

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE TORRANCE AIRPORT COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Airport Commission convened in a regular session on Thursday, February 10, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Browning, Dingman, Donnellan, Gates, Pyles, Tymczynsyn and Chairperson Ouwerkerk.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian and Airport Business Manager Zucker.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Gates led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Browning, seconded by Commissioner Donnellan, moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 13, 2005**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Dingman moved for the approval of the January 13, 2005 Airport Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Donnellan and passed by unanimous voice vote, with Commissioner Gates abstaining.

**6. ACTION ITEMS**

**6A. EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION (EAA) B-17 EXHIBIT**

**Recommendation**

The Facility Operations Manager recommends that the Airport Commission review and recommend:

- 1) That the EAA display a B-17 Bomber at Zamperini Field on April 13-17, 2005.
- 2) That the event be designated as a special exhibit under Section 46.8.10 of the Torrance Municipal Code, which exempts such events from noise regulations.

- 3) That the EAA conduct flights for hire under the following parameters:
 

Wednesday, April 13, 2005	Arrival flight 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, April 14, 2005	2 flights, 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Friday, April 15, 2005	5 flights, 10:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 16, 2005	5 flights, 10:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 17, 2005	5 flights, 10:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Monday, April 18, 2005	Departure flight 10:00 a.m. – noon
- 4) That the EAA conduct volunteer flights for the Young Eagles program on Saturday, April 16, 2005 to coincide with the B-17 exhibit.

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian briefly reviewed staff's recommendation that the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) in conjunction with the Torrance Air Fair Association (TAFA) be allowed to sponsor a visit to Torrance Municipal Airport by a B-17 bomber.

In response to questions from the Commission, Nancy Clinton, director of Torrance Air Fair Association, provided additional information about the event regarding parking arrangements, restroom facilities, insurance coverage and crowd control. Referring to her written report (per agenda material), she noted that a decision was made not to display EAA members' private aircraft adjacent to the B-17 display because there will not be enough space.

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian advised that, as with past events hosted by TAFA, the City's Risk Manager will review the organization's insurance policy to ensure that there is adequate coverage.

Referring to the proposed budget for the event (per supplemental material distributed at the meeting), Ms. Clinton explained that TAFA was requesting that the City help defray the cost of the event, explaining that there are additional expenses associated with the bomber's visit, including the rental of tables, chairs and port-a-potties, because they are unable to use facilities in the General Aviation Center (GAC), as was done in the past because there is no longer room to accommodate the exhibit and parking for the event in this area. She noted that the City has contributed \$15,000 in the past for the Torrance Air Fair and clarified that TAFA does not receive the money, but it is set aside and the City pays the bills when they are presented. She reported that the Daily Breeze has agreed to donate an ad and South Bay Jaguar has agreed to provide transportation for pilots and that TAFA will continue to look for sponsors to help cover expenses.

Commissioner Pyles indicated that he was in favor of City funding for the event, especially in the absence of a full-fledged air fair. He suggested the possibility that TAFA could hold a raffle to offset expenses.

Ms. Clinton reported that she looked into holding a raffle but learned that a deadline to file a form was missed due to recent changes in state law concerning non-profit organizations and that the Secretary of State will be contacted to see if a waiver can be granted to allow the form to be filed.

In response to Chairperson Ouwerkerk's inquiry, Ms. Clinton reviewed plans to promote the event, which will include the use of posters, Citicable, and ads in the Daily Breeze. She noted that K-Earth radio station has expressed an interest in broadcasting

from the event; that letters will be sent to EAA members; and that Doug Irving, a Daily Breeze reporter, is scheduled to take a ride in the bomber and write an article just prior to the event.

Commissioner Gates suggested the possibility of including fliers in trash bills.

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian cautioned that the event cannot be publicized until approved by the City Council, but indicated that if approved in time, a flier could be included with monthly hangar bills.

Chairperson Ouwerkerk asked about the impact on fixed-base operators (FBOs). Ms. Clinton advised that the exhibit will not impact FBOs and will hopefully help them by calling attention to airport businesses. She noted that the airport will remain open throughout the event.

