

County of Santa Clara  
Airports Commission

Tuesday, June 6, 2006  
Minutes

**Regular Meeting**

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

The regular meeting of the Airports Commission is called to order by Vice-Chairperson Pathak at 6:04 p.m. in Room 157, County Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose. A quorum is present.

<u>Members Present:</u>	<u>Members Absent:</u>
Sagar Pathak	John Ford
Bud Beacham	Robert Lenox
Ron Blake	
William Carpenter	
Michael Leeper	
<u>Ex-Officio Members Present:</u>	
Carl Honaker	

**2. Public Presentations**

There are no public presentations.

**3. Approve Minutes of April 4, 2006**

On motion of Commissioner Carpenter, seconded by Commissioner Blake, it is unanimously ordered that the minutes of April 4, 2006 be accepted, as submitted.

**4. Discuss election of officers**

Commissioner Blake notes that the Airports Commission has not utilized a nominations committee in past years, and states that he feels it will not be necessary since the Commission is only comprised

of seven members. He makes the motion to accept nominations from the entire Commission and hold elections in August without the use of a nominations committee, as in past years. Commissioner Carpenter seconds the motion. Mr Honaker points out that it is difficult to find Commissioners who will volunteer to hold office, and so nominations become necessary. It is agreed on consensus that the Commission will hold elections in August without the use of a nominations committee.

**5. Accept Bi-Monthly Staff Report from the Roads and Airports Department relating to County Airports Operations (Honaker)**

Mr Honaker refers to the June Report which was included in the agenda packet. He notes that this report reflects that there were two months remaining in the Fiscal Year, and so it gives a good picture of the revenue status for the airports. He advises that there are no significant changes in Hangars and Tie-downs, and that the only important news in this area is the South County project. Mr Honaker reports that the South County Hangar project is in the midst of ongoing inspections, and that the County Airports Department (Department) is intending to send the project to the Board of Supervisors for approval of the building later this month. He notes that if the Board of Supervisors approves the project in June, it is expected that new tenants will occupy the hangars by July. Mr Honaker asserts that this will change the revenue picture for South County significantly.

Commissioner Blake inquires how many hangars are available. Mr Honaker replies that 53 to 55 tenants have confirmed, and so there are approximately half remaining. Commissioner Blake asks if there was a large public response from the advertisements placed. Mr Honaker states that the response from the advertisements was less than expected, and that the most effective form of advertising was the flyers placed in the airports.

Vice-Chairperson Pathak inquires whether the Department has received feedback from the tours of the Hangar Project. Mr Honaker replies that the Department has received feedback and the tours have

been well received. He notes that one of the most appreciated aspects has been the addition of restrooms to the Hangar area.

Commissioner Beacham requests an update relating to the incident in which the individual in Palo Alto did not know that there was a Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) in effect. Mr Honaker responds that he does not have details other than that the pilot violated the TFR at 29 Palms while President Bush was visiting, and that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) tracked his flight path back to Palo Alto and spoke to him about the incident. Commissioner Beacham inquires if there were any incidents of violations of the TFR during the President's visit to Santa Clara County, and Mr Honaker responds that there were no incidents.

On motion of Commissioner Beacham, seconded by Commissioner Carpenter, it is unanimously ordered that the Bi-Monthly Staff Report be accepted, as submitted.

**6. Accept the First Quarter 2006 Noise Report from the Roads and Airports Department, Airports Division relating to County Airports Operations. (Honaker)**

Mr Honaker references the report and points out that operations have decreased at all three of the County's airports. Mr Honaker confirms with Eric Peterson, Assistant Director of County Airports, that 2001 was the year with the largest operations for the airports. Mr Honaker reports that this is due in part to the dot-com bust, rising fuel prices, and a worse than normal winter. He notes that a decrease in operations has allowed for the airports to reply more quickly than normal to Noise Referrals. Vice-Chairperson Pathak inquires if this is the first full year that the Airports have had a noise monitoring program. Mr Honaker replies that this is the first year with a Noise Program Manager (Ken Betts), and that the Airports are in the process of implementing an electronic noise monitoring program.

