



**TACOMA NARROWS AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
 MEETING SUMMARY**

Tuesday, July 23, 2019

A regular meeting of the Pierce County Tacoma Narrows Airport Advisory Commission (TNAAC) was held on Tuesday, July 23, 2019 at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held at the Tacoma Narrows Airport office, 1202 – 26th Ave. NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98335.

- **Call to Order & Welcome**

Chair Wiley Moore called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

TNAAC VOTING MEMBERS	
Present:	Wiley Moore, Chair Kurt Grimmer Bob Felker Brad Pattison
Excused:	Larry Fickel, Brian Durham
TNAAC NON-VOTING MEMBERS	
Present:	
Excused:	Michael Perrow, City of Gig Harbor; Derek Young, Council District 7
PIERCE COUNTY STAFF	
Present:	Debi Ross, Interim Administrator Cindy Willis, Office Assistant
VISITORS	
Present:	Eleven members of the public signed the attendance sheet.

- **Approval of Prior Meeting Summaries**

By motion (Grimmer/Felker), the meeting summary for May 14, 2019 was approved unanimously.

- **Visitors and Petitions**

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

Tom Kwiat formerly served in the military and worked in civil service for various branches of the military. He lives in Artondale; in the last few months, he’s noticed an increase in flyovers in their neighborhood. He’s never been subjected to so much aircraft noise as where he lives now. It usually occurs between 6 am – 11 pm and can be 10 times an hour and over 50 times/day. He can hear aircraft even with the windows closed, or while mowing the lawn wearing earplugs.

It's disruptive, an invasion of privacy, and degrades the area; he's not the only one annoyed. TIW has been around a long time and he knows some of the flyovers are due to flying lessons. He has no issue with the airshow, but he would like to find out what can be done about limiting the frequency and hours of these flyovers. Are there any quiet hours? Wiley said 6 am – 11 pm sounds about right for the busy flying times. Brad said he's been flying for nearly 50 years; the economic downturn slowed things down, but now aviation is increasing. Flight schools are doing more training due to a pilot shortage; that causes a huge increase in repetitive patterns. Brad said the tower moved the pattern to the Narrows side (east) to reduce noise impact on the west side.

Justin Van Slyke provided a copy of the Airport Rules & Regulations which include a map showing the noise sensitive area. The rules contain some noise abatement procedures; these are also on the website.

- **Reports**

O&M Report – Debi Ross said our recent focus has been on mowing and noxious weed control; extra hires have been working to remove these weeds from airport property. Wiley said he pays a noxious weed tax; does none of that money come to the airport? Debi said the Weed Board gets that money to identify noxious weeds and determine how to abate the problem.

Debi said the County pavement removal crew was in the area, so they removed pavement near the main entrance. That was done as part of the landscaping project. Additional staff time was spent preparing and cleaning up for Wings & Wheels.

Tower Report – David Langford is the tower manager who arrived four weeks ago; he came from Olympia. He's spent 37 years in air traffic control and 20 years in the Navy. He managed at Troutdale for 12 years; he was at TIW in 2008-09 and is now back. He's worked at several other locations for Serco. He's got lots of experience. Safety is his #1 priority—he will not compromise it. He brought business cards and said he responds within 24 hours. Traffic at TIW used to be around 85,000 operations/year; now it's around 90,000. At one point, we were over 130,000. He will try to attend TNAAC meetings or send a report or someone to speak for him. We have one controller in training and will be fully staffed by the end of August. He said he can't speak to the noise issue; we run traffic on both sides of the airport, but he prefers to see airplanes in front of him so it's better if planes are on the west side. He lives under an airport, too. We lost radar for about a week, but it's back. Bob Felker asked about the status of his equipment; David said it's great equipment. An in-house power failure caused the radar to go down; it's working fine now. Wiley asked if ILS minimums are back; David didn't know. Wiley said there were tall trees; they were removed, and we should have the minimums back. Brad asked what pilots can do to make things easier for the tower. David said that pilots hear, but are not listening to the directions they're given; that's a problem; pay attention. It happens everywhere; 90% are students and they hear what they want to hear. Other issues: don't read back instructions; if you're cleared to land and you do a touch 'n go instead, that changes everything. Torsten Arnold said he appreciates David's work to train the new controller. Sometimes air traffic has us circling outside the airspace and we get forgotten—that's happened a few times. Curt Scott said the tower services are excellent. David is learning about the VFR entry points and needs to see the lay of the land from the sky. Lots of people don't know that