Commissioner Donnellan thanked Ms. Clinton for her very thorough report.

Chairperson Ouwerkerk invited comments from the audience.

Frank Rizzardi, representing Southwood/Riviera Homeowners Association, commented on the likelihood that this event will generate some complaints from residents about noise. He stated that he was pleased to see that there will be restroom facilities for the handicapped and asked about handicapped parking.

Ms. Clinton reported that there will be parking spaces designated for the handicapped and that volunteers will be asked to monitor them to make sure that they are reserved for this purpose. She noted that noise abatement procedures were detailed in her report and that there were very few complaints related to the B-17 during a similar event last year at Long Beach Airport.

Mr. Rizzardi expressed the hope that this event will be successful.

In response to Chairperson Ouwerkerk's inquiry, Ms. Clinton confirmed that no one on the Commission is a board member of TAFE.

Commissioner Gates asked about the participation of FBOs, and Ms. Clinton reported that FBOs will be invited to set up tables to promote their businesses at the event.

Commissioner Pyles suggested the possibility of inviting Air Force recruiters. Ms. Clinton explained that there will be limited space for information booths; however, TAFE encourages aviation-related organizations to provide brochures to be passed out at the event.

In response to Commissioner Browning's inquiry, Ms. Clinton indicated that TAFE will receive a portion of the proceeds from flights, ground tours, and merchandise sales. She reported that at the Long Beach event, approximately \$3,000 was raised, which was split among the three groups that organized it, but she hopes that this event will be better attended.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn voiced support for the event, noting that it has been a long time since there has been an air fair in Torrance and this type of event calls attention to the airport and promotes an interest in aviation. He conceded that a ride on the B-17 is not inexpensive, but suggested that it is a once in a lifetime experience, and pointed out that one can tour the plane for a very nominal fee. He stated that he believes the event will attract a lot of people and well worth the \$3812 to fund it.

Commissioner Browning expressed concerns about the adequacy of the \$1 million insurance policy provided by TAFA.

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian stated that he could not comment on insurance requirements, however, \$1 million is consistent with what has been required for past events.

Commissioner Browning indicated that he favored funding only about one-third of the cost because it would not provide the same benefit to the City as an air fair.

Chairperson Ouwerkerk suggested covering the cost of insurance because this is a City requirement.

Ms. Clinton noted that there is no guarantee that the event will make a profit as rainy weather could severely impact attendance.

Commissioner Donnellan recommended that the City cover the entire cost of the event, stating that he thought it would be of great benefit to Torrance and felt it would be unreasonable to expect the organizations that work so hard to coordinate the event to do so without the hope of realizing any profit.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn suggested that Torrance Airport is in danger of becoming a storage facility as the number of airport businesses continues to dwindle and stressed the importance of keeping it in the public view.

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian provided clarification regarding the Commission's options for taking action on this item. He advised that staff's recommendation is that the Commission support the B-17 exhibit, as described, and it does not include a request for any additional funding, noting that the City will be providing staff time and staff assistance in excess of \$3800. He explained, however, that the Commission could make a separate recommendation regarding the funding of the event.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the level of City funding. Commissioner Dingman indicated that he favored recommending that the City cover the entire cost of the event, noting that the City Council will make the final decision and they are better equipped to decide what the City can afford.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Pyles moved to concur with the staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gates and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Donnellan moved to recommend that the City fund the B-17 exhibit in the amount of \$3812. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dingman and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**7. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**7A. AERONAUTICAL OPERATIONAL INFORMATION UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Chairperson Ouwerkerk noted that the following reports were included in the agenda material: Hangar and Tiedown Rental Status; Ongoing Projects; February Meeting Room Schedule; and Hangar Waiting List.

Referring to the Ongoing Projects Report, Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian advised that the Hangar Repair Project (239 hangars) was progressing very nicely and that staff was in the process of reviewing the two proposals received for the Airport Security Project.

