

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

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Airport Commission convened in a regular session on Thursday, March 14, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Boyce, Donnellan, Glass, Hsiao, Johnson, and Chairperson Orpe.

Absent: Commissioner Jacobsen.

Also Present: Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Donnellan moved to grant Commissioner Jacobsen an excused absence for the March 14, 2013 Commission meeting. Commissioner Hsiao seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**3. FLAG SALUTE**

Commissioner Boyce led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING**

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

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**5A. MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2013**

Commissioner Johnson offered the following correction to the minutes: Page 2, last line "...responded that they operate VFR,..."

**MOTION:** Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the February 14, 2013 Commission meeting minutes as amended. Commissioner Donnellan seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Jacobsen).

**6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**6A.** Commissioner Johnson informed Commissioners that on March 12, 2013 City Council approved funding for the B-17 Bomber Display on April 25-29, 2013.

**7. ACTION ITEMS**

**7A. REQUEST TO OPERATE BANNER TOW BUSINESS – CONTINUED FROM AIRPORT COMMISSION MEETING OF FEBRUARY 14, 2013**

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian provided background on a proposal from Aviad aerial media to conduct banner tow operations at the Airport. He recalled that at its February 14 Commission meeting staff was directed to bring back information on how ground operations would be affected by having two banner tow operations at the Airport as well as the feasibility of entering into an agreement for a trial period with Aviad. He reported that staff met with both operators to discuss the operational area and safety concerns, and that they both agreed to be open to an agreement that would address and identify areas of operation, communication between aircraft, and any Federal, State, or local regulations. He noted that the Commission could recommend a trial period with Aviad, and suggested a six months time frame to provide sufficient time to evaluate if Aviad met criteria set forth by the City or FAA. He also recommended that a revised standardized banner tow agreement be entered into between the City and any banner tow operator conducting business on the Airfield. He reminded Commissioners that any recommendations would need to be approved by City Council and pointed out that additional letters of recommendation for Aviad were included in Attachment A.

Commissioner Donnellan expressed concern that safety of others on the ground is not being addressed. In response to his inquiry, Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian explained that, if the trial period with Aviad is deemed successful, City Council would need to develop a more permanent agreement.

Commissioner Glass received clarification from staff that they have had no problems with Star Ads, received no complaints about noise, and that the revised permanent agreement with the City would reflect any concerns that any vendors would have on the airfield.

In response to Commissioner Hsiao's inquiry, Manager Megerdichian stated that the City and meetings with both vendors would determine success or failure of the trial period. He indicated that the Commission could direct staff bring forward criteria that have to be met during the trial period.

Commissioner Boyce suggested using some of the performance measurements in the agreement, such as noise and safety aspects, to assess the trial period.

Barry Jay, Brian Avenue, President of Torrance Airport Association and FAA Safety Team representative, distributed an aerial photograph of the Airport and pointed out the two helipads, antenna site, and 1,000 foot staging area where banners would be picked up and dropped. He noted that operators would need to share the space and stagger their schedules, but questioned what would happen if one of them had to come back early and the other was staging. He asked if the trial period could be terminated after one or two months and Manager Megerdichian noted that the City can terminate the agreement at any time.

Bill Tymczyszyn, Mesa Street, stated that he sees no reason for a six month trial period but would like to hear how pilots are trained and if banners are snagged on take off. He questioned if Aviad is required to maintain a 500 foot margin from the runway or Loew's. He stated that he sees no reason to deny the request, that having two

operators would not be a safety issue, and questioned if of one operator should have a monopoly at the Airport.

Mario Lopez, Ridgeland Road, Star Ads, provided his background and discussed two potential risks in his ground operations: taking off over the second operator and being under the second aircraft when it's aircraft is coming in. Referring to flight area operations, he stated that there are currently five operations going on the north side, six if Aviad's proposal is approved. He raised the possibility of miscommunication with the Tower and problems landing when there is a down draft. He maintained that all operations can work well, but expressed concern that at some point something may go wrong. He asked the Commission to consider monetary gain versus liability.

Commissioner Glass received clarification that both operators snag banners during take offs and that Aviad is leaving Long Beach Airport to expand its operations.

