civil Air Patrol units from Marianna to the west. He said there are five units. Porter discussed the background of the Civil Air Patrol. He said he is requesting permission to secure a mobile command post at Peter Prince Airport for use by deployed recon teams. Porter said the mobile command post is not for local use; it is for employment in disaster. He said the mobile command post will occasionally be opened up for an exercise. Porter said the mobile command post will not be hooked up and no one will be residing in it. He described the trailer that will be used as the mobile command post. Porter said the mobile command post will need to remain at Peter Prince Airport at least until after the current hurricane season.

Diaz asked if the mobile command post will be anchored. Porter said yes. Diaz asked if this is permanent or temporary until something can be built. Porter said a building fund has been started to build on the property. He said the current plan is to have the mobile command post on the property for the current hurricane season, but the main objective is to build a building on the property.

Elbert asked if the request has been coordinated with the Santa Rosa County EOC (Emergency Operations Center). Porter said no. He said the State deploys the team when the team is needed. Porter said the State EOC allows the Civil Air Patrol to provide information to the County EOC. Elbert asked if there will be a representative at the County EOC. Porter said probably not this year. He said there is a representative that is going through the training courses with the Santa Rosa County EOC this year. Elbert said it seems the Santa Rosa County EOC should be made aware that the Civil Air Patrol unit will be here and should know what the Civil Air Patrol capabilities are. Porter said the Civil Air Patrol Director of Operations is currently working with the Santa Rosa County EOC. He said he can not promise there will be an actual person from Civil Air Patrol in the Santa Rosa County EOC building because his people may be out in the field. Elbert asked if there will be coordination with the Santa Rosa County EOC so the County EOC is aware of what the Civil Air Patrol is doing. Porter said yes. He said the Santa Rosa County EOC may not be aware of the trailer being placed at Peter Prince Airport. Porter said the trailer will not remain at the airport at all times; it will be moved at times to serve all of Northwest Florida during disasters. Diaz asked if Civil Air Patrol is capable of communicating with the Santa Rosa County EOC with radios during disasters. Porter said the State gives orders to the Civil Air Patrol unit. He said sometimes those orders may be transmitted through the Santa Rosa County EOC or some other county's EOC. Diaz said the Civil Air Patrol unit and the Santa Rosa County EOC may be deployed to the same disaster without knowledge of what the other is doing. Porter said he hopes the State and EOC will do a good job communicating with each other. Walker said typically those types of communications go between the State EOC and the County EOC. Porter said the Civil Air Patrol had the capability of placing someone in the county EOCs in the past, but there are no longer enough people qualified to serve in the EOCs. Diaz asked if the County has any issues with the trailer being located at Peter Prince Airport. Walker said no. He said the Civil Air Patrol has a lease for the property at Peter Prince Airport. Walker said the County does want the trailer tied down. Porter said the Civil Air Patrol is actively working to get involved with all EOCs. He said there is a federally approved memorandum of understanding for use by counties to guarantee services at a set fee. Porter discussed services available and costs to counties through a memorandum of understanding.

Martin moved to recommend approval to allow the Civil Air Patrol Emergency Response Mobile Unit to be located at Peter Prince Airport provided tie downs (unhookable type) are attached to the trailer at all times while at Peter Prince Airport; Harris seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

### **Other Business**

Holbert said he could not locate any information in the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan on who is in control of keeping Peter Prince Airport open and how the airport will be utilized during emergencies. He said he felt it is a good idea to have a plan for the airport. Holbert said people need to be made aware if the airport is open and if there is fuel available during emergencies. He said the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan needs to include how the airport will be operated during emergencies. Walker said he will check to see if that information is being included in the revision of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Holbert discussed the differences in hangar rates, runway lengths, and amenities available at Pensacola Regional Airport and Peter Prince Airport. He said Santa Rosa County needs to keep these differences in mind when setting hangar rates. Holbert said people may tend to go to Pensacola Regional Airport to rent hangars if the rates are too close because of what is available.

Holbert asked if a decision was made on how the new hangars will be handled as far as leasing. Walker said the new hangars will be made available to the current hangar lessees first. Blaylock said he believes Tammy Simmons is working on a list of current hangar lessees who want the new hangars. Holbert said he felt that is a good way to handle rental of the new hangars. He said people need to be made aware of the list being created. Blaylock said prioritization of who gets offered the new hangars will have to be determined.

Martin said there are a lot of Aviation Advisory Committee members that do not have a copy of the Master Plan and Airport Layout Plan for Peter Prince Airport. He asked staff to supply a current copy to all committee members. Blaylock said the most current copy is from 2003. He said it is time to revise the Master Plan. Blaylock said staff will get committee members a copy of the most recent Master Plan.

### **Next Meeting/Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Aviation Advisory Committee is scheduled for July 16, 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 6:00 p.m.

