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 piercecountywa.gov/ppw

THUN FIELD ADVISORY COMMISSION
DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

July 20, 2021

A meeting of the Pierce County Thun Field Advisory Commission (TFAC) was held on Tuesday, July 20, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

I. Call to Order & Welcome

Chair Andrew Karlsson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

TFAC VOTING MEMBERS	
<i>Present:</i>	Andrew Karlsson, Chair Michael Thompson J. Keith Kemper Marshall Collins John Boyd Matthew Mackey
<i>Excused:</i>	John Hurlbut, Vice Chair
TFAC NON-VOTING MEMBERS	
<i>Present:</i>	Nichole Weber, SHAC Dave Morell, Councilmember Rod Propst, Airport Manager/Airport & Ferry Administrator
<i>Excused:</i>	
PIERCE COUNTY STAFF	
<i>Present:</i>	Rod Propst, Airport Manager/Acting Airport & Ferry Administrator Lissa Smith, Acting KPLU Airport Manager Kim Schwannecke, Office Assistant
VISITORS	
<i>Present:</i>	Approximately 8 members of the public participated.

II. Approval of Meeting Summary

Meeting Summary – April 20, 2021

Motion Andrew Karlsson and John Boyd approved the April 20, 2021 meeting summary.

III. Visitors and Petitions

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

John Boyd asked where the automated weather observation station (AWOS) is located for Pierce County Airport Thun Field (KPLU). Lissa Smith stated that it is located on the eastside by the windsock and the wind tee. Boyd stated that this location is unsafe because the wind that is reported does not match the windsock due to the surrounding vegetation blocking an accurate recording of the wind. Boyd asked if we can clear some of the vegetation surrounding the AWOS. Smith stated that it has been a concern in the past, but the FAA has been to the location and been shown the data. Marshall Collins stated that the bigger concern would be the buildings blocking it. Smith stated that she can investigate the possibilities we have concerning the location of the AWOS.

Rod Wetherbee had a question about the fuel island being closed. Rod Propst stated that we will discuss that in the O&M report and that Wetherbee can share his questions and comments then.

IV. Reports

- **O&M Report** – *Propst presented a PowerPoint presentation*

Former Pierce County Airport and Ferry Administrator, Randy Rodgers, is no longer employed with the Pierce County. Propst will be the acting Airport and Ferry Administrator while Pierce County hires a new Administrator. As acting Airport and Ferry Administrator, Propst will be managing both airport and ferry issues. In the meantime, Lissa Smith will be the acting Airport Manager for KPLU and Justin Vanslyke will be the acting Airport Manager for Tacoma Narrows Airport (TIW).

Airport Regulation changes to ground vehicles in the Airport Operating Area (AOA) were proposed to the county council in January for their action. This was reviewed by the committee yesterday (07/20/2021) to be moved on to the council for their action. This would primarily effect TIW. Propst will continue to provide updates.

There will be a Virtual Public Open House to share the Master Plan. This meeting will be an informational meeting; however, there will be an opportunity to comment. More information to come.

The engine generator replacement is on track for delivery in November.

The next Budget Biennium will include an increase in hangar rents, support from the General Fund for Airport Improvement Program (AIP), and the TIW Water System.

Smith will be completing hangar inspections for compliance.

KPLU received a complaint from a user over ten days ago that they found metal particles in the fuel that they purchased at KPLU. Propst stated that Pierce County secured the fuel island and called in a vendor (Fuel Care) who evaluated the fuel and fuel system. The technician stated that they found unspecified sediment in the samples, so the samples were sent to a lab. The lab found traces of low alloy carbon steel in the fuel sample from each tank and is conducting further testing. Propst stated that fuel island will remain closed until further notice as we will not sell potentially contaminated fuel.

Waters Construction will be completing the hangar door replacement for 45 of the 50 county hangars. Propst and Smith will be scheduling a pre-construction meeting. Smith will be the point of contact for the hangar door replacement.

Comments/Questions:

Rod Wetherbee stated that something needs to be done by Pierce County to take control of the fuel island. Wetherbee stated that the vendor (SpanaFlight) should be responsible for taking out the contaminated fuel and putting in new fuel. Wetherbee stated that he is very frustrated, and he is looking for answers and accountability. He stated that he observed the vendor taking fuel out of the fuel island after it was shut down and put it into the Flight School planes on Friday, July 16th. Propst stated that he understands the frustration, but it is not advised to put contaminated fuel in an airplane. Propst stated that Smith takes inventory of the fuel island every morning and that the vendor should not be taking fuel from the fuel island. Propst stated that the contract between the vendor and Pierce County ends in June of 2022, and his recommendation would be for the county to become the fuel vendor. Propst stated that the county needs to find out if it is something in the fuel that was delivered, or if something in the tank is failing. Until then, the fuel island will remain closed. Wetherbee asked what the fuel quantity was at when it was shut down as compared to where it is at now. He also stated that the Executive can change this contract as soon as possible rather than waiting until June of 2022. Smith stated that 91 gallons have gone through the dispenser since it was shut down. Wetherbee congratulated Smith and Vanslyke on their acting Airport Manager roles and acknowledged that staffing is tight. He stated that even so, we should not have to police this issue as it is an ethical issue. Wetherbee stated that he has camera footage that he can provide to Pierce County, and asked Pierce County to also look at their camera footage. Propst stated that he would be happy to look at the footage and connect with Wetherbee one-on-one. Smith stated that she should be able to turn the power off to the fuel island while it is out of order.