Commissioner Beacham requests that future reports list each noise complaint separately rather than in groupings. Mr Honaker replies that currently this is time consuming because the report is created by

manual data entry, and he asks Ken Betts, Noise Program Manager, if the new noise monitoring system equipment will facilitate reporting of individual noise complaints. Mr Betts responds that the noise monitoring system will capture each separate noise complaint. Mr Honaker notes that it is the intent of the Department to report as accurately and individually as possible, and that the manual data entry has been difficult. Mr Betts adds that future noise reports will provide more detailed information.

Commissioner Beacham notes a complaint of a law enforcement aircraft at approximately 5:00 a.m., and asks which branch of law enforcement it was. Mr Betts responds that the Department receives information about the classification of the aircraft and therefore knows that it is law enforcement. He notes that generally the Department will not find out which branch of law enforcement unless the complainant can confirm the insignia on the aircraft, and that the law enforcement agencies do not share information about when and where they are flying. Mr Betts advises that in Santa Clara County there are three law enforcement agencies which have helicopters, San Jose Police Department (SJPD), County Sheriff's Department and California Highway Patrol (CHP), and two with fixed wing airplanes, SJPD and CHP.

On motion of Commissioner Carpenter, seconded by Commissioner Blake, it is unanimously ordered that the Quarterly Noise Reports be accepted.

## **7. Accept director's verbal reports (Honaker)**

### **A. Airport Projects**

#### **1. South County (E16)**

Mr Honaker reports that the South County Hangar Project is close to being finalized and that all construction on the project is complete. He states that South County will be completing fire testing for the staff on June 7, 2006 and that it is awaiting final inspection of the building by a structural engineer. He advises that the Airports Department is anticipating approval by the Board of Supervisors on June 20, 2006, and states that if the project is delayed for any reason

there will not be another opportunity to obtain Board approval until August. He notes that this would be detrimental to the revenue picture for South County and that the Department is very anxious to obtain timely approval.

## **2. Reid-Hillview**

Mr Honaker reports that the Department is working with engineers on the design for fencing and access to control gates for the Reid-Hillview Airport.

## **3. Palo Alto**

Mr Honaker notes that the Department is working on implementing a security system at the Palo Alto Airport.

## **B. Security Update**

Mr Honaker reports that there is no update relating to security, and that there have been no security problems or issues other than the Presidential visit, which occurred without incident.

## **C. Update on Master Plans**

### **1. Reid-Hillview**

Mr Honaker reports that there are a few minor revisions to send to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) relating to the Reid-Hillview & South County Master Plans.

### **2. Palo Alto**

Mr Honaker notes that the Palo Alto Master Plan is still in the process of being completed in conjunction with the review of the Palo Alto financials by the City of Palo Alto. He states that the Palo Alto Joint Community Relations Committee (JCRC) will see the first draft of the City's report next Tuesday, June 13, 2006. Mr Honaker advises that the report will go to the Palo Alto City Council later in June, and it will then come to the Airports Commission at the August meeting. He further informs the Commission that following approval by the Airports Commission, the report will go to the Board of Supervisors' Housing, Land Use, Environment and Transportation (HLUET) Committee, and then to the Board of Supervisors.

### **3. E16**

Mr Honaker reports that there are a few minor revisions to send to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) relating to the Reid-Hillview and South County Master Plans.

#### **D. Update on the Hush Kit Program**

Mr Honaker informs the Commission that the term “Hush Kit Program” is a misnomer, and the agenda should actually say “Noise Program Update”. He asks Mr Betts for any updates on the FAA funding. Mr Betts reports that the County Airports Department has officially received a grant from the FAA in the amount of \$1.2 million for the installation and implementation of a Noise Monitoring System. He states that the Department anticipates publishing a Request For Proposals (RFP) in August, following approval by the Board of Supervisors, and that he hopes to be in contract with initial construction beginning by the end of the year. Mr Betts notes that the Noise Monitoring System will include a public kiosk for noise complaints.

