



TACOMA NARROWS AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
Meeting Summary
January 14, 2020

A meeting of the Pierce County Tacoma Narrows Airport Advisory Commission (TNAAC) was held on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at 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. He introduced and welcomed three new members of the TNAAC: Garth Jackson, PAC representative, Tim Toerber, airport representative (excused tonight), and Edward Lewis, PenMet Parks representative.

TNAAC VOTING MEMBERS	
Present:	Wiley Moore, Chair Larry Fickel, Vice Chair Kurt Grimmer Bob Felker Garth Jackson Edward Lewis Brad Pattison
Excused:	Tim Toerber Brian Durham
TNAAC NON-VOTING MEMBERS	
Present:	Rod Propst, Pierce County Airport Manager
Excused:	Derek Young, Council District 7
PIERCE COUNTY STAFF	
Present:	Randy Rogers, Administrator Rod Propst, Airport Manager/Asst. Administrator Cindy Willis, Office Assistant
VISITORS	
Present:	Twelve members of the public signed the attendance sheet.

- **Approval of Prior Meeting Summaries**
 - Meeting Summaries – July 19, 2019 and October 8, 2019

Motion (Grimmer/Fickel) passed unanimously to approve the meeting summaries as written.

- **New Business**

- Introduction of New Airport & Ferry Administrator – Randy Rogers started with the County in mid-November, moving from Austin, TX. He’s worked for the federal government, WA State Ferries, attended the Naval Academy, sailed ships, worked for port authorities, and retired from the federal government after 36 years. He was the port director in Waukegan, IL where he managed an airport. His work with WA State Ferries was mostly budget work for the preservation, maintenance, and construction of ferries. He is responsible for ferries and airports.
Brad Pattison said these hires represent a huge change in management structure and a vote of confidence from the County; we’ll have two people focused on airports. Wiley Moore welcomed Randy.

- Introduction of New Airport Manager / Asst. Administrator – Rod Propst will be focused mostly on airports. He came from San Diego County and his youngest grandchild lives in Gig Harbor. His background includes 31 years managing airports; he has a passion for it and says it’s fun. He operated two airports in San Diego; before that, he was in Sedona, AZ. He spent 17 years as an airport manager in Fullerton, CA. He’s a retired Marine. Rod is accredited as an AAAE airport executive – only 10% of all airport managers in the country are accredited. He’s on the board of directors for airport managers. He’s an OSU graduate commissioned as a Marine lieutenant and spent 20 years in the Marines. He went to flight school at age 30, flew lots of helicopters all over world, flew King Air airplanes and turbo jets. He still loves to fly and has 3000 hours flying 172/182s. He took this job to be here in Gig Harbor; he’s happy to be here. Advisory Commissions are great sounding boards; it’s important to bring issues and concerns to the Advisory Commission when things need to be done. He’s very transparent. He’ll look at rates and charges, make some changes, and comply with FAA grant assurances by doing hangar inspections annually to be sure that hangars are for aeronautical uses—the FAA says we must. He’ll make sure we’re ready to do FAA projects when the environmental assessment is done. He’ll look for non-aeronautical revenue sources at both airports, write business plans with goals, objectives, and mission statements. He’s reviewing leases, templates for monthly agreements, and airport rules and regulations. His goal is to leave the airports better than he found them. He would love to hear your issues and concerns. Typically, only 2% of airport users talk to the airport manager. He will be at TIW on Mondays because Justin is out; Fridays he’ll be at Thun; he hasn’t yet figured out the rest of his schedule. Rod said change can be slow and painful, but we’re going to attack it.
Wiley welcomed him. Brad asked about contact numbers; make sure they’re the same as in the airport and field directory.

- Election of Officers for 2020 – Wiley asked Kurt Grimmer to consider the chairmanship. Motion (Moore/Pattison) passed unanimously to elect Kurt Grimmer as chair. Wiley said Tim Toerber is at Sea-Tac tonight due to snow; however, he’s agreed to serve as vice chair. Motion (Moore/Fickel) passed unanimously to elect Tim Toerber as vice chair. Kurt said Tim brings a great amount of experience as a pilot.

