



**THUN FIELD ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MEETING SUMMARY**

**January 19, 2017**

A meeting of the Pierce County Thun Field Advisory Commission (TFAC) was held on Thursday, January 19, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at the Civil Air Patrol building, Thun Field, 16915 – 103rd Ave. E., Puyallup, WA 98374.

**I. Call to Order & Welcome**

Chair Mike Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm. Members, staff, and guests introduced themselves.

<b>TFAC VOTING MEMBERS</b>	
<b>Present:</b>	Mike Thompson, Chair J. Keith Kemper, Vice Chair Lyle Sindlinger Marshall Collins Douglas Miller Shawn Pratt John Hurlbut arrived several minutes after the meeting started.
<b>Excused:</b>	Michael Keaton has resigned.
<b>TFAC NON-VOTING MEMBERS</b>	
<b>Present:</b>	Jim Downs, SHAC
<b>Excused:</b>	Nichole Weber, SHAC; Dan Roach, Pierce County Council District 1; Hugh Taylor, Pierce County Council Alternate
<b>PIERCE COUNTY STAFF</b>	
<b>Present:</b>	Lauren Behm, Jay Simons, Lissa Smith, Cindy Willis, Brian Ziegler
<b>VISITORS</b>	
<b>Present:</b>	Eleven members of the public signed the attendance sheet.

**II. Approval of Prior Meeting Summaries**

November 17, 2016 – Motion (Keith/Doug) passed unanimously to approve the meeting summary as written.

### III. Visitors and Petitions

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

1. Tom Brown had questions about the building which houses the Pierce County Noxious Weed Control Board; what was the cost of the remodel? Lauren Behm said she will look at the final cost; the estimate was around \$190,000 and was mostly paid for by the Weed Board. Pierce County contributed \$35,000 to bring the building up to code. The Weed Board is a County agency that pays a fair market value rent, reduced based on the initial investment amortized over the length of the lease which is probably 5 years—that makes sense since the FAA gave them a 5-year exemption.
2. John Boyd said the left turn lane into the airport complex is frustrating. Whoever has influence should change the light to an amber flashing light so you can turn left when traffic is clear. His second issue is about the fuel problems with the card reader. Someone wrote a note and said, “If you’re unhappy, go somewhere else.” Auburn is 30 cents/gallon cheaper, so might be a better option. Michael Thompson said the airport should be more welcoming to pilots and users. Brian Ziegler, Public Works Director, gave his opinion about the traffic light; it’s a state signal and it would cost them money the change it; they’d want someone to pay for it. He didn’t know what the cost would be. It’s generally not an issue during the day—just at rush hour. Mr. Boyd said people who use it are frustrated with the light and the long wait.
3. Rod Wetherbee has the concession for the County-owned fuel pumps. He can’t figure out why it varies 10-40 cents. He’s tried to adjust the price accordingly, but fuel prices go up and down, so it’s difficult. The letter at the pump was not intended to push people away—just to let people know that the pump isn’t working properly. We’ve paid to have it calibrated twice. The vendor is difficult to work with. If there’s a suggestion for how to word the note, he’d listen; he doesn’t want to push people away, but doesn’t want people to think he’s dishonest. The problem moves from pump to pump. He’s trying to find a contractor to come out and fix it. Shawn Pratt said these are old pumps so finding someone with the technical expertise to repair them has been difficult. Doug Miller asked about the County taking over the fuel concession. Lauren Behm said we have an on-call engineer who looked at the system and sent a scope of work to fix the issue long term. The contract says the concession holder (SIM) maintains what’s above ground, and the County maintains what’s below ground. Shawn Pratt said it will be expensive to replace all four pumps.

### IV. Reports

- **Operations and Maintenance – Jay Simons**

Jay reported on the runway lighting/transformer/REIL project; the total cost was \$372,000; the engineer miscounted 12 lights, so that added a cost of \$7900 to complete those they missed (included in the \$372,000 total); it was paid for by a grant. Mike Thompson asked how much was saved by not changing out all the conduit—some of it was reusable. Jay will check.