we can't go above 2000'; aircraft above that altitude are controlled by Seattle Approach; we keep our planes lower. Brad said he'd be happy to take the new guys on flights to see the area. David said he'll schedule an RSAT (runway safety) meeting sometime in September.

RAZ Update/Columbia Helicopter Memorial – Wiley spoke with Brett Marlow; she could not attend tonight, but Tim Toerber from the Gig Harbor Rotary said they've been working hard on the RAZ beautification installing plants, then artificial turf, and then signage with three themes: 1) sense of place with a map showing navigation checkpoints understandable to laymen; 2) education – teaching about flight and introducing youth to aviation; and 3) work opportunities in aviation industries. It's fun to listen to controllers and pilots in the RAZ. Tim is working with Al Abbott for printing. At the next meeting, we'll bring ideas about users of the airport and history to capture. Tim said they're asking for aircraft parts—perhaps the Cherokee rotting away for a decade could be acquired. PAVCO may donate a prop; Avionics may have some items. Bob Felker said there is a process to get rid of abandoned boats—is it the same with planes? Yes. Tim said we need to work with airport management. Wiley said Brett said they need water hooked up; Justin said he's trying to take care of that tomorrow. Columbia Helicopter – Brett has the contact; Tim said it's a memorial relative to the region: Dan Emmel, a helicopter instructor on this field, was killed in Central America.

Wings & Wheels Report – Doug Fratoni, director of Wings & Wheels, said it was a record year for attendance; including vendors, paid attendees, volunteers, and performers, there were close to 7,000 people over two days. We got close to the cap of 5,000 per day—we can't physically accommodate more. Parking is always an issue; we had 200 cars parked on the ramp. There were also cars parked along the road, and we bused 2,000 people on Saturday and 1,000 on Sunday. We issued refunds if people were disappointed; we want to make it a fun experience. There were 210 cars in the car show on Saturday; we ran out of room. We lost ramp space due to the Falcon and another plane in our display space; we just roped them off and made them the display. The airboss said the FAA was happy with how things flowed and the safety. Doug's #1 issue is safety; we don't want injuries or accidents, so he hires only the best performers—professionals and people he trusts. Bob Felker asked about next year and whether there's any seed money. Doug laid out how the proceeds were spent: Having the Gig Harbor fire department onsite was \$6,000; next year will be \$10,000. The fuel bill was \$8,000; buses \$5,000, insurance \$4,000, rental cars/hotels/performer fees \$25,000 – it's huge and there's not a lot of excess. We try to have seed money for the next year. We offer a portion of the proceeds to volunteer groups—\$2,500 goes back to non-profits; we want to give back to our volunteers. George Swift has asked him if we can give back to the airport; there are rules about non-profit money coming into the County; we would like to find a way to give back to the airport and make it better. Next year's dates are planned for July 4-5. Jim Griffith asked if he'd heard any input from the community about the F18 noise; Jim saw complaints on email, Facebook, and had phone calls. Jim said he went outside with his dog just as the Hornet went over; the dog ran off, totally freaked. He loves fast airplanes, but he heard complaints from 3-4 people in his 54-home community. He's not saying he doesn't appreciate the planes, but not everybody is an airport person. F18s were flying at 200-300' making lots of noise. Can it be mitigated and not so low and noisy? Doug said this is the first time we've had F18s and they weren't doing a demo—it was a legacy flight. Doug said he will brief them next time not to stay low, or to lower their power. Jim said it scared everyone. Doug apologized; he invited the F18s, so will look at that issue. The after-burners are noisy.