- **Reports**

- O&M Report – Rod Propst asked Justin VanSlyke who handles the day-to-day maintenance to provide the report. Justin said we’re working on hangar roof repairs;

we've contacted roof and door contractors for quicker responses. We had repairs done to the water tower gate—the wiring had been eaten. We're fixing potholes and rollers on gates; the water main was flushed last week (fire station had dirty water). We're installing LED lighting in the corporate hangars, doing ongoing stormwater sampling, and improving HVAC in the office. Wiley asked about painting stripes/parking spaces. Justin said Jay was working on it. Rod said it clearly needs to be done; Justin said we have quotes from the Road Division. Jay PerryCook asked if the paint is reflective; Rod said there is a standard—we need to buy the right glass beads. Bob Felker asked about a grass landing strip; Rod said it's in the ALP, but that project competes with capacity and safety projects with the FAA, so it would be at the bottom of the list. If the FAA gave us money, that would be good. Rod said in a realistic world, that project doesn't carry a lot of priority; he's not opposed to it, but said there's no money designated for it. We'd have to get a grant for design; he doesn't think the FAA will give us money for that. There are FAA standards for grass strips.

- Tower Report – David Langford, tower manager, said they have a new employee. David has set the RSAT for May 6 and hopes to hold it at the TIW office; he will coordinate with the airport regarding notifications. He talked with Rod about hold bars—he doesn't like where they're located—too far from the runway. There hasn't been a lot of traffic lately due to the wind and weather. Wiley wants to add an item to the RSAT agenda: safety issue in the south end – non-movement area. Brad said we need more ramp space; we should use the non-movement area for efficiency parking. Rod needs to create the agenda and staff report to discuss it in open forum, get tower chief's comments, and consider the FBOs' desire for more ramp space; we'll bring it back as an agenda item. Jay PerryCook said most people driving on the ramp move toward the grass strip; staying near the hangars is more dangerous; drive near the red line so you have reaction distance—maybe get a mirror. Mike Pickett asked about the potential for a compass rose; pilots have to fly to Olympia to test their equipment; someone in Gig Harbor offered to pay for it; Rod said if we can find space for it, that's fine—we'll look at it. Brad said B-4 relocation must be fixed first, then we can install a compass rose. Mike Pickett said we've never enforced car traffic on the ramp – we have rules, streets, and routes; some people would rather go down the taxiways and there have been near misses.
- Wings & Wheels – Doug Fratoni, director, said they try to minimize the impact to the airport activities. This year, Wings & Wheels is scheduled for July 4 and 5; planning is underway; we have an agreement with the County. He provided a list of performers; it's our 10th anniversary, so we want to go big. He's meeting with volunteers tomorrow. He wants to talk with everyone on the airport to make it a success while minimizing the impacts. We need about 60-70 volunteers per day. We use volunteers from the Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, Gig Harbor Cadets, and booster clubs from the Air Force. We'll have the same air boss as last year. We try to share performers with Tacoma's airshow to reduce costs. There's a new Top Gun movie coming out just before our airshow; we hope to run a Wings & Wheels ad at the local theater. Bob Felker asked about a boutique hotel; Rod said we're designing a new pump house to get water to them; it's expensive, but we're actively pursuing it through grants.

- **Old Business**
 - RAZ Update/Columbia Helicopter Memorial – Tim Toerber was absent, so we'll put it back on the agenda in April.
 - Landscaping Project – Rod said we'll probably not do anything until the weather gets better; then he'll have a better idea what Justin is going to do.
 - 2020-21 Airport Budget – Review the budget process and discover ways the TNAAC can be instrumental in budgetary process. Rod said he knows the budget is a huge concern; he can read between the lines—it's the County Executive's budget. In San Diego, it belonged to the mayor and he was protective of his budget. When committees wanted to provide input, they had to time it; he's going to have to figure out when that will happen. He doesn't have an answer how to make it happen. Kurt said the Advisory Commission is passionate about this airport; he loves the comment about the TNAAC being a sounding board. Tonight's turn-out comes from the excitement about having a new Airport & Ferry administrator and assistant administrator; Rod is eager to do this—it's a timing thing. Experience from the commission will allow us to bring projects forward. We'll use the Advisory Commission as a tool to rally the community. Garth Jackson asked about examination of airport capacity. Rod said that Randy is talking to the PSRC; he has a phone call on Friday morning; he's looking at electric aviation in its infancy and looking for opportunities to implement it.
- **Visitors and Petitions**