Lissa Smith said the south gate was worked on today; we have a riser on it (approximately 18” tall). It gets the mechanisms/chain off the ground and enables travel to be smoother. We still need to replace the rollers. The card reader is working again and we’re hoping it’s a big improvement. Next week will be the same retrofit on the north gate. If you have any issues, let her know. General maintenance and some bigger projects are scheduled for the year. The runway was undamaged by the cold snap; lots of our driving roads have taken a

beating, but we will be addressing them when the weather warms up. The taxiway crack sealing is in the maintenance plan. Mike Thompson asked if there are any areas to avoid; Lissa said just in the car driving portion. If you see potholes, let her know. John Hurlbut asked about AWOS; Lissa said the ceilometer is not working; the warranty period is past, but we're working with the vendor to get it going. It's just more than a year old and there's a history of issues with it. Lissa said the fire department is doing training and is filming for training videos. They have pilot also who's familiar with aviation procedures. Shawn Pratt said they'll be blowing smoke out of a hangar door, so it's not really on fire. Mike Thompson said the beacon is on at odd times; Lissa said it's on a photo cell so should come on when the weather dictates. It may be time to replace the photo cell (it's been a year and a half); she'll put it on the to-do list. Someone complained about potholes; Lissa has marked them for repair.

- **Administration - Lauren Behm, Assistant Administrator**

1. Master Plan Update – Lauren said we do an annual planning conference with the FAA and WSDOT; we asked about the status of grant for the master plan. We thought it would be released in January 2017, but now they're telling us not until May. We can't do anything on the project until then. We have a consultant on board, and the scope has been under FAA review since October. Next steps will be to get the scope approved; the consultant will submit a fee estimate which is reviewed by a third party, then that goes back to the FAA. When the money is allocated, we begin the project. The Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC) will consist of community and TFAC members; it's a 15 member group. We hope to begin meetings around mid-year. Typically master plans take 18-24 months to complete.
2. Pierce County is working to replace the administrator position; the interview process is ongoing. Lauren will go back to ferry work.
3. The NW Aviation Trade Show is Feb. 25-26 with some classes on Feb. 24. We want volunteers to work 2-hour shifts to talk to people about the airport; we'll cover your admission that day.
4. We are eliminating our part-time maintenance position so there will be no airport representative here on Saturdays. We do have a maintenance technician on-call. Use the after-hours number that's posted; we can publish Justin's number on the gates. Both Jay and Justin are available on Fridays. Mike Thompson asked about having someone in the office when Lissa is out. Lauren said we'll look into it for 2017. We will have extra hire help during summer months.
5. Hangar renovation process; this is close to going to bid by the end of January or early February. The bidding process takes between 7-8 weeks, then we start the 90-day construction project in late April. We'll have more to share when the bids are in. Mike Thompson asked about the estimate; it's \$1.3 million+. We will build as much as possible which realistically is two hangar buildings with doors; alternatives would be three more buildings.
6. Fuel concession – We received a budget proviso from Council for our Performance Audit Committee to do a full study on the fuel concession; they will provide that report to the Economic & Infrastructure Development Committee by May 30 – that will allow for adjustments to the 2018 budget. We will share findings when we get them. Rod Wetherbee said that cutting power to all the hangars needs to be coordinated for time/duration. Lauren said we would do that. We should probably notify hangar owners on the north end as well.

- **Commission Reports**

None.

