

Cottonwood Municipal Airport  
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Cottonwood, AZ 86326



"Inspiring a Vibrant Community"  
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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COTTONWOOD AIRPORT COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COTTONWOOD, ARIZONA, AND HELD WEDNESDAY JULY 14, 2021 @ 6:00 PM AT THE COTTONWOOD COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT 826 N. MAIN STREET, COTTONWOOD, ARIZONA.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Jim Moeny opened the meeting at 6:03 pm.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jim Moeny, Chairman  
Vernon Reed, Commissioner  
Tim Pebler, Commissioner

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Bill Wade, Vice Chairman  
Will Hallier, Commissioner

**CITY STAFF PRESENT:**

Ron Corbin, City Manager  
Rudy Rodriguez, Deputy City Manager  
Mark Williams, Airport Manager  
Lorenda Yoke, Airport Coordinator

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Chairman Jim Moeny led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Airport Commission Regular Meeting from May 5, 2021**

Chairman Moeny asked if the Commissioners had time to review the minutes from the May 5th meeting. All commissioners present affirmed. Commissioner Pebler made the motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting and Commissioner Reed seconded the motion. Chairman Moeny stated that the minutes have been approved by unanimous vote.

**V. BRIEF SUMMARY BY AIRPORT MANAGER, MARK WILLIAMS**

**Completed Projects:** Security cameras with signage is finished. VirTower cable is complete and the system is fully operational. Light installation at the front main gate is waiting on availability of Utility Dept and bucket truck.

**Engineered Material Arresting System (EMAS):** As part of the runway extension we are considering installing an EMAS which is a foam cushion to be placed at the end of runway 32 which will provide additional safety. This is to be covered by the FAA with grant funds.

**Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP):** This document is submitted to ADOT, with the FAA receiving a copy, annually based on 5year projections. The FAA asked for the taxiway reconstruction to be moved up on the project priority list. New lighting, run up areas and another connector will be based upon the recommendations from the FAA. An option to expedite the project is for the City to pay up front for the design then receive reimbursement at the time of construction. ADOT volunteered to cover this cost up front by the Airport submitting a grant application by September 30, 2021. Cost for the design is \$191,000 with the construction running \$1.24M. ADOT will include the required runway thumper test (runway strength) in the design cost to be funded as well.

2024 & 2025: Helo operating area design and construction, runway strengthening, narrowing, extend and run up area design and construction with Power Control Unit relocation from the safety zone are with the FAA funding the PCU project.

**AWOS Update:** Project is completely funded and we are awaiting the final letter. CATEX is complete. The completion date will not change until the equipment is ordered and we are given an estimated date for delivery.

Chairman Moeny asked if the helicopter area had been brought to grade yet? Mr. Williams stated that it has not but that this will be included with the Airport Layout Plan (ALP).

#### VI. **WISEMAN AVIATION – FBO REPORT**

Chairman Moeny stated there will not be a report.

#### VII. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC** This portion of the agenda is set aside for the public to address the Commission regarding an item that is not listed on the agenda for discussion. However, the Commission cannot engage in discussion regarding any item that is not officially listed on the agenda for discussion and/or action (A.R.S. §38-431.02.A. (H).) ***Therefore, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.01.G., action taken as a result of public comment will be limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date. Comments are limited to a 3-minute time period and the Commission will not hear repetitive comments.***

Chairman Moeny asked for any comments from the public. As there were several in the audience who wished to comment, Airport Coordinator, Lorenda Yoke, read through the list in order for each to come to the podium.

**Lenn Howard:** “3 questions: 1) Why is the public not included in the meetings with the FAA? After several seconds of no response from the Commission, Chairman Moeny stated that the Commission is unable to respond to any questions per Open Meeting Laws. Ms. Howard stated that she would find the answer for herself. 2) Why isn’t there a regularly scheduled BPA airport inspection? If an inspection can be arranged, why hasn’t it been? 3) Old Business 3: Review of final Residential Airport Noise Disclosure Notice to record with Yavapai County and post on City and surrounding areas webpages. Who is the legal approval on this item?”

Anita McCann: “Sometime ago I stood at this podium about an article that appeared in the Cottonwood Journal that was titled “Airport neighbors complain of noise. In that article there was an explanation of why there was increased noise from aircraft as student pilots came here for what was to be 1 month while a runway in Prescott was closed and being repaired. After that I proceeded to give a detailed list of the dates and times that the planes flew over our homes with most beginning around 7 am. About 2 months later at the Airport Commission Meeting, there was a noise abatement committee formed and many good ideas were introduced but not acted on. The interesting thing about the comments I just made is that this took place in October & November of 2018. Now Mr. Williams has proposed yet another commit. The difference is that this time the committee will be comprised of representatives from many neighborhoods in and around Cottonwood. So far, I have representative from the neighborhoods that I don’t plan to read unless you want me to but I currently have 11 on the list and has been presented to Mr. Williams which he has some information on already. I hope that this time we can find some type of compromise. I’m sad to know that so many of the citizens are stressed and angry and I hope you are too. Thank you.”