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

 1. Dave Morell is the Councilmember from District 1. He just finished his first year on the Council and is learning how government works; he owned a company for nearly 40 years. He's a proponent of aviation and airports and is your advocate at the Council on airports. He convinced his colleagues to do a Next Generation of Airports study. We need major renovations at Thun Field to give staff a more comfortable office. He brought a draft of the Next Gen document – it's a process. The Council set aside \$200,000 to put toward hybrid electric aviation. This state is green and we're tapping into that; we're working with WSDOT Aviation and Electric Aircraft group. He didn't understand the whole electric aspect of aviation until met with some Israeli friends at the Paris Airshow. He met others from California moving from experimental to light aircraft for flight training; we're using that model at Thun and looking at TIW also; new technologies are coming. He hopes Thun Field will have the first electric infrastructure; there's lots of grant money out there. Urban air transportation is where things are going; we want to get more innovative technology companies to locate here. Toby Rickman is trying to spotlight our airports; he hired Rod and Randy. We're going to have fun. We got a green light from the Exec to make airports viable community assets. Dave will be bringing more information and rebranding the whole idea of electric and hybrids – we're hiring consultants and joining with regional airports/counties. He's glad Rod is here. He'll be making rounds and will meet with the FBOs; he's impressed with TIW. Larry Fickel thanked him for his participation. Cindy will distribute his document to the TNAAC. Wiley said we've tried to have input to budget for several years; let us help. Brad said it's unusual to have a CM who's learning about our airports. Tim Toerber is our new vice chair and is very involved in an electric aircraft project. Garth Jackson said it would be neat to have one at W&W.

2. Mike Pickett has been at the airport since 1982. The Bremerton airport built two restaurants, and now has another; our restaurant has changed ownership probably 15 times since he's been here. A tent provides covered seating in winter; is there any hope that the building can be renovated so that a restaurant can survive? We need a restaurant; it's been neglected. Bob Felker said the County offered to do a cover; Mike said you don't put a tent in this rainy area. The restaurant has just been repurchased.
3. Dan Neil owns the Avionics Shop; he's got a vested interest in the airport. He previously complained about the lack of signage and now expressed appreciation for what's out there. He's been here for 30 years involved with TNAAC meetings over the years. The budget process is a sore subject with him; sometimes the budget is not worth the paper it's written on. We're losing money due to mismanagement; he expressed hope that budget money generated here stays here. This airport is self-sustaining and generates revenue; he hopes that the budget doesn't rob Peter to pay Paul. Rod said we're looking at leases and tenants who aren't paying; it's difficult to understand that when you have an airport system with multiple airports, sometimes the budget takes revenue from TIW to support PLU; you can count on him to tell the truth; he'll try to make it understandable. In the last five years, we've lost money; we need better revenue streams. Dave Morell said the County doesn't have a balance sheet/profit & loss statement. Rod wants to know who pays what; airports are driven by enterprise funds and are supposed to be operated like a business. He's going to do a deep dive into what airports are generating so we have clear picture moving forward. That will be part of the proposal we're putting forward.
4. John Vodry, NW Hangars, is building the south end condo hangars. We just got a curve ball from the FAA at the end of project; the anticipated jet traffic didn't come here, so we had to change our hangar plan and do more GA t-hangars. The FAA gave us its rules 14 years ago; now we're told we need a 79' taxiway.
5. Keith Lemmon is an FAA Medical Examiner leasing space from Narrows Aviation in their old hangar. He's retired Army, a pediatrician and aviation specialist working two days a week at TIW. It should be good for pilots to be able to fly in for a medical exam. He asked if we have an AED on the airfield; Rod says that's an easy fix. Keith's son Charles is his office manager; he welcomes business – NW Aviation Medicine.
6. Someone asked about the NW Aviation Show. Rod said we're attending, but not planning to get a booth. We want to attend and get a feel for it—maybe next year we'll get a booth. It's scheduled for February 22-23. Brad said we may not want to dismiss having a booth; it's an opportunity to meet lots of people.

- **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.