**V. New Business**

- 2017 Election of Officers – Nominations for chair (which must be a community representative this year): Keith Kemper was the sole nominee and the vote was unanimous. Nominations for Vice Chair (airport user this year): Doug Miller was the sole nominee and the vote was unanimous. New officers will begin their duties at the next meeting.
- Business Signage Project – Lauren Behm showed a drawing of some proposed business signage; we started with our graphic designer and this rendering was done by a sign company. It's been difficult to get responses, but initial quotes have been between \$3,000 and \$40,000. We want to finalize the design; this is the Cadillac of installations. We could consider installation ourselves. For sign placement, we're considering placing a larger sign at the T when you first drive in; for the single panel signs, we'd place them just inside the north and south gates with appropriate arrows. We could have one inside the fence facing the apron for pilots who fly in to the airport. The signs are an aluminum fabrication with a cement pad, poles, and the casing slides over the poles. Illumination is much more expensive. This design and specification is from Plum Design Co. for \$27,000 which includes installation for three signs (big sign, and north and south signs – not one on the apron side). Costs of \$25,000 or more require an RFQ. Mike Thompson said he thought that 'Pierce County Airport-Thun Field' was the official name and should be properly reflected on the sign—however it's registered with the FAA. He also suggested checking with businesses for approval of their listings. Lyle Sindlinger said we should have a map to show where each business is located like industrial parks do. Lauren will check with the designer for costs to include a map on the front sign. Lauren said a cheaper installation was a flat sign like a traffic sign; she'd like to do something aesthetically pleasing—above the \$3000 level, but not \$40,000. Someone suggested we request feedback on possible sign companies via email to airport tenants. Bellandi Signs in Puyallup does lots of the local monument signs in the community. Mike Thompson said make sure they're easy to update. Rod Wetherbee suggested we get the main sign first if money is limited. Mike said he thought the smaller signs are overkill. Keith Kemper suggested substituting maps for the gate signs. Mike asked how many businesses are currently on the airport; Lauren said there are 12-15 listed on the website. Shawn Pratt asked about illumination—an outside light projecting toward the sign would be a cheaper option. Lauren said we'd need to have electricity close; she could get pricing. Marshall Collins said solar cells could provide 3-4 hours of light after dark. Check Auburn's signs. Several members liked the proposed design.
- Non-Aeronautical Policy and Procedure Discussion – The chair said the audience should know the FAA's basic concept of non-aeronautical use. Lyle Sindlinger read the policy from the FAA document. It applies mostly to hangars, but also other structures designated for aeronautical use. It applies to everyone (owners, lessees, and the airport sponsor). Mike Thompson said a subcommittee from TNAAC and TFAC discussed a draft from Lauren and submitted their ideas back to her. Lauren provided the status; the version in agenda packet is the initial version plus subcommittee amendments. She highlighted recommendations received from our Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and comments from AOPA--both recommended we don't add or change the FAA's language; it should mimic FAA policy. Lauren asked for TFAC thoughts on that because the TNAAC is considering keeping it the

same as FAA language. Lauren spoke with the FAA today which said the policy is mainly for hangars (even though their paragraph said all facilities). Mike Thompson asked about airport owned land; is there an objection for that phrase? Lauren said it came from the DPA's opinion that we should stick to addressing hangars only. Mike wondered why we restricted the scope; Lauren wants the DPA to give his interpretation of the FAA's policy. Her initial draft included airport facilities. Mike said it needs to cover more than just hangars. We are weary of the *do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do* attitude. Doug Miller said the FAA says follow the language laid out for you, so restricting it to hangars doesn't make a lot of sense. Non-aeronautical use for hangars and buildings needs to be agreed upon. Doug said airport land becomes a storage option if it's not included in the non-aeronautical prohibition. Rod Wetherbee said the FAA doesn't address land. Someone from audience asked what indefinite storage is. Mike Thompson said we need to discuss storage of non-working aircraft. Lauren said the FAA references as indefinite storage; there needs to be communication between the tenant and the County about when a project will be complete. Lauren said there's an argument to have the FAA language in our policy and reference the requirement to communicate a timeline for maintenance, repair, or project planes to the County in a procedure/enforcement document. John Hurlbut said as long as you state when to be done, that's a definite timetable. Rod Wetherbee asked about the primary use of hangars in FAA language. Lauren said the intent was to have aviation use be primary in each hangar. John Hurlbut said if you've got six classic cars in front of a plane, the primary use is probably car storage. Doug Miller said Rod's showroom is aviation related. Lauren said restaurants are covered in FAA 5190.6B guidance as approved uses at airports. Someone asked about the Weed Control Board. Lauren said that use has been approved by the FAA for an interim use of that building (5 year maximum lease); it was applied for prior to Deb's departure from the County (the letter was provided to the Commission). Mike Thompson said he doesn't recall a 30-day clause in that lease. Lauren said she'd had that question, too; the FAA policy section 3A (approval of interim use in advance (3-5 years)) talks about a 30-day notice. Item B talks about month to month. Lauren hasn't recently reviewed the Weed Board's lease. Keith Kemper asked if the Weed Board can reapply after 5 years; Lauren said the FAA is very wishy-washy and won't put that in writing, but that's the direct question she hopes to have answered. She will bring the ALP that shows what is designated as aviation use and what isn't—that has a big impact on grant assurances and what the policy covers. Grant assurances apply to hangars and anything on the ALP designated as aviation. Mike Thompson said it's important to be consistent in all areas of airport—even land used for privately-owned t-hangars. Lyle Sindlinger said we need a meeting location and Lissa needs a new office--no consideration was given for that building by the previous administrator. Lissa noted that the ALP is on the website and the 16709 Bldg. (where the Weed Board is located) is designated as an airport operations building. Rod Wetherbee asked about parking vehicles; Mike said you can park in a hangar while flying your airplane; it's spelled out in FAA policy. Shawn Pratt asked if the ALP lists the building as the airport operations building, does the ALP need to be rewritten? Lauren said we've not been requested to amend the ALP—maybe because we're redoing the master plan. Mike Thompson said to change the ALP after the fact doesn't set too well. Lauren said maybe it's not changed for interim use. Mike asked for clarification of the language used on the bottom of the first page: noncommercial maintenance put in to discourage unauthorized shops on the airport. Lauren said she took it out of the paragraph above it. The intent is to keep people from building and selling aircraft as a non-licensed business. Mike asked about Attachment A; Lauren said that was from the attorney for reference. Mike said it negates TFAC's