Aileen Smart: “I have lived here in the Sedona/Verde Valley for 19 years and live at 700 Red Tail Hawk Drive in Clarkdale. I live on top of the ridge right up here. The planes come across and turn exactly on top of my house, every day, 7 days a week. 7 days a week with no break at 6:15 in the morning and go on for 2 – 3 hours. For me its noise harassment.” Chairman Moeny interjected that this subject has already been discussed and the Commission does not allow repetition. He then clarified that the topic of airport noise has already been brought up by a previous speaker. Ms. Smart continued with “the bottom line is that we the people pay City, State and Federal taxes. Those taxes pay for the FAA and the Cottonwood Airport. We fund it, we pay for it, but we have no say in what’s happening. To me, that’s not right. I would like to see that changed and I have volunteered to be one of the representatives from my area. I think there are answers and I would like to be part of a positive change that helps everyone because it is affecting peoples’ health and property values. Thank you.”

Bob Backus: Declined to speak.

Art Chinofsky: “I live in Pine Shadows. My main concern is that the planes are literally over my house. I can read the numbers on the bottom and they seem like they are too low.” Chairman Moeny interjected again and stated that we need to stop this here. It is not our rules, it is state law. Mr. Chinofsky continued “that I know these guys have to practice. My brother is a graduate of Embry Riddle and just retired from UPS after 31 years. I know they need the time.”

John Balla: “These people are taxpayers, right? All of you people, every single one of you and the people that are absent are paid for by us, the taxpayers, one way or another. My one question is who give who the right at a public meeting to stifle what these people have to ask questions about and have to say? This silly thing about state law, that doesn’t fly. This is a public meeting, at a public place in Cottonwood, Michigan. Excuse me, Cottonwood, Arizona and here you’re stifling these people and tell them they can’t talk. Can’t say this, can’t say that. How are they supposed to lay grounds for something they want to say if they can’t say anything? It’s just absurd. You people do not have a right to stifle what these people are saying one way or another at a public meeting.” Chairman Moeny interjected that the Commission does Sir as it’s the law. Mr. Balla became argumentative to which Chairman Moeny said he would show him the law after the meeting. Mr. Balla again continued that “no body wrote a law saying that these people at a public meeting couldn’t say what they want to say. Nobody wrote that law.” He then left the podium and sat down.

Lawrence Minch: “Would like to ask the Commission to place the gate issue on the next meeting agenda in order to offer guidance to the airport users regarding interaction with non-compliant individuals at the gate. To be expedient, if the Commission can approve now, I won’t continue with

my additional comments. The open meeting laws do allow the Commission to an item on the next meeting agenda. Chairman Moeny agreed to do so. Mr. Minch agreed to continue his comments at the next meeting. Mr. Williams asked Mr. Minch to clarify the item for the Commission and agenda. "There is a big danger at the West gate in my opinion because I already met it. I tried to get in the gate one day, I stopped and was confronted. I don't want that to happen to anybody else. I want a sign placed beyond the original gate with a phone number I can call without getting out of my car if I am being harassed by a hot head. I had the problem and I would like to go further on it at the meeting."

Jim Millis: Declined to speak.

James Redmon: "I am the President of the EAA Chapter 952. Our tenants and us are concerned with the current regulations and restrictions of security at the airport. One look at the ramp and you see vacant and unused airport. It's mostly used by visitors. I am a resident of this City and I would like to have the use of our airport. Security cameras alone isn't going to fix this Mark (addressing Mark Williams, Airport Manager). A well-used airport will be the best deterrent against anybody wanting to steal something. Give us a sensible means of using and inviting guests to our airport during and after hours. Several groups have contact us (EAA Chapter) wanting to use it for seminars and for education purposes. They have declined due to the restrictions proposed upon entering and leaving our building. We have approximately 40 members, 35 of which do not have an access card. I feel that it is unfair for those people not be able to use the building where multiple partners of a hangar all have a card and can come & go at their hangar. Our Chapter has given full scholarships to children for fly and have given partial scholarships for ground school. We have flown a hundred kids. We are a very viable source for information for these young kids. We are being denied access to our airport and to our building. Please, can we work something out to make it more easy for us to use our building? One such method would be what Payson has. They have a camera at the gate. An individual calls a phone number and a person will answer. It depends on whoever has that phone who will answer and they can see you at the gate, ask a few questions and if appropriate, they will let you in. It can be done both during and after hours, on or off the airport. Chairman Moeny commented that Mr. Redmon's time is up but that we can continue this discussion. Mr. Redmon then returned to his seat.