Mr Honaker advises the Commission that the Noise Program Monitoring System is a result of the FAR 150 study completed a few years ago, which found that Reid- Hillview needed an Airport Noise and Operations Monitoring System (ANOMS). He notes that the System will provide better data on noise complaints. Mr Betts adds that the System will record frequencies and correlate them with noise complaints.

Commissioner Blake inquires how the system works, comparing it to microphones on telephone poles. Mr Betts responds that it is very similar to this. Vice Chairperson Pathak inquires if the public will determine where the microphones are placed, for example by refusing to allow one on private property. Mr Honaker and Mr Betts explain that the public will not really determine where the microphones are placed, because they can be placed in a range of positions and so public spaces are normally where the microphones will be located.

Commissioner Beacham inquires about the rest of the FAR 150 Study findings that the FAA did not approve. Mr Betts reports that findings which cost further restrictions will not be approved, and that only one airport in the nation since 1990 has had such a finding approved. Mr Honaker notes that one of the findings was a need to insulate homes near the airport, and that the Department is seeking grants for this purpose.

Commissioner Beacham notes that the FAA allows an airport to restrict or deny student flight activity, and that he believes there are things that could be done to develop rules that are specific to the needs of Reid-Hillview. Mr Betts advises that if Reid-Hillview obtained approval to restrict student flight activity, it would be the first airport in the nation to receive this approval. Mr Honaker and Mr Betts note that they will look into what can be done, and that it would be a very difficult process.

#### **E. Reid-Hillview Joint Community Relations Committee (JCRC)**

Mr Honaker states that he has not heard from any of the three Board of Supervisors members that will be appointing members to the JCRC, and that he believes they are having difficulty finding interested participants.

#### **F. San Martin Planning Advisory Committee**

Mr Honaker reports that the Advisory Committee met last week, and that he provided a report on the Hangar project at South County.

#### **G. Report on Feral Cats at the Airports**

Mr Honaker informs the Commission that the Animal Advisory Commission met last month to discuss the feral cat population at Reid-Hillview. He notes that in the past the County did not have a policy governing handling of feral cats, and that the Animal Advisory Commission (AAC) wants the Board of Supervisors to adopt a Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) program for cats on any county property. Mr Honaker points out that the problem this program poses for the airports is that there is a burrowing owl population at

Reid-Hillview that is quite compatible with airport operations and the feral cats hunt these owls. He notes that there is a program called "Town Cats" which has assisted in trapping, neutering, and sending out for adoption some of the feral cats. He reports that the "Town Cats" program has provided public education relating to neutering cats that are household pets in order to help prevent an increase in the feral cat population. Mr Honaker states that he has suggested to the AAC and the Board of Supervisors that the Department Trap, Neuter, and then relocate the animals to a more acceptable county location, such as a park. He announces that the AAC meets this Thursday night and invites Commissioners to attend.

Mr Honaker notes that County Airports is in the process of formalizing its burrowing owl plan. He references the San Jose International Airport (SJI) program in which the airport has built artificial habitats for the owls to build nests in, in order to keep them away from the ends of runways. He advises that this program has been successful and the owls will easily migrate to the artificial habitats.

Commissioner Beacham inquires if burrowing owls are the only problem the cats are creating, or if there are problems that may impact airport operations. Mr Honaker replies that the burrowing owls are the primary problem, although the cats have presented a problem if they are on runways. He notes that predators coming to hunt the cats have been seen on the airports, such as coyotes, and that the cats are dirty and present a health hazard.