**7B. AERONAUTICAL OPERATIONAL INFORMATION UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

Chairperson Ouwerkerk noted that the following reports were included in the agenda material: Events Requiring Emergency Response and Airfield Operations Status.

**7C. LAND MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Chairperson Ouwerkerk noted that a report from Land Management Chair Sunshine was included in the agenda material, which indicates that Robinson Helicopter plans to continue their month-to-month lease for the parking area west of their facility.

Commissioner Browning reiterated his suggestion from the previous meeting that that the gate on Airport Drive be eliminated if Robinson intends to continue leasing the parking area for an extended period of time.

**7E. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Community Outreach and Education Committee**

No report.

**Disaster Plan Committee**

No report.

Chairperson Ouwerkerk suggested that the Commission consider re-staffing this committee at a future meeting.

### **Hangar Rental Agreement Committee**

Chairperson Ouwerkerk reported that the committee has made significant progress in revising the Hangar Rental Agreement and hopes to bring a recommendation forward to the full Commission in March or April.

### **Noise Abatement Capital Projects Committee**

Commissioner Tymczyszyn noted that the committee has met twice with City officials since its formation at the January Commission meeting and that another meeting is scheduled for February 17.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn reported that on January 26, the committee met with Fred Richards and Linda Cessna, of the Environmental Division/Building and Safety Department, to review the two proposals submitted in response to a City RFP for the replacement of the airport's aging noise monitoring system. He explained that one bid, from Rannoch Corporation, was right at the \$256,250 allocated for the noise abatement system in FY 2004-05, and the other bid, from Lochard Corporation, came in at \$256,000 for a system with similar capabilities to the existing system, but \$45,000 higher for an enhanced system such as the one proposed by Rannoch. He noted that the enhanced system would allow for remote operation from city hall, without the need for a person on-site at the airport, which would allow for better service for the pilot community for noise tests, etc., better daily hours-of-operation coverage, and free the "half person" budgeted for airport noise to do other duties in city hall when not required to cover noise.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn reported that at the end of the second meeting on February 1, Fred Richards agreed to check with both companies on the feasibility of using WI-FI (wireless) connection between the remote microphones and central computer system. He noted that, currently, the City is spending \$22,400 a year for dedicated phone lines to noise monitors; that both proposals include cheaper connections to the microphones via DSL or cable; and that one mentioned WI-FI, so the City has asked both bidders to describe their WI-FI costs and capabilities. He explained that the committee has questioned the need to replace all 11 noise monitors surrounding the airport because newer technology may allow for fewer microphones with equal monitoring capability and since the cost of 11 microphones and connections is more than half of the total system cost, the committee felt this possibility should be investigated. He stated that both companies have responded with prices to do a study covering which microphones could be eliminated without loss of system capability; that this option is being looked into by City staff; and that details will be available at the next committee meeting.

Commissioner Gates questioned whether the committee has looked into noise monitoring systems at similar airports.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn reported that he checked with several airports, including Fullerton and San Diego's Montgomery Field. He explained that Fullerton Airport has no noise monitoring equipment and noise complaints are handled by the airport manager, who indicated that approximately 50 complaints are received each year, out of which 20 are for media helicopters hovering over crime scenes, 20 are for

transient aircraft, and 10 are legitimate complaints involving locally based aircraft, which he addresses by personally calling the pilot and the problem usually goes away.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn explained that Montgomery Field has a system patterned after Torrance's, but has only 9 noise monitors despite having 2 runways that cross each other. He reported that they experience approximately 10-15 violations per month, mostly by transient aircraft; that they have the authority to impose fines ranging from \$50 to \$250; and that a warning is issued for first violations and second violations involving local pilots rarely occur. He noted that the committee is focused on finding the best system to enforce Torrance's noise ordinance, which includes specific decibel limits, and taking advantage of today's technology.

## **8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

**8A.** Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian encouraged commissioners to attend the Commissioner Orientation, scheduled for March 15, at 6:30 p.m. in the Civic Center Library, noting that it will address legal issues, record keeping, procedural matters and the Brown Act.

