

**THUN FIELD ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING SUMMARY**

November 1, 2018 continuation of Oct. 17 meeting

A meeting of the Pierce County Thun Field Advisory Commission (TFAC) was held on Thursday, November 1, 2018 at 2:30 p.m. at the Civil Air Patrol building, Thun Field, 16915 – 103rd Ave. E., Puyallup, WA 98374.

I. Call to Order & Welcome

Chair Keith Kemper called the meeting to order at 2:36 pm.

<i>TFAC VOTING MEMBERS</i>	
Present:	J. Keith Kemper, Chair Douglas Miller, Vice Chair Mike Thompson John Hurlbut Marshall Collins Andrew Karlsson
Excused:	Lyle Sindlinger
<i>TFAC NON-VOTING MEMBERS</i>	
Present:	Nichole Weber, SHAC
Excused:	Dan Roach, Pierce County Council District 1; Hugh Taylor, Pierce County Council Alternate
<i>PIERCE COUNTY STAFF</i>	
Present:	Lauren Behm, Cindy Willis, Lissa Smith
<i>VISITORS</i>	
Present:	Six members of the public signed the attendance sheet.

II. New Business

- **2019 Budget**

Keith Kemper brought up the subject of hangar door project (\$450,000). John Hurlbut asked about the roof project. Lauren said the 2018 roof project is for two rows of hangars (2 and 5); we've proposed to put doors on those two rows in 2019; they're rolling doors with tracks on top and bottom. Keith asked if that's where we want that capital expenditure to go. Lauren said the \$450,000 was an estimate from a contractor, but it would go to bid and the low bid would be chosen. Keith mentioned an allocation to enhance security on east side of field; there's been a series of incidents. What needs

to be done there to secure the area? Lauren said ecology blocks were installed; we're going to have Roads move the middle ecology block outside the gate so it provides an impediment even if the gate hinges are cut. She said we're trying to find creative ways to keep intruders out. They've cut the chain link fence also. Beyond the gate is a section through treed areas with trees falling on the fence and causing damage; we don't have an estimate for repair, but it's a priority. It would probably require some clearing for access to fix the fence. We want to prioritize it for 2018 or with other money in 2019. Andrew asked about security patrols; Lauren said we've done a site visit with the Facilities manager; he's running the proposal up the chain of command and we've not yet heard back when security patrols will begin. Doug wondered about removal of trees to reduce cover for hiding. Marshall said intruders sawed through the gate on the ASOS, so they're quite comfortable having enough time to work and gain access. Andrew asked about Sheriff patrols and if there's room for a security road; Lauren said the airport property does not abut the road on that side. It is fully fenced, but we could put a space in the fence and we'd need an easement through private property. The wetland area would regulate what we could cut down or take into the area. Andrew asked about moving the fence back from the wetland or adding a secondary fence. Lauren said the fence is right on the property line; a secondary fence is not a bad idea. Andrew asked if anyone owns the property between 110th and the airport property; Lauren said it's privately owned. Andrew asked about coordinating for brush removal there. Lauren said there would still be trees between cleared brush and what can be seen from here. Andrew said hopefully it would be easier for patrols to see. Lauren asked if there are homes back there; John said there are some mobile homes buried back there. Sgt. Chris Adamson, Sheriff deputy, said we should consider making the AWOS more defensible rather than trying to secure the entire airfield. Spend the resources on lighting near hangars. The Sheriff tries to patrol as resources allow. It would require lots of money to secure the perimeter—even clearing brush. If we could apply that money toward a camera system, that would be better. Every business owner and homeowner needs cameras to secure property these days. Mike said if we don't have secure fencing, it could allow homeless people or animals on the runway. There needs to be more capital money than maintenance money for fencing. The Sheriff said the ASOS has its own fence; there are 2.5 miles of perimeter fence; we should enhance security closer to valued items. Mike said the federal government should provide money for keeping animals out; Lauren said there are grants from several organizations. Keith asked about runway incursion by deer, coyotes, and birds. Someone has seen elk near 110th and the wrecking yard; Astoria got a huge fence when a jet hit some elk. Deer and elk can be deadly. Someone suggested that a fence rather than doors can be part of TFAC's recommendation. Doug said the \$450,000 could be spent on other rows for roofs and get them rentable and bring in more revenue. Lauren said that's what this year's roofing project will do. Units fixed this year will generate around \$20,000 in additional revenue since those hangar roofs leak. That's 8 units—we'd keep 1 for storing our maintenance equipment. Lauren said we're addressing drainage issues—every one of the five roofs has been rooted out, cleanouts were installed, and we continue putting roof projects in as capital in each year's budget. In 2019, we put in to do two more rows of hangars, but the Executive chose not to fund that project. The Council has approved money for doors; you could recommend that money be split or put toward security. Keith said we don't have enough information. He'd like to do some of both. Andrew said \$22,000 per door seems high. John said it didn't seem high to him. Keith wondered how to flesh out what needs to be done on

