



Meeting called by: Josh Beaner **Type of Meeting:** Quarterly

Facilitator: Josh Beaner in place of Committee Chair, position vacant **Minutes:** Sue Findlay - POA

Members Present: Warren Walz, Anni Brogan, Dan McCroskey, and Tony Idczak

Prospective Member(s) Present: Tom Blackwood

Port Attendees: Commissioner Short; Commissioner Verdoes; Dan Worra, Executive Director; Josh Beaner, Operations Manager; and Sue Findlay, Operations Assistant;

Call to Order Josh Beaner called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

Introductions

Minutes

Agenda Item: Public Comment

Annie Brogan indicated she had concerns and comments.

1. Split rail fence on Kingsway is falling down.
2. Last month she received two different phone calls about trees—what was happening about the trees.
3. She received a call from someone at Wash Dot indicating the comp plan for the airport was being approved that day at 10 a.m. and did she know about it.

She felt in regards to two of the above issues, she should have been notified in advance especially since she is on the Airport Advisory Committee. She should have had at least had some involvement.

Dan McCroskey indicated the same. He advised he had been at a homeowner’s meeting recently with Commissioner Niver present. When Commissioner Niver was asked about the trees coming down, he did not have an answer as to what trees.

Josh explained that trees are just now being identified. We started the project with one consultant, and we recently transitioned to another consultant. The latter consultant is doing a more thorough job of identifying the trees to be removed.

Discussion then ensued about obstruction removal in Part 77 (FAA deemed encroachment in flight path), the length of time since last tree maintenance (7-years), consistent maintenance vs addressing trees every few years, removal vs topping (if topped previously FAA will not provide any additional funding for those that were topped), type of trees to be removed, replanting of trees offsite for mitigation (Ship Harbor), and replacing trees with shrubs. It is noted the trees being removed are on Port property only.

Dan Worra indicated when they (Annie and/or Dan McCroskey) receive calls from people, to please refer them to us, or let us know, and we can call the individuals. We will be having community meetings to talk about the upcoming project and what will be taking place. It is the eastside of the airport property, midfield where the majority of the tree removal will take place. The numbers of trees involved are in the 535 to 550 range in varying widths. There will be approximately 1,200 replacement trees and shrubs. Some replacement trees will be planted offsite. For offsite planting, if the tree being removed has a diameter of 8", then the replacement is a one-to-one ratio.

Dan Worra also indicated yes, we did attend a meeting with the City regarding the Comprehensive Plan. Included in this meeting was a representative from AOPA and Carter Timmerman from Wash Dot. The purpose of the meeting was to put an airport influence area on a map overlay of the airport area (City map). This is to determine who may be impacted by a proposed change in lot size in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Annie indicated we just need to let them know what is happening.

Dan Worra reiterated the purpose of the meeting is to allow communication to the Commission. We definitely want input especially since this is an unmanned airport. He also indicated it is a two way street as he would have loved to have received an invite to the Copper Pond homeowner's association meeting. He noted it has been difficult to get a quorum for this committee. No vote tonight for new Chairperson as no quorum.

Warren did indicate a lot of members are snowbirds, and it is hard getting a quorum this time of the year. Warren provided some information on animal control fencing used at Orcas Island airport. This comprises rows of short fences with large boulders in between that will break their legs. The indication was deer will not jump the fences due to these boulders. This may be one item to explore to keep animals out. It was noted that Warren brought this fencing up at a prior meeting. It is also noted in this current obstruction removal project, fencing height will be increased only in the tennis court area.

At this point in the meeting, Tony Idczak arrived and introduced himself.

Dan Worra discussed the current survey being completed will identify trees by type, and they may be replanted or not replanted depending on type. Screenings will use bushes rather than trees. It is best to deal with the trees now so as no maintenance later. We will be paying for tree removal for trees previously topped as no FAA funding is provided for this. Before depreciation, the airport realizes about \$380K in annual revenue. Expenses are at \$350K, for a net income of \$30K. There is not a lot of room for additional expenses.

When Josh was asked about biggest issues/complaints with this project, the answer was:

1. Killing trees
2. Noise Screening

Dan McCroskey agreed indicating noise, killing trees, and losing sight blockage—he could see all three being an issue.

Dan Worra indicated you get more noise impact from the Navy base.

Tom Blackwood advised the removal of trees also saves the lives of pilots and passengers, as well as people on the ground. Trees can become a safety issue. If an airport is always in compliance with Part 77, that is bragging rights.

Warren advised on one characteristic pilots are not familiar with at our airport: Both ends of the runway drop away. You can get away from the runway easier if you get into trouble, and this gives more time to react and deal with things. The pilot has altitude on his side to move away from the area/homes.

Tony talked about his prior work with the Parks and Recreation for Whatcom County. He is a horticulturist. In a perfect world, a consistent maintenance plan would take care of the trees. He advised trees do not stop sound much. Also, it is better to crash into shrubs rather than trees. Trees do not move much—they flex. If you select plants correctly, with mature growth in 10-15 years, the maintenance will be sustainable. Also, felled trees create a good habitat—they are good for the wetlands.

Discussion ensued around a PowerPoint presentation given at a City Council Meeting and at a Commission meeting. Feedback indicated this should be available on our website.

Dan Worra advised some good news: At the Commission meeting on March 3rd, an announcement will be made about fiber being available at the airport. Pogo high speed internet and phone service will be available to all airport tenants. It is anticipated this service will be available by the end of August. This will be line-of-sight service, and anyone around the area may sign-up for the service if they are within line-of-sight. Anthony Esposito came-up with this innovative solution with the contract being signed next week.

There will be a cost to the Port; however, with possible revenue sharing and bundling of services to the Port itself, it may be a breakeven solution for the Port.

Annie advised this will make a huge difference for them. When it rains, the phone service is spotty. Their internet service is over the phone; and no orders if phone and internet is not available.

Discussion ensued about meetings and members. Commissioner Short would like to continue with quarterly meetings for perception of what is going on. He wants to hear from people that live in that area. The purpose of the committee is to solve issues for the commission or solve before it becomes an issue.

Joe Verdoes indicated the Marina advisory committee is a dynamic committee. They recently changed their by-laws to allow some fluidity from Commission to Staff. There is value to continue quarterly meetings to keep the group in the loop—on both sides of the fence even if it is a small group.

Back to discussion on the obstruction removal project: Will meeting be advertised? Yes. Will information be available on our website, as education ahead of time is best? Yes, items will be posted on the Port's website. Will notice be given for additional meetings ahead of time? Yes, possibly 2 more meetings will be held. It was noted in the past, Skyline Beach Club was used as a meeting location.

Josh advised we are still looking for an FBO. This may require an air taxi certificate, and these are hard to come by as these are not currently being issued by the FAA. It was indicated that Clyde Carlson, prior FBO, may still have his air taxi certificate. It is not known if he can/would transfer his certificate.

Discussion about the drainage on Kingsway—area of standing water where the split rail fence is located. There is an issue with drainage at that location where the water was redirected. He had been in contact with the City to identify a solution. He will look at this area again.

The next meeting should be the first Tuesday of June. The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m. by Josh Beaner.