**8B.** Commissioner Tymczyszyn congratulated Mr. Gates on being appointed to the Commission.

**8C.** Commissioner Tymczyszyn thanked Robinson Helicopter for inviting commissioners to attend the grand opening of their expanded factory on February 8, which included a first class reception and tours of the facility. He noted that the event was timed to coincide with the last day of the Helicopter Association's International Expo Exhibit that was held at the Anaheim Convention Center, so it attracted the international community and provided great exposure for the airport.

**8D.** Commissioner Browning welcomed Mr. Gates to the Commission.

**8E.** Commissioner Pyles noted that he attended the Robinson Helicopter reception and thought it was very informative.

**8F.** Indicating that he also attended the Robinson Helicopter Open House, Commissioner Gates stated that he found it to be an outstanding facility and first class operation and noted that Robinson is the largest helicopter manufacturer in the world.

**8G.** Commissioner Gates questioned how he could obtain information about the Airport Fund's income/expenditures and the capital improvements planned for the airport over the next 5 years. He related his understanding that the Commission has an opportunity to provide input on the airport budget and asked about the current budget cycle.

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian explained that the new budget cycle has not yet begun; that he will inform commissioners of those dates as soon as they are advertised; and that the budget is typically not discussed at Commission meetings, however, Commissioners are welcome to attend City Council meetings and provide their input.

Chairperson Ouwerkerk recalled that the Commission has received periodic financial reports providing an overview of the airport's budget, and Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian offered to check and see when the last report was given.

Commissioner Pyles noted that when he was on the Water Commission, commissioners found it helpful to have a Finance Department representative present who was able to explain the figures when the budget was reviewed.

**8H.** Commissioner Gates related his understanding that Caltrans offers a \$10,000 annual grant to every airport in California, which includes no restrictions, and questioned whether the City has applied. Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian stated that he was not aware of any applications for grants, state or federal, but offered to look into this matter.

**8I.** Nancy Clinton, 2785 Pacific Coast Highway, stated that she was pleased that Mr. Gates was appointed to the Commission because he has a great deal of knowledge about Torrance Airport and aviation in general.

**8J.** Ms. Clinton thanked airport administration staff for helping out with a skunk problem at the airport.

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian reported on a recent skunk infestation, noting that a professional company was hired to set traps.

**8K.** Ms. Clinton noted that she also attended the Robinson Helicopter reception and appreciated the opportunity to tour the facility and mingle with interesting people from all over the world. She related her understanding that the company currently manufactures 20 ships a week and has sold over 6,000 helicopters since 1994.

**8L.** Ms. Clinton updated the Commission on the Zamperini Way beautification project. She noted that 378 copies of Louis Zamperini's book have been sold, with the proceeds to be used to fund the project, and that Mr. Zamperini spent three hours autographing books for those who purchased them at a book sale the previous Sunday. She reported that, in addition, some sizeable cash donations have been received and that she will be meeting with Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian and Land Management Team Chair Sunshine to discuss the budget for the project. She explained that in addition to monetary donations, a pilot who is a landscaper has offered to assist with the landscaping and GS Brothers agreed to provide a sign for the entrance at the "family price." She indicated that her goal was to have the project completed by the time the proposed B-17 exhibit comes to the airport.

**8M.** Responding to earlier questions about the Airport Fund, Frank Rizzardi noted that the Finance Director provides the City Council with a monthly summary, the latest of which (December 31, 2004) indicates that the Airport Fund has a balance of \$3,826,383.53. Additionally, he noted that the City Council Finance and Governmental Operations Committee holds a semi-annual budget review to which the public is invited and that each year when the budget is considered, a thick book detailing income and expenditures for each department is available to the public.

**8N.** Chairperson Ouwerkerk welcomed Mr. Gates to the Commission; thanked Ms. Clinton and TAFE for their work on the Zamperini Way beautification project; and stated that he looked forward to the B-17 exhibit.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:22 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Thursday, March 10, 2005, at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Written March 10, 2005 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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