Ted Johnson, San Jose resident, notes that he has had a problem with feral cats on his property, and he live traps them and the City Animal Control will come and pick them up and take them to the pound. He inquires if County Airports have done this. Mr Honaker replies that this is what the County Airports used to do and they have been told that they can no longer do this because the cats are considered unsuitable for adoption and are euthanized within 48 hours. He notes that the Department trapped approximately 40 cats and turned them over to City Animal Control approximately two years ago.

Vice-Chairperson Pathak inquires how many cats are currently at the Airport. Mr Honaker responds that there are approximately 20 feral cats at this time at Reid-Hillview.

On motion of Commissioner Carpenter, seconded by Commissioner Blake, it is unanimously ordered that the director's verbal reports be accepted.

## **8. Accept Commission Liaison verbal reports**

### **A. Airport Land Use Commission (Blake)**

Commissioner Blake reports that the ALUC received one project for a proposed development that would include an automobile dealership across the street from Reid-Hillview at Capitol Expressway and Tully, near the end of the runway. He advises that the ALUC found the project inconsistent with the Land Use Plan because it would place objects in the Safety Zone 1, and the ALUC is awaiting the outcome of this finding. Mr Honaker adds that the issue goes to the San Jose City Council on June 20 to consider a possible override of the ALUC's finding. He notes that the state is involved because of concerns relating to a school that is placed within 2 miles of the airport as well. He notes that currently the property in question is zoned for agriculture and the city wants it re-zoned to commercial and industrial. Mr Honaker points out that the problem with the rezoning request is that if the property is zoned commercial, the City can place whatever they want there. He notes that the city built within the safety zone for their own building downtown, putting their own employees and others in danger. Commissioner Blake inquires if there is any possibility of the Airport purchasing this property. Mr Honaker replies that yes, this is a possibility, however it will require a lot of money and time. He notes that it would require a change to the Master Plan as well as to the Land Use plan, and that the process would take at least two years.

### **B. Palo Alto JCRC (Lenox)**

Mr Honaker reports that the JCRC met last month, and are meeting one week from today. He notes that the JCRC will be receiving the

financial report for the Palo Alto Airport. He comments that no noise complaints were received at Palo Alto.

Commissioner Beacham makes the observation that the geography of the Palo Alto Airport creates a layout such that there are no residences next to the Airport. He suggests that there are no noise complaints because there are no nearby residents, and asks if this is perhaps an unnecessary committee. Mr Honaker advises that when the JCRC was formed some of the flight patterns were different and when aircraft flew on the city side, rather than the bay side, there were more noise complaints. Commissioner Blake notes that the JCRC handles many other issues in addition to noise complaints. He inquires about the time of the JCRC meeting. Mr Honaker states that the meeting is at 8:00 a.m.

### **C. Metropolitan Transportation Commission-Regional Airport Planning Committee**

There is no report. The next meeting is in July.

On motion of Commissioner Carpenter, seconded by Commissioner Beacham, it is unanimously ordered that the Commission Liaison verbal reports be accepted.

### **9. Recognize Chairperson Lenox for his service as chair**

Chairperson Lenox is not present. It is agreed on consensus that the Commission would like to authorize a Commissioner to draft a resolution commending Chairperson Lenox, and forward to the Board of Supervisors for adoption. Vice-Chairperson Pathak volunteers to draft the resolution, and requests a copy of a previous resolution to use as a template.

### **10. Correspondence/Announcements**

#### **a. Ethics Training on June 8, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers, County Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose.**

Vice-Chairperson Pathak announces the ethics training.

There are no other announcements.

**11. Adjournment**

Vice-Chairperson Pathak notes that the July workshop meeting was previously canceled, and asks the Commissioners if they would like to meet in July.

On motion of Commissioner Carpenter, seconded by Commissioner Blake, it is unanimously ordered that the workshop meeting in July be canceled and that the meeting be adjourned at 7:02 p.m. to the next regular meeting on August 1, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 157, County Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose.

Respectfully Submitted,

JoLene Mittelsteadt  
Deputy Clerk