- **Noise Complaints** — *Propst continued with his PowerPoint presentation*

Most noise complaints came from the north end of the airfield by 150th court; the rest were located west of the airfield. There was a total of 11 complaints in three months; several of the complaints were made by one individual who recently sold his house and moved. All complaints go to the PCAirport email, which Kim Schwannecke will route to Smith or Vanslyke. Propst met with the three flight schools to discuss noise sensitive areas and how to be the best neighbors.

Nichole Weber stated that the airport meets the FAA guidelines for the south hill.

Wetherbee stated that signage posted on the major streets stating “Entering Airport Overlay Area” would be very helpful, especially for people who are buying a house. Karlsson and Weber both stated that they thought this was a great idea.

Dwayne Little (current tenant of Hangar 17) stated that he missed the part of the conversation about the hangar door replacement. Little stated that he spent over \$4,000 on hangar doors and asked if his rent will still go up even if his hangar doors do not need to be replaced. Propst stated that a resolution passed by council stating that rent will increase at

KPLU upon the improvement of the hangar doors. Propst stated that Little can take off the doors he installed, but only 45 of the 50 hangar doors will be replaced. Little stated that he has \$4,000 worth of material and that he feels that he is paying rent for something he is not getting a return on. Little asked Propst how they will determine which hangar doors to replace. Propst stated that he and Lissa will survey the doors and decide which five doors are in the best condition to stay. Propst stated that if one of those doors belongs to Little, then he will talk to the Deputy Operating Attorney. Propst stated that is he is also available to talk to Little further one-on-one.

- **Commission Reports** – *There were no reports from the commission*
- **Council Update** – *Councilmember Dave Morell*

Councilmember Dave Morell stated that he is very concerned about the fuel issue and will continue to push towards a resolution. Morell stated that he hopes the council will move next week to approve the new rules and regulation changes to ground vehicles. Morell stated that the budget will be submitted to the Executive who will send it to council; council will review the budget in August or September and finalize it in October. Morell stated that he likes the idea of signage in the Airport Overlay Area and will try to get funding for these signs to be posted.

V. Old Business

- **General Aviation Security Assessment** — *Propst continued with his PowerPoint presentation*

Propst stated that the General Aviation Security Assessment has been modified to remove complications. Some of these modifications include narrowing it down to 11 topics instead of 13, making it easier to navigate, and using fill-ins to make it more user friendly. Propst stated that he would like to get data back from tenants, users, and commission members to help establish a baseline for developing security measures. Even if a participator does not know all of the procedures currently in place, Propst stated that he wants as much participation as possible to be filled out to the best of your ability. Once the data is received, Propst stated that the airport will use the Protective Measures Matrix to establish an Airport Security Plan and an Emergency Plan for each airport. Topics covered in the Protective Measures Matrix include Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery. Propst stated that Pierce County will focus on Mitigation and Preparedness in their Airport Security Plan, while each individual airport will focus on Response and Recovery in their Emergency Plans. Propst emphasized that this assessment gives people the opportunity to voice concerns and make recommendations that will help to create the Airport Security Plan. Propst stated that completed assessments can be sent to PCAIRPORT, where Schwannecke will file them. In the Fall of 2021 Propst will collect the data and present it to the commission before any plans are finalized.

Michael Thompson stated that the bottom of each section of the Security Assessment states the following:

“Warning: This record contains Sensitive Security Information (SSI) that is controlled under 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 15 and 1520. No part of this record may be

disclosed to persons without a “need to know” as defined in 49 CFR 15 and 1520, except with the written permission from the Administration of the Transportation Security Administration. Unauthorized release may result in civil penalty or other action.”

Propst stated that if there is sensitive information that should not be shared, then that information will not be shared. An example may be if the Pierce County Sheriff department responds to this assessment with sensitive information that should not be shared with the public.

- **Commercial Operating Agreements** — *Propst continued with his PowerPoint presentation*

Propst stated that Commercial Operating Agreements are required for “commercial operators” per the guidance in FAA AC No. 150/5190-7, the Minimum Standards for Commercial Aeronautical Activities, the Pierce County Code in P.C.C. 5.40.060 Commercial Operations Minimum Standards, and the Pierce County Airport Rules and Regulations. Propst stated that 11 letters were sent to potential “commercial operators” with a due date of return or response by July 9th. Propst stated that the county has received 1 agreement back from KPLU, and one response back from KPLU stating they are no longer in business. Therefore, 9 operators will receive a second letter to respond or send documentation stating they are not an operator by July 30th.

VI. New Business – *There was no new business to report*

Nichole Weber stated that Cindy Willis retired and that she wanted to honor Cindy. Nichole stated that Cindy had quite an impact in Pierce County, and she wanted to thank Cindy for her hard work and commitment to Pierce County. Propst agreed and stated that the new Office Assistant taking over for Cindy is Kim Schwannecke.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm. Motion of Adjournment given by Andrew Karlsson and Keith Kemper.

TO CONTACT THE THUN FIELD ADVISORY COMMISSION:	
regarding any items on this agenda or any other issues:	
Call:	(253) 798-2478 (Airport Administration)
Fax:	(253) 798-4695
Mail:	Thun Field Advisory Commission 9850 – 64 th Street W. University Place, WA 98467
Email:	pctfac@co.pierce.wa.us
Submit comments online:	www.piercecountywa.org/thunfield (click on “contact us”)