

**TACOMA NARROWS AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MEETING SUMMARY**

**Thursday, July 13, 2017**

A regular meeting of the Pierce County Tacoma Narrows Airport Advisory Commission (TNAAC) was held on Thursday, July 13, 2017 at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held at the Pierce County Library, 4424 Point Fosdick Dr. NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98335.

**I. Call to Order & Welcome**

Chair Bob Felker called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Commission members introduced themselves.

TNAAC VOTING MEMBERS	
<b>Present:</b>	Bob Felker, Chair Brad Pattison, Vice Chair Michael Murphy Kurt Grimmer Terry Lee Laura Fox Hal Cline Larry Fickel Wiley Moore
<b>Excused:</b>	Brian Durham
TNAAC NON-VOTING MEMBERS	
<b>Present:</b>	
<b>Excused:</b>	Michael Perrow, City of Gig Harbor; Derek Young, Council District 7
PIERCE COUNTY STAFF	
<b>Present:</b>	Jay Simons, Operations & Maintenance Supervisor Lauren Behm, Interim Administrator Cindy Willis, Office Assistant
VISITORS	
<b>Present:</b>	Nine members of the public signed the attendance sheet.

**II. Approval of Prior Meeting Summaries**

By motion (Lee/Fox) the meeting summary for May 11, 2017 was approved unanimously.

**III. Visitors and Petitions**

*(Public comments are limited to 3 minutes per person on non-agenda items.)*

None.

#### IV. Reports

- Jay Simons, Operations & Maintenance Supervisor, provided the O&M report. Wings & Wheels took a lot of time getting the airport ready. Since then, we've repaired roof leaks in the HeliTrak building, and fixed the lights in their hangar that required a lift; we replaced lights that were out in the 1402 building (ATP); and fixed the gutters in the 1524 T-hangar building where they had separated from the building. We're in the process of fencing off the back-up generator north of the garbage bins. We designed and estimated for a new garbage bin enclosure to put next to PAVCO by the road and will install a chain link fence around it. The tower has its own generator. There have been black bear sightings on the south end and west side of the runway.

Terry Lee asked about the attendance at Wings & Wheels. Jay said that Jensene takes a couple weeks off after the event, so we have no numbers yet; as soon as we receive them, we'll share those numbers with the TNAAC. He thought there were more people this year than last and definitely more show cars than planes. Terry said it was a great event.

Someone in audience asked about whether personal planes are allowed to participate; Lauren said that an email went out to tenants inviting them to exhibit their planes.

- Lauren Behm, Interim Administrator, provided her report. We've advertised for two positions that will be open on the TNAAC as of November: one airport user and one community resident. Both are 4-year terms and applications are due July by 28, so spread the word. Laura Fox asked about future meeting locations; it's no fun to meet at PAVCO in the winter. Lauren said we're not in our own office because Thursday night is open mic night at the Hub and it's fairly noisy. The library is a great meeting space. Brad Pattison said the fire station is also a good meeting location. Laura wondered if it's heated. Lauren said we'll try to keep the library as the prime location and use the fire house as a second choice. Brad asked about the definition of airport user; Lauren said it's fairly broad. Brad noted that George Swift was very disappointed he didn't get representation on the TNAAC. Lauren said it's up to the Executive to conduct interviews and make the decision.

Lauren said we sent out an email and received feedback about closing the restroom in the HeliTrak building. We've pulled back from that position and it's currently still open to the public, but we are going to be closing it and looking at the restroom in the Pioneer building as an option. That will require renovations; we'll need to wall it off so we can rent out the space; as long as it's not too expensive, that will be our plan. We currently have two porta-potties—one at the south end of the Pioneer building and one south of the 1724 building which are usable now. There are also restrooms at the Hub, a porta-potty near the water tanks, and our airport office as long as someone is there. Laura Fox said to leave the HeliTrak restrooms open until the fix is in place. Lauren said that the HeliTrak staff has grown and they need another restroom; members suggested that HeliTrak can use the porta-potty. Laura said they can share. It makes no sense to give up a restroom to a business that doesn't need an airport to conduct the majority of its business. Lauren said she hopes we're able to quickly fix the restrooms in the Pioneer building. A motion (Fox/Murphy) passed unanimously to recommend that the HeliTrak restroom remains open to the public until the Pioneer building restrooms are complete and usable.

Lauren said the non-aeronautical use policy was passed by the Council and was effective July 1. Inspections have begun for the condos; we're working on email notification. We hope to complete inspections by the end of August. Then we can update the inventory annually. The policy was adopted as part of the Airport Rules & Regulations which are found on the website. Jay Simons said cooperation with condo owners has been good; he's done 14 inspections to date, scheduling them with Frank Scoggins or doing drive-bys if the doors are open. We'll schedule two blocks of time for inspections; if those dates don't work for you, contact Jay for individual appointments. Michael Murphy asked if Jay is looking for other issues or just the non-aeronautical—he's just checking for accessible working airplanes. Lauren said we do a monthly inventory to check for maintenance needs. All the condo hangars inspected to date are in compliance. Lauren said the condos can be inspected or tenants may state that they're not in compliance; then the condo association has to request a waiver. Almost 14 out of 70 units are claiming non-compliance. Michael asked about the process for a waiver; who makes the decision? Lauren said a request from the condo association will come to the County, then to the TNAAC for a recommendation; then the County will determine the next step. If a waiver request is made to the FAA, the FAA makes the final decision. An audience member asked about square footage requirements; Lauren said the primary use must be aviation; there are no square footage requirements. Someone suggested that people might pack their car hangars with drones and call it an aeronautical use. Brad Pattison said drones aren't included in the list of aeronautical uses.