suggestions. Doug Miller said Attachment A is a transient issue. Lauren said she'll have further conversation with the DPA. Maybe you want to get the subcommittee back together to discuss non-permitted uses and more prescriptive uses. Lauren said this issue needs to stay on our agenda for the next meeting. She'll get notes from the TNAAC meeting to share.

- 2017 Work Plan/Meeting Dates

Lauren suggested quarterly meeting dates and she provided two options in each quarter. Mike Thompson said if we have to wait until April/May for more discussion on non-aeronautical uses, we're pushing the opportunity for the Council to act by July; a quarterly schedule won't work, at least at the beginning of the year. Lauren said the TNAAC will have a March 9 meeting, so perhaps TFAC should meet March 16 (third Thursday). Then maybe hold a meeting in May to finalize the policy. Lauren then suggested these dates for regular TFAC meetings:

March 16

May 18

August 17

November 16

As for work plan items, Lauren suggested it helps staff be effective to know what we're working on. Let's agree on the major projects for the year and create a reasonable list. If these items aren't what the TFAC wants, let's talk about it, but this is the volume level we can support. Mike Thompson agreed that it's nice not to get surprised; this is a good list.

Lissa Smith presented certificates of recognition for each TFAC member and thanked them for their help and time on behalf of the airport. We're looking forward to another great year with positive energy flowing. Mike Thompson thanked Lissa and Lauren for their fine work, and Brian Ziegler for attending.

Paul Burgess asked about the email that Pierce County airports would no longer supply traffic cones and barricades. Jay Simons said when there are events on the airport, we have to barricade and cone off certain areas; if a business wants to borrow 30 pylons to put around their planes, we may not have enough for our own needs. Airports aren't supposed to furnish this equipment. If a business wants to cone off something, they should plan to furnish their own. We'll do it in an emergency, but we don't have the resources to loan ours out. Jay said our pylons are shared between the two airports and we need them to do our job. Jay said the email could have been worded differently and he apologized if the wording seemed harsh.

John Hurlbut asked if there are extra keys to the County hangars; Lissa Smith said most have locks to which she has no access. Doug Miller said for County-owned hangars, access should be unrestricted. Lissa said lots of condo association members have given her keys in case of fire to get planes out, but that's not mandatory.

## **VI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

<b>TO CONTACT THE THUN FIELD ADVISORY COMMISSION regarding any items on this agenda or any other issues:</b>	
<b>Call:</b>	(253) 798-7250 (Airport Administration)
<b>Fax:</b>	(253) 798-2740
<b>Mail:</b>	Thun Field Advisory Commission 2702 South 42 <sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 201 Tacoma, WA 98409-7322
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:pctfac@co.pierce.wa.us">pctfac@co.pierce.wa.us</a>
<b>Submit comments online:</b>	<a href="http://www.piercecountywa.org/thunfield">www.piercecountywa.org/thunfield</a> (click on "contact us")

### **TFAC Next Meeting**

**Date:** Thursday, March 16, 2017  
**Time:** 6:30 PM  
**Location:** Thun Field, Civil Air Patrol Building  
16915 103rd Ave. E.  
Puyallup, WA 98374