

January 6, 2011

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE HELICOPTER COMMITTEE

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Helicopter Committee convened in a regular session on Thursday, January 6, 2011 at 3:00pm in the General Aviation Center meeting room.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Arteaga, Carey, Hamilton, Jones, Root, Elmore, Donnellan

Absent: Polcari

Also Present: Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian, Deputy Community Development Director Cessna.

Committee member Polcari was granted an excused absence.

3. **FLAG SALUTE**

Committee member Root led the pledge of allegiance.

4. **AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING**

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian verified the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Committee member Elmore moved to approve the posting of the agenda. A voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the helicopter committee meeting held on November 4, November 17, December 2, and December 14, 2010 were presented to approve. Committee member Root submitted comments on the previous minutes. Committee member Donnellan moved to approve one meeting at a time. Committee member Elmore preferred to have minutes approved as submitted, without amendments. Committee member Donnellan seconded that with abstain from Nov. 4. Committee member Carey stated that Committee member Root's suggestions were adding a lot of information and gave too much detail. Operations Manager Megerdichian clarified all handouts at meeting kept for public record.

Discussion ensued regarding the amount of detail in the previous meetings. The minutes of November 4, 2010 were approved as submitted with 6 yes votes, and 1 no vote. The November 17, 2010 minutes were approved as submitted with 6 yes votes and 1 no vote. The December 2, 2010 minutes were approved as amended with 7 yes. Amendments suggested by Committee member Root were as such: Should read Mr. Short, Schulz. Root also clarified the statement "He then requested the City bring forward what it thinks is a reasonable noise level for helicopters". The December 14, 2010 minutes were approved with 7 yes, adding that the Crenshaw and Southeast route language changes should be reflected in the January 6, 2011 minutes.

Crenshaw Route Arrival: *From ½ mile east of the horseshoe, proceed northbound to Del Cerro park, then join Crenshaw Blvd. Avoid overflying homes to the extent possible. Follow Crenshaw Blvd to Pacific Coast Hwy, then north of Airport Dr., Cross Del Cerro Park at or above 2,000 msl.*

Crenshaw Route Departure: *From a point north of Airport Dr, proceed to Crenshaw and PCH. Follow Crenshaw southbound to Del Cerro Park and then southbound to a point 1/2 mile west of the horseshoe. Cross Crenshaw & PCH at or above 600msl, continue climb to at or above 2,000msl.*

Southeast Route Arrival: *From over the World Cruise Center (Berth 93) at 1500msl, proceed to the reservoir, then turn north to the gravel pit. From the eastern edge of the pit, proceed to the South East corner of the airport. From the reservoir, remain over the major roads as much as possible.*

Southeast Route Departure: *From the SE corner of the airport, proceed to the gravel pit, then southbound to the reservoir, then to the World Cruise Center (Berth 93) Cross Crenshaw Blvd at 600msl, climb to 1500msl in VFR conditions.*

6. ACTION ITEMS

6A. Discussion of PCH Arrival and Departure Route

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian introduced the action item. Committee member Root showed a presentation of proposals regarding Class D Airspace and asked why Torrance Class D airspace is low. Committee member Carey explained airspace and why altitudes are as they are. Committee member Elmore further explained airspace dimensions and altitude restrictions. Committee member Root then discussed fixed wing crossing PCH. Committee member Root proposed that the City request Tower guide aircraft when safety and time allows, not to turn left on PCH until shoreline. Root clarified VFR only.

Committee member Carey explained how aircraft may have to turn left or how they are drifting with weather conditions. Deputy Community Development Director Cessna stated noise abatement applies to IFR, VFR. Only noise levels apply, not route

Committee member Root wants FAA tower to instruct aircraft straight out to shoreline. Discussion continued regarding IFR vs VFR.

Committee member Arteaga stated that the tower already guides aircraft not to turn left before the shoreline, but they may drift at times.

Discussion continued about departure procedures at LAX and how it relates to Torrance.

Committee member Carey stated that an emphasis on noise sensitive areas around TOA along with better publication for pilots to use was needed.

Missed approach procedures were also discussed and presented as a possible reason aircraft are turning left before the shoreline.

Committee member Root continued his presentation. He requested the City ask the FAA to reconsider missed approach procedure
Committee member Elmore stated that the procedure was not up for review until 2012.

Operations Manager Megerdichian felt that it was out of scope of the Committee. Committee member Carey stated that it should be captured and that the City should put in that request.

Operations Manager Megerdichian stated that it can be addressed but should be outside of this committee

Committee member Carey felt that it can be safety issue with the proposed helicopter routes and should be addressed as a separation issue not a noise issue.

Committee member Carey made the motion that fixed wing routes be evaluated following final design of the helicopter routes to ensure no conflict.

Committee Member Donnellan seconded the motion, and a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Committee member Root continued his presentation on footprint of helicopter noise in relation to altitude. The Committee discussed schools in proximity of aircraft and helicopter noise. Committee member Root reiterated that he would like to see helicopters fly at 2000 feet and should be below 60 decibels.

Operations Manager Megerdichian asked Committee members Hamilton and Jones if they recommended an altitude.

Committee member Hamilton stated that the FAR's were set in stone for every pilot to abide by. A higher altitude would put the helicopters too close to fixed wings, and that 60db pertains to wildlife areas, not cities like Torrance.

Committee member Jones stated that flying over 1000ft by an experienced pilot was ok, but not as easy with inexperienced pilot.

Discussion went back to the west PCH route and what altitudes the Committee wants to assign to it. The Committee discussed language regarding the routes to be flown on the northern part of PCH. The Committee considered shifting the route north of PCH to fly over the commercial areas, rather than the residential. The recommendation was not adopted due to the amount of residences still impacted, and it was determined that noise may be shifted from one area to another. Other modifications to the lateral route were considered, but it was decided that only the altitude could be recommended to change on this route.

Discussion continued regarding the altitude in certain areas of PCH, and comparisons arose between MSL and AGL.

An inquiry was made regarding Santa Monica Airport and helicopters that fly in circles around airport to gain altitude. It was determined that terrain issues and fixed wing traffic prevent that at Torrance Airport.

Altitude discussion centered around fixed points where helicopters should reach certain altitude by those points. Suggestions were made that Helicopters be directed to climb as high as possible, without fixed points. The Committee recommended the following language for the west PCH departure:

Follow or remain north of Airport Dr., then direct to the intersection of Hawthorne Blvd. and PCH, then climb as rapidly as is safe to 1,400' or above and follow PCH westbound to Ave. I then to the shoreline. For noise abatement, pilots should not begin north or southbound turns until reaching the shoreline. At the shoreline, pilots are to fly beyond the breaking surfline before beginning any descent.

Committee member Donnellan made the motion to accept this language. It was seconded by Committee member Carey. The motion passed with a 6-1 vote.

Discussion then continued regarding the West PCH arrival. The Committee presented the following language:

From the shoreline at or above 1,200 ft, join Ave I to PCH to Hawthorne Blvd to the southeast corner of the main ramp. Do not begin a descent until past South High School, cross Hawthorne Blvd at or above 600ft.

Committee member Carey made the motion to accept this language. Committee member Elmore seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-1 vote.

The Committee then discussed transition routes over Torrance, but decided it did not look feasible and the Committee decided to table the discussion.

Operations Manager Megerdichian stated that the Committee's recommendations would be presented to the Airport Commission and City Council for approval.

7. ORALS

8. ADJOURNMENT

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:55pm. A voice vote reflected unanimous approval.