the east side with associated costs; we need input about what we can do nearer to the hangars for more security. Doug asked about the thought process for the County approving doors; would it include an increase in rent? Lauren said yes, the Council passed a resolution several years ago that with a new roof and door, units would go up to \$285/month – for 20 units that's \$68,400 annually. To fence 2-1/2 miles of the property line is \$30/lineal foot equaling around \$400,000. Concertina wire would be much more than \$30/lineal foot, but we could get grants from FEMA/homeland security to pay for fencing. Sgt. Adamson said grants would be no sooner than 2021 for that kind of fence. Lauren said the FAA won't prioritize a fencing grant, but she will ask when they might. Doug said to reach out to DNR. Nichole Weber suggested a memo should be sent to tenants regarding wildlife so people are careful. Marshall said Lissa shoots cap pistol to scare away the animals. With a fence, every winter a tree will come down somewhere on that fence. Mike said we need money to get fencing; Andrew suggested moving the fence or adding another fence to keep animals out and have it away from where trees fall, but we need to consider expansion on the east side before building fences there. Keith said we'd forego \$68,000 annually if we didn't do roofs/doors. Lauren said the hangar revenue estimate is \$120,000; \$68,000 more than we currently get. Brad Pattison asked about a public/private partnership for hangars; Lauren said hangars are a sole revenue source and we don't want to lose it. She wondered about the impact to annual revenue vs. reduction in maintenance costs. Keith said there are two schools of thought: 1) spend money on hangar doors for more revenue, or 2) reallocate the funds for security. Andrew said we want operating hangars, but not having our stuff stolen—choose between nice or secure. Keith said lighting, cameras, and guards are significant steps. Lauren said Facilities will look at installing cameras, but has not initiated them yet. Facilities has a different cloud-based, wireless technology. They'd have to budget for cameras and determine priority. John said the Council should be happy if we're more self-sufficient, so more revenue is important. Keith asked if the \$68,000 figure is secure; the hangars will be occupied? Lauren said yes; there's a long wait list and much interest. Mike wondered about hangar revenue vs. an expensive lawsuit if someone is hit by an animal or killed on the runway; Lauren said we do have insurance. An audience member asked who would pay if an accident occurred; somebody will sue. Andrew said people are aware of the animals. We can't protect against everything; pilots know to watch for animals on the runway, but we can't protect against every eventuality. Doug asked about the cost to de-limb the trees up front; Lauren was not sure if we're allowed to do it. Brad Pattison wondered about FAA options to keep the airport safe. Lauren said the FAA said fencing is a lower priority than runway or lighting projects. Lauren asked if the animals are living on the airport; Fish & Wildlife will take care of those animals living on the airport. Nichole said she's seen deer on 110th. Sgt. Adamson said the deer are like dogs in the housing communities. Development is displacing them from wooded areas and pushing them into developed areas. Lissa Smith said she has seen more coyote than deer. Keith said we have a compelling argument about the need for both fencing and revenue. Sgt. Adamson said it almost requires an incident to get their attention.

Lauren has written down these ideas; she has a November 20 conference with the FAA and will see what they have to say. She can look for other grant programs for fencing. The Council and Executive like it when you can leverage federal grant dollars, so that's a good argument to them. When we put together the 6-year plan, we told them if the County paid \$6-7 million for projects, we could get \$20 million in federal money over

the 6-year timeframe. If you want to shift the \$450,000 from hangar doors, that should be in your recommendation. Motion (Miller/Hurlbut) passed 4-2 (Karlsson/Thompson voted no) to keep \$450,000 for doors.