- Tower Report – Bonnie Malgarini, control tower chief, was not in attendance. Jay Simons said in May, we had close to 10,000 operations; fuel sales by the FBOs total 148,000 gallons so far this year.
- Commission Reports – Larry Fickel said the FOTNA movie night is August 12. He expects to have up to 600 people attending with a BBQ truck and other vendors. It should be a good time. It's in the same location as last year.

## **V. Old Business**

- Hangar Lease Rate Update – Michael Transue phoned in and provided a progress report. He expects to have a draft report next week from the contractor ValBridge. They've toured the entire airport facility and got a good sense of its size; they've done background work and gathered lease information and square footages. We compared a long list of local airports for lease rates. Auburn and Hillsboro were added for general aviation purposes. Maury Brackett is finishing up the report this week. Michael and Bill Vetter will review it and provide comments to the contractor; he expects the full report to be ready for the next TNAAC meeting; hopefully the Performance Audit Committee will have accepted it by then. The TNAAC recommendation will go to the Economic Infrastructure Development Committee for action.

Wiley Moore asked if we'll be on time for inclusion in the 2018 budget. Michael said it will be really close for the Exec's budget, but certainly there will be opportunity to include it in the budget process before the Council in October/November. Wiley asked staff if they believe timing is adequate. Lauren said she'll be prepared to make budget adjustments if the report shows rate changes are needed. Wiley said it would be a shame if we didn't

make this budget cycle. Brad Pattison said the issue came up last June and the TNAAC voted to keep rates the same; later we revisited the issue because he didn't think rates were in line with the quality of the hangars. We looked at surrounding airports and voted unanimously to recommend lower rates: a 25% reduction for t-hangars and quads, but no reduction for offices because there is demand for them. If we're not in time for this budget cycle, it will be a blemish on the process. The last rate study didn't consider the condition of hangars, only square footage, and that's unreasonable. Michael said the message was received and the condition of the hangars was pretty clear. Michael Murphy asked about the shelf-life of the study--when does it need to be done again? Michael Transue said he didn't know the answer, but he'll ask the contractor. Michael Murphy asked if it's possible to get preliminary look so we can think about it before making a recommendation; Michael Transue said the Performance Audit office said it's not possible. We do our internal review and try not to have external influences on the report. However, it should be a quick turnaround. Once we get the report and the recommendation to the Performance Audit Committee is ready, we might provide it to the TNAAC with a caveat that Performance Audit has not yet accepted it. Michael Murphy said the sooner the better. It would be nice to have time to digest it. Brad Pattison said we also need to look at the big picture for the hangars. Of the airports of similar quality in Washington and Oregon, none have hangars in this state of disrepair. Dan Neil asked about vacancy rate; Lauren said it's 20%; we have rented 4-5 hangars in the last month and are at the highest occupancy rate in several years.

## **VI. New Business**

- Grass Landing Strip – Lauren has not yet received the engineer's cost information on this project. It's in our Master Plan and we believe the FAA will approve it as long as there are no dual operations and it's controlled by the tower. We're looking at what Public Works can do to keep costs low, and use County staff to construct it without having to pay a contractor. The Roads Dept. will give us a deep discount on labor when they have training to do with new operators. We will update you when more information is received.

Larry Fickel said it's just a grass strip; sometimes engineers get carried away. Keep things realistic. Lauren has conveyed that to the consulting engineer—try to make it functional, but not fancy. Brad Pattison asked if there's any County rule that prohibits someone from landing on the grass; the FAA says it's fine. Lauren said she doesn't think so. Jay said there are currently some ditches and places you wouldn't want to land. Brad said the Juranichs have antique planes that do better landing on grass. Lauren said there's an airport in Oregon that has antique aircraft flying every second Saturday to bring out the public; she would love to see something like that here. The Juranichs are interested in providing a living history museum as an asset to the airport. Larry Fickel asked about hangars shown on the drawings – what does that mean? Lauren said they're part of the master plan recommendation to put general aviation on the west side; we'd need more infrastructure to make that happen, so there are no solid plans. The economic development task force for the airport will look for a developer to put in hangars. She said that Warren Hendrickson said there's legislation to provide low-interest loans to build hangars. We need to make a modification to the airport improvement plan to receive FAA grant funding, and increase the priority of this project to get more development and revenue. Larry Fickel asked about the timeframe; Lauren said not yet—the task force will need to make prioritizations first. Michael Murphy asked if the taxiways are to scale. Lauren said it looks narrow, but she'd

have to ask the engineer. Dan Neil asked about the runway; is this proposal going to restrict development there? Lauren, said no; originally it was further north, but the preferred location is further south and there's no impact to development.