Condo Association Brief – Torsten Arnold is VP of the condo association; Frank Scoggins is the president. At their annual operating meeting, they notified the group that inspections should be coming and that the County is the decision-maker on compliance; if they're not compliant, they need to get there. Non-compliant owners will be notified and the situation remedied. We tell them to sell, get out, or become compliant. We're waiting on the County now.

Brad asked about fire inspections at the airport. Justin said the fire marshal comes out annually and inspects County buildings. The 1624 Bldg. has fire suppression. Brad asked about fire inspections in condos; Torsten said the fire marshal inspects every year. The real question comes down to how to police 84 people to make sure they don't have 10,000 gallons of fuel in their hangar; we educate them and remind them not to keep excess fuel in their hangar. It's a good time to remind people to beware of fire hazards in hangars.

- **Old Business**

- **Raising Catch Basins**

- Debi said the maintenance/operations crew raised two catch basins on the south taxiway near the Avionics Shop; they smoothed it out, so now there are no worries about possible damage to planes due to uneven pavement. They cut out the old pavement and installed new.

- **Landscaping Project**

- County crews removed the pavement; the next step will be removal of shrubbery. We will do a utility locate in the main entrance area. Torsten talked to the County to get the south condo area striped and painted for handicapped parking stalls.

- **Status of Hiring Asst. Administrator**

- Debi announced that the Assistant Administrator position is open. That person will spend 80% of their time managing the two airports and 20% on ferries. It posted July 9 with a continuous opening with the first pull of applications by July 29. We advertised in WAMA, AAAE, NaCo, LinkedIn, GovtJobs.com, County websites, and it's crawled on other sites. We hope to get qualified applicants; perhaps by the October TNAAC meeting, she'll get to introduce the new person. Wiley reminded Debi that the TNAAC wants representation in the hiring process. Debi said Tim Mensonides is on the interview panel. Wiley said if Tim were to bless someone, that's his idea of the TNAAC having input. Brad said Tim is not connected with the airport. Wiley asked if someone on the TNAAC could review applicants. Debi said the County doesn't like to do that; our rules about government hiring are specific and there's potential exposure for asking questions we're not allowed to ask. Debi said she couldn't commit to TNAAC involvement because HR must approve, but there are opportunities for practical exercises. Wiley would like to see applicant credentials; we want to be sure they have an airport management background. Brad said we've been involved before; we keep getting people who don't know anything about airports and we don't want a repeat performance. Debi wants the next person to be an airport person; we're looking for that. Wiley said we want some influence; leave it at that. Tim has managed Bremerton, Arlington, and now Auburn.

- **New Business**

Wiley said that there are TNAAC vacancies; Maia is not returning his calls. Debi said we're still in a holding pattern and we will keep raising the issue. There are four positions vacant.

Wiley said he's received reports of hangar doors that don't roll; Justin said we received approval to have Davis Door fix them. Hangars are being leased that previously had door issues. Torsten said the condo hangars are going for \$500/month; the County needs to raise its rates. Wiley said the condo quality is better.

The waiting list is closed since it's long (30 on the list now) and we have no hope of getting people into hangars any time soon, so don't want to take their money.

Wiley said the preliminary budget items are drafted during July; we want input in the process. We want more of the money we're making to stay at TIW. Wiley said that Debi had suggested that the TNAAC provide 10 prioritized items; we didn't do that. Let's come up with 3-5 priorities to give Debi for inclusion in the budget for discussion at the next meeting. Water meters are one item. What can we do to make and keep more money and improve the airport? Brad said there used to be a list containing issues like a compass rose, relocating the taxiway, getting approval for a grass runway, and westside development. Debi said those items are part of capital projects over multiple years. Wiley requested a copy of the list. Tim Toerber said WH Pacific would have had a long list from the last Master Plan. We could create a Survey Monkey to get input for the budget.

- **Adjournment**

The chair adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.