Wayne Mansfield, President/CEO of Aviad, stated that he stands on his safety record, 60 years of experience, Code of Conduct, and letters of recommendation. He indicated that he sees no problem with the physical area, there is a Control Tower, and that operations are not allowed when there is a helicopter on the helipad.

Commissioner Donnellan voiced concern that the north side of the Airport could become extremely congested and hazardous for people working in the area. He noted that the Tower does not control people on the ground.

Victoria Gall, ground crew for Star Ads, expressed safety concerns about the number of banner tow operations, especially when winds are gusting. She stated that she does not see how the two operators can work together and be safe, adding that it is not worth the risk. She pointed out that the Airport has a training Tower and that scheduling operations can also be an issue during busy weekends.

Mr. Tymczyszyn pointed out that there have been two or three banner tow operators at the Airport in the past, that take offs and pick ups only take a few minutes, and that the City should be fair and not favor one over the other.

Responding to Commissioner Boyce's inquiry, Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian advised that the Tower makes decisions for take offs and landings.

In response to Chairperson Orpe request, both operators explained how many operations they expect to be conducting.

**MOTION:** Chairperson Orpe moved to recommend to City Council for Aviad aerial media to conduct banner tow operations at Torrance Airport on a six month trial basis with the ability to cancel earlier if deemed necessary. Commissioner Glass seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 5-1 roll call vote (absent Commissioner Jacobsen, Commissioner Donnellan voting no).

**8. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**8A. AERONAUTICAL OPERATIONAL INFORMATION UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Chairperson Orpe noted that the following reports for February 2012 were included in agenda materials: Hangar and Tiedown Rental Status, Ongoing Projects, March Meeting Room Calendar, Hangar Waiting List, Events Requiring Emergency Response for January - February 2013, and Airfield Operations Status for January 2013.

Manager Megerdichian stated that there are currently 5 hangar vacancies and that the GAC flooring has been installed and new furniture for the Pilot's Lounge ordered. He indicated that he would provide an update on the Airport Pavement Maintenance Program at the next Commission meeting.

Commissioner Glass questioned why people advertise to rent their hangars, and Manager Megerdichian responded that they are trying to sublet but are not supposed to.

**8B. LAND MANAGEMENT REPORT - None**

**8C. NOISE ABATEMENT QUARTERLY REPORT**

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian noted that the Noise Abatement Quarterly Report for October – December 2012 was included in agenda materials.

Responding to Chairperson Orpe's inquiry, he stated that there are still complaints about helicopter noise but that Noise Abatement staff are being more proactive. He noted that they have not been able to test the recommended route changes yet and are still working with the FAA.

When Commissioner Boyce asked about mitigation measures to minimize noise, Manager Megerdichian explained that letters are sent to violators, action is taken against repeat offenders, and staff talks to new pilots about noise abatement procedures.

**9. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**9A.** Commissioner Boyce discussed the February 22 South Bay Cities Council of Government general assembly.

**9B.** Commissioner Glass wished all a happy St. Patrick's Day.

**9C.** Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian tentatively scheduled a Tower tour on March 26, 2013 and asked Commissioners to e-mail him with their availability.

**9D.** Manager Megerdichian stated that Airport staff is monitoring Federal sequestration to see how it might affect the Airport and Tower. He stated that Torrance was not on the list of towers potentially closing, but there may be employee furloughs.

**9E.** Bill Tymczynsyn pointed out that the number of operations at the Airport are less than half than in the 1970s and 1980s and that there are few helicopter noise violations.

**9F.** In response to Mr. Tymczyszyn inquiry, Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian provided an update on the redesign of the Airport Security Project. He stated that they are working with the Police Department on grant opportunities for camera funding and expressed hope that the project would go out to bid soon.

**9G.** Chairperson Orpe wished everyone a Happy Easter.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 8:37 p.m., Commissioner Donnellan moved to adjourn the meeting to Thursday, April 11, 2013 in the West Annex meeting room at 7:00 p.m. Commissioner Hsiao seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Orpe so ordered.

Approved as Amended April 11, 2013 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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