Pam Smith: "I live in Pine Shadows. I just have to share this fear that I have. At one time in my life, I did live in south Texas and there was a big cotton field behind our house in a brand-new development. There was an airport down the way, not too far, maybe 5 minutes. When I was out wandering around exploring the edges of the cotton field there was a plane that surprisingly came up (not a noisy plane that some are talking about here) and crashed right near this little grove of trees and that individual dies. I am worried because I live on the edge of Pine Shadows and there is a big open field that does over toward Clarkdale and it's very dry. It's crunchy, of course not in the last few days but the scary thing is that vision comes up as a real happening and I'm afraid. I would like to find out, I don't want to be morbid but I would like to find out, I don't know, how to but maybe I could get some guidance there, about whether there have been any crashes by these new pilots, newish pilots and whether there have been any incidents of emergency landings? How often does it happen? It has to happen as they're coming down here and have to go back to Prescott. I hate having had this past experience and I would hate to every see it happen again. Thank you.

Tina Andres: "I am a pilot and fly out of the Cottonwood Airport usually every week. I am with the EAA and leader of the Young Eagles program bring responsible for all the children in the area that get the free flights so I have been a big advocate of aviation and our airport. I am concerned about the security envelope tat has existed since January for the airport. I understand the reasons for the compromise security at the airport that prompted it, but I think that we have been restricted in Build 0

with the EAA and we have had very good communication from the airport in terms of what the security plan is. I have not seen the Security Plan and it has been an unreasonable burden for us to try to have meeting and use our building according to the terms of the lease that we have for that building. I am asking for better communication and equal treatment between the tenant of Building 0 and the hangars. It appears that we don't have the same security requirements between those entities." Chairman Moeny interjected that this is a repeat of what Mr. Redmon said. Ms. Andres continued "we are just asking to use our building as outlined in our lease and if the security plan that you are talking about in this meeting could be put on the webpage. I have not seen it and if that could be made available as I would have liked to have given input to that document but have not seen it nor have had an opportunity to provide input in to that. Thank you."

Gary Corval: Declined to speak.

Carol Schmidt: "I haven't been here in Clarkdale very long but we live in the flight path of takeoff. My questions would be who to find out more information. What is going on? Where it's going on? I went on My Cottonwood and couldn't find anything. I found out about this meeting but that was it. My questions would be on flight path, altitude, hours, the plan itself moving forward. The ability to be notified of changes in meetings. We were her last Wednesday thinking that it was going to be here and there was nothing that I could find that it had been postponed to tonight. That's all. Thank you."

Chuck Schmidt: Declined to speak.

Jill Schmidgall: "My question is about the flight school from out of town using our airport. When I looked on flightaware.com there has been a 3000% increase. I took a screen shot because I figured nobody would believe me. Since May 21, 2019, a 3000% increase. I was just wondering in Planning and Zoning if we would have a better option for the airport? When I came from Georgia and I love, love, love Cottonwood for the community that it is and a small community and all the things we have going for us but the airport seems to be a little bit of a sore for everybody. Where I lived and came from, I didn't like the community, I didn't like the area but the airports where I live in Georgia they were outside of the residential zoning area so it didn't really affect the flight plans for the area. I had other things but they've already been addressed. I would like to thank you for the flight school from Embry Riddle is not now flying over Dead Horse. They have changed the flight pattern and so I love that but it is directly over my house now. Thank you."

Michelle Swavely: "I live on Tierra Verde off of Willard which is very close to the airport. In this particular case I would like to make a comment that whoever informed the flight schools that they needed to rein it in, I really feel they did. A change happened within 2-48 hours and a lot of the more unusual flying was reined in quite a bit so thank you for that aspect. There was statement that was made that the choice of runway configuration would be left to the FAA. Did I understand that comment correctly?" Chairman Moeny reiterated that they cannot comment. Ms. Swavely continued "that this is in line with this but something else. Perhaps put this on the agenda if that's how it has to be done. I am curious if the renovation to the airport is to bring the airport into compliance whereby it is out of compliance now? I think that would be helpful in understanding what's driving this change."