Keith said we've been talking about the idea of an Assistant Administrator for the airport and need some discussion. Two TNAAC representatives are here to speak. We've been kicking around the idea of an Assistant Administrator and need some discussion. Wiley Moore, TNAAC chair, and Brad Pattison, past chair, introduced themselves and provided some background. Wiley said we didn't get the budget until early October, didn't have enough time to look at it, and we didn't understand or like what we saw. We met with CM Derek Young and reached out to the TFAC; we have two main asks. Derek facilitated a meeting with Dennis Hanberg before he presented his budget to Council. Wiley said the TIW got no capital money in 2019; our hangars are deteriorating quickly, although all available hangars are filled. The TNAAC is worried about TIW not having any capital money for next year. He said the County is moving about \$205,000 to Thun to help with hangars; therefore, it's important for you to spend the money carefully—he feels like it came out of his pocket. Our #1 ask is for an airport manager—someone with boots on the ground split 50/50 with Thun Field. We would like to align with the TFAC about getting an airport manager to decide how to use the money. An airport manager could make decisions to save money and be present. TIW needs capital money. We've lost REET money and we're trying to run two airports as businesses. We must see where money is getting spent. Keith had a copy of the Administrative Assistant classification document and had questions about it. Lauren said when the position was set up, it was the intention that the administrator would run the airport side, and the assistant would run the ferry side; since then with staffing changes, it made more sense to reverse that—the assistant position would be more focused on airports. However, HR advised against significant changes to the job description because it would have to go through a reclassification process; we've been told there will be no more classification changes. Lauren made some changes, but not so many as to trigger a reclassification. Keith said you do have to look at every aspect. We need expertise—someone on the ground who is an aviation specialist. Lauren said the official title would have been Assistant Airport & Ferry Administrator, but would be advertised as an airport manager or superintendent. Keith said the skill set should be someone with an aviation background and management experience. Mike said it should go through the reclassification process. He said that position should answer directly to Dennis Hanberg, not to Lauren. Wiley suggested an airport manager with experience and credentials who answers to higher staff; we need the job to be aviation-oriented. Wiley said that Tim Mensonides is a barn-burner getting things done at Bremerton as an example of an airport manager. Lauren said she could ask if they'd entertain a classification change if we're granted the FTE.

Brad Pattison said Lauren is learning fast and thanked her for putting up with him. His concern isn't Lauren. Jack was the airport manager when Tacoma owned it. It's been a challenge for Lauren who's spread too thin to focus on airports; Deb had the same challenge. Co-mingling airports with ferries becomes a huge distraction. We need a dedicated manager without distractions who can deal with airports and bring our message to the County Council without lots of layers in between. Mike said from his perspective, it wouldn't cost money, but would save money if we got the right person. We can't afford to have a part-time person.

Sgt. Adamson said reclassifications are being requested by lots of County agencies; the only way to move a reclass forward is to pressure the Council to do it; otherwise it won't happen. Wiley Moore said when they've talked to CM Young and Dennis Hanberg, they're told it's hard to push for an airport manager for rich boys over Sheriff's deputies. We'll keep pushing. John said with a capable manager who generates revenue and makes the airports more self-sufficient, it becomes easier to hire more cops.

Mike proposed a motion that the TFAC should recommend an airport manager position (don't eliminate the FTE) who is answerable to Dennis Hanberg, has the education and tenure to properly manage both airports (50/50). Doug wondered why the position should report to Hanberg. Mike said there are layers of management and you expend a lot of effort to get through those layers with resistance from people who don't understand our needs. Lauren explained the chain of command in Planning & Public Works. Keith wondered where that would leave Lauren's position. Lauren said this approach might create two divisions: 1) airport and 2) ferry. That's not been done so far because airports don't make enough revenue to support the FTEs they currently have. On page 330 in the budget, it breaks out the FTE percentages. By dividing Airport & Ferry, you'll have only three staff running airports and three on the ferry side. Lauren spends much more than 25% of her time on airports. We have a contractor (HMS) that runs the ferry system. By dividing airports and ferries, you won't have access to all staff members—only three. The idea has merit, but it comes with constraints. Andrew asked if Lissa Smith could take on more responsibilities and be given more authority; Lauren said that would require a different classification and pay—all of which goes through HR/Finance. Andrew asked to see an organizational chart; Lauren said the org charts are online under Planning & Public Works/Employees. Keith said we need expertise; he values Lauren's abilities, but said we need someone who knows the range of possibilities and has contacts; that's essential to get the work done.

Sgt. Adamson said the County Council will want numbers; you've got to present real savings that a person will bring. Keith agreed that we need numbers. Wiley said there's much money to be made at the airports.

Mike wondered how far back County budget archives budget go to see when Thun Field was profitable. He wanted a motion voted on even if it won't go anywhere this year. Mike Thompson restated his earlier motion (seconded by Miller) to recommend in the budget a fulltime airport manager position to be split between airports with the proper education and experience in airport operations to lead us in a positive direction. The motion passed 6-0.

Lauren talked about how to get the TFAC recommendation to the right people; it needs to be put into writing, so get a letter put together sooner than later. She also suggested they set up meetings with both CMs and with Doug Richardson; he and Connie Ladenburg were excited about the airport workshop done a few months ago. The formal time to testify is November 9. Keith said we need data; Wiley said you're not going to get that data; go talk to your councilmember and Dennis Hanberg before November 9; nothing will likely change, but stomp your feet and make noise. We're too late for numbers; just put a bug in their ear. Keith said he and Doug will talk to Dennis Hanberg. Wiley will send Keith his letter. Lauren will call Dennis to let him know Keith wants a meeting.

III. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

TO CONTACT THE THUN FIELD ADVISORY COMMISSION regarding any items on this agenda or any other issues:	
Call:	(253) 798-7250 (Airport Administration)
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Submit comments online:	www.piercecountywa.org/thunfield (click on "contact us")