- Airport Signage – Lauren said we got a mini grant for economic development to spend by the end of the last year, so we purchased mast arms for the light poles to hang banners along 26th and another four in the parking lot. The next step is to go to businesses on the airport to see who wants to sponsor a banner. Lauren said she would prioritize business directional signage first to point people toward businesses; she got a design and is getting quotes. When she gets quotes, we'll have further discussion to start the signage project this year. Michael Murphy asked if the banners are subject to the County's signage ordinance. Lauren will check; there will be a standard design, not just willy-nilly. Larry Fickel said the proposal shows signage on the hangars on 26th as you approach the tower; Lauren said logo signage is the second priority—she needs to get quotes, but that would be easy and impactful.
- ALP Modification to Eagle Communications – Lauren said we're proposing to modify the ALP to accommodate Eagle Communications (a current tenant) in the 1026 building. They want to stay on the airport and we have land that is not prime for aviation use (different elevation than the runway). It's the land with the old airport manager's house—the blue building in the corner (#34). Eagle is proposing a ground lease with the County; they'd put up the new building and move the laydown area now in the pit to the west of the building. The County would demolish the house. The FAA has been open to this in preliminary discussions. We're bringing it to the TNAAC to get a recommendation because generating revenue on the airport is a challenge. We want to be able to improve the airport and need to maximize revenue opportunities.

Terry Lee asked if public hearings are triggered when you amend the ALP. Lauren said she thought the process with the TNAAC would constitute a public hearing – she'll find out. Terry wondered if amending the ALP would open Pandora's box to other changes. Lauren said we may be able to request modification for this one thing; she'll find out.

Wiley Moore asked about access to the property; this might be a great time to segregate and fence to create easy access to businesses. We might as well do it right. Lauren said we've looked at the A gate (far south) and have a concern about impact to the residents. Wiley would highly recommend access. Brad Pattison agreed with Wiley; he's in favor if it comes with its own access.

Kurt Grimmer asked if there's enough land for other businesses in that area. Lauren said the land use map shows that whole area as non-aviation use due to not being accessible to the runway. Wiley said maybe PenMet would like trail access or bike trails. Lauren said the existing laydown area is going to be where the new stormwater pond is located down in the pit; that takes up some of that land. As for trails, we've asked the FAA previously and they said no. Kurt said the Arlington airport accesses its perimeter road for walking; they didn't call it a trail and the FAA approved it. Jay said you can't have the public in certain areas (dark green area on the map). Brad Pattison asked about the children's play area.

An audience member wondered if a 2-3 story building could be built for hangar space. Lauren said there's a stormwater pond adjacent to the building and the hillside will be moved 50' to the east. Engineers say the pond has to be in that location.

Michael Murphy had several questions: 1) Is this property subject to a unique set of land use rules or does it follow the Code? Lauren said PALS sees a path to approving this land use. 2) Do County architectural standards apply to this property? Lauren said she would ask PALS. 3) Can the design accommodate some other business use and not be locked into only one? Lauren said we will get a 50-year ground lease for this type of facility. Brad Pattison said alternate access is important.

Jay Perrycook from Eagle Communications provided a sketch for the space; they're planning to lease the entire area. Jay Perrycook said it would be a steel building with a privacy fence, and landscaped or natural wooded buffer. The gate would be automatic similar to other airport gates. Brad Pattison asked if Avionics would have access. Dan Neil said it's not practical. Lauren said we can have further discussions about gates. Motion (Murphy/Grimmer) was made to recommend pursuing this ALP modification subject to these conditions: 1) there's a dedicated access from the A gate for Eagle and others, 2) that the ALP modification is limited to this issue and doesn't require a hearing, 3) Lauren will check whether architectural standards apply, and 4) we get information on whether walking trails could be included. Larry Fickel asked about the neighborhood; it appears to be quite residential; we don't want complaints from the neighbors. The motion passed unanimously.

Brad Pattison asked if FOTNA would be willing to address the kids' playground; Larry Fickel said the Rotary is funding it; we're waiting for Tacoma Narrows Aviation to replace the fence. Lauren said she will meet with the RAZ team to finish the project; she understands that Bremerton is in trouble with the FAA for putting in a playground.

**VII. Adjournment**

The chair adjourned the meeting at 7:50 pm.

<b>TO CONTACT THE TACOMA NARROWS AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION</b>	
<b>Regarding any items on this agenda, or any other issues:</b>	
<b>Call:</b>	(253) 798-7250 (Airport Administration)
<b>Fax:</b>	(253) 798-2740
<b>Mail:</b>	Tacoma Narrows Airport Advisory Commission 2702 South 42 <sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 201 Tacoma, WA 98409-7322
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:pctnaac@co.pierce.wa.us">pctnaac@co.pierce.wa.us</a>
<b>Submit comments online:</b>	<a href="http://www.piercecountywa.org/tacomannarrows">www.piercecountywa.org/tacomannarrows</a> (click on "contact us")

### **TNAAC Next Meeting**

**Date:** Thursday, September 14, 2017

**Time:** 6:30 PM

**Location:** Location TBD