Hines Metz: "I am another Pine Shadows resident. The last meeting I went to, there was the assertion that expanding the airport is important for business. I have not seen any figures on how, other than for the airport itself, our community benefits financially from that so I would be interested to know the financial benefits in general to our community. I am also interested to know how much of the financing for what you're planning here comes from the taxpayers and how much is from generated income from the airport itself? I think those are important issues for us to be able to understand

what's going on here. There was also a mention at the last meeting of community outreach and I have not been able to find information about how the concerns of the community from the last meeting or even this meeting it's apparent there are some big concerns. I'd like to know how those are being addressed by this group? I would like to know if there have been any focus groups to address the community concerns? Mainly I would like to get some sense that our concerns are being addressed rather than just giving us the opportunity to stand here and voice them. Something that is put out that is available to the general public, easy to find, would be very helpful in this regard. Thank you."

Ann Klassen: I live on Viejo Drive in Cottonwood. My concern is not so much about noise but the public's safety. Since the last meeting there were two training pilots that crash landed on Phoenix freeways and one F16 that was practicing in Las Vegas that crashed. Those are just since this last meeting that was being held here. Pilot training over our community is to me unacceptable. Nearly every other municipality has eliminated touch and goes, yet Cottonwood seems to embrace this practice to no benefit of Cottonwood. If they're not charging them to land, why are they letting this happen and putting all of us at risk? I feel these touch and goes are being used as a means to bump up the numbers in order to qualify for this airport expansion. If this is the case, I would find that to be deliberately deceptive. I also believe the number one concern of this Council should be public safety and I don't understand how student pilots practicing in high, unmonitored traffic at low altitudes over our head qualifies as safe."

Diane Schneider: "I live at 1930 Northstar, Clarkdale. I step over a patio and I am in Cottonwood. When we bought our property a few years ago, the real estate agent only said to us that there's an airport nearby. We kind of shrugged and said well yes it's a small one. No big deal. That has since changed as everyone knows. I am not happy about hearing how quickly this will be completed. Our home value is going to go way down. We will not be able to sell our house because no one is going to want to listen to the aircraft. I am assuming this extension is really for the sole purpose of what you call critical aircraft. That's small jets. I know there are wealthy people that live in the Sedona and Cornville area. They don't want to drive all the way to the airport in Phoenix when they can fly right out of Cottonwood. Sedona can't expand anymore. I'm not even sure there is going to be much more of these touch and goes because the Prescott airport got a lot of money for expansion. The other concern I have is many who live on Northstar or I should say my area of Crossroads on Mingus, have the beacon strobe light blinking in their house, on the patios and through their windows. I am assuming that this light will be moved or bigger to accommodate these so called critical aircraft? How does that light flashing going to be blocked? You can't even go outside in the mornings because of the noise. I can't go out in the evenings when it's dark. I am just so upset because we didn't move, didn't build our house knowing this. It's a problem for me and many others but not for you who are making money."

As Ms. Schneider was the final person to comment, Chairman Moeny closed the Call to the Public.

## VIII. **OLD BUSINESS**

### 1. **Review and update of the Cottonwood Airport Pending Projects List**

Mr. Williams directed the Commission to the beginning of the Project List which were the top 5 priority items identified in pink with the disposition of each item on the right. He asked the Commission if they had another 5 items from the list to be moved to top priority? Chairman Moeny stated that he would send the update to Mr. Williams. The Commission did not have any items they wished to discuss at this time nor did they have any current questions.

**2. Review of final copy of Airport Security Plan**

The Commission discussed the late receipt of the TSA Guidelines for GA Airports just prior the meeting. Chairman Moeny and the Commission agreed that this item is to be tabled to consider their recommendations before final approval.

**3. Review of final Residential Airport Noise Disclosure Notice to record with Yavapai County and post on City and surrounding areas webpages**

Mr. Williams stated that although these documents were approved by the Commission at the last meeting, there were some minor changes with adding ARS 28-8485. No action is required by the Commission nor City Council. Mr. Williams will proceed with recording of documents.

**4. Review of Dakota/Brunner Lease**

Following some discussion on the lease rate, Chairman Moeny asked for a motion to recommend the presented lease to City Council. Commissioner Vern Reed moved for the motion to recommend with Commissioner Tim Pebler seconded. The recommendation was approved by unanimous vote.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Review of Airport Capital Improvement Plan**

This item was discussed during Mr. Williams Manager Briefing.

**2. Cottonwood Airport Mission, Vision & Values Statement**

The current statement is posted on the Airport webpage and staff is asking for input and/or recommendations from Commission to update the document or leave as is. This is required to be part of the Airport Master Plan and will be submitted upon approval by Commission.

To provide additional time for the Commission to present ideas/input, this item has been tabled until the next meeting.

**X. COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

As there were several presented during the Call to the Public, the Commission did not submit any additional.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Moeny asked if there is anything else to come before this Commission. As there was none, he asked for a motion for adjournment. Commissioner Pebler so moved, Commissioner Reed seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.