

**VAN NUYS AIRPORT CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**Tuesday, February 3, 2015**  
**MINUTES**

A meeting of the Van Nuys Airport Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Elliot Sanders. Members present: Elliot Sanders, Don Schultz, Ron Merkin, John Parker, Gerry Silver, David Rankell, Kathy Delle Donne, Vahid Khorsand, Wendy Saunders, Wayne Williams, David Bernardoni, Laurence Rabe

Members Absent: Harold Lee, Cindy Goodfellow, Roger Oeland, Roger Ortiz

The Council vacancies as of February 3, 2015 are as follows: Two appointments from the Mayor's Office.

The minutes from the January 6, 2015 meeting were unanimously approved.

**STAFF REPORTS**

Mr. Romo stated Gina Marie Lindsey announced her retirement from LAWA to be effective sometime later this spring. Ms. Lindsey will stay on until LAWA has a replacement.

Mr. Romo indicated Flora Margheritis and Diana Sanchez are attending the NBAA Schedulers and Dispatchers conference in San Jose California, which started today. Ms. Margheritis and Ms. Sanchez are attending the conference to promote the airport in general, but specifically to promote the soon to be opened Customs and Border Protection (CBP) clearance facility. Operations could start as soon as March upon final sign-off from CBP. A CBP officer will be brought from Los Angeles on an interim basis to perform the clearance activities. Mr. Romo indicated VNY will keep the council apprised of the status and stated VNY plans on having an open house the second or third week in March.

**REPORT FROM CHAIR**

Mr. Sanders reminded the council members of the By-Laws and the importance of attending the meetings.

**Working Group Reports – Discussion/Action**

No items were discussed.

**3.) BOAC AGENDA ITEMS CONCERNING VNY**

Mr. Romo discussed the agenda items for the BOAC Meetings on January 15.

**January 15, 2015 BOAC items:**

7. RESOLUTION NO.- Land Rental Rate for Lease VNY-4897 with Soper, Babcock and Jumanan at Van Nuys Airport: Covering the land located at 8100 Balboa Place within Van Nuys Airport

PURPOSE: Adjust the land rental rate for Soper, Babcock and Jumanan in accordance with the required five (5)-year periodic adjustment.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Adoption of the Report requesting that the Board of Airport Commissioners find that this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III Class 1(31) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines; approve

the new land rental rate for the land located at 8100 Balboa Place in Van Nuys Airport; and authorize the Executive Director to adjust and apply the new land rental rate to the Soper, Babcock and Jumanan lease as applicable. (Debbie Bowers, 424-646-7142)

8. RESOLUTION NO. - List of Qualified Proposers: To compete for Fixed Based Operator Request for Proposal opportunity at 16644 Roscoe Boulevard in Van Nuys Airport; and rescission of Resolution 25403

PURPOSE: To rescind the current list and establish a Qualified List of firms that may submit proposals in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Fixed Base Operator (FBO) at 16644 Roscoe Boulevard at Van Nuys Airport.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Adoption of the Report requesting that the Board of Airport Commissioners find that this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines; further find that use of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and RFP processes, as opposed to the Request for Bids process, would best serve Los Angeles World Airports' (LAWA) objectives and interests, and benefit LAWA to make all firms that submitted a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) eligible to receive the RFP for design, construction and operation of an FBO at Van Nuys Airport, and involves, in part, the performance of expert, technical and special skills, services, and judgment for which competitive bidding is not practical or advantageous to LAWA and, as such, that competitive bidding would work an incongruity and be unavailing and would not produce an advantage with reference to the aviation community or LAWA; further find that the RFP process used in this competitive award process satisfies the requirements of Administrative Code Section 10.17, benefits LAWA and is compatible with its interests; rescind Board Resolution 25403, which established the Current List of Qualified Proposers, and find that in light of the circumstances presented that it would be in the best interests of LAWA to make all firms that submitted an SOQ eligible to receive the RFP for an FBO at 16644 Roscoe Boulevard; and approve the list of Qualified Proposers. (Debbie Bowers, 424-646-7142)

All items were approved.

Mr. Schultz asked about the asphalt pile on Balboa Place and whether there was any word on its possible relocation.

Mr. Romo stated he asked Diana Sanchez to look into this matter. Ms. Sanchez reported through email that, "The asphalt pile has gone from 36 feet to 17 feet and it is constantly being removed when the city works on the streets. The 17 foot pile that is currently on the site is covered with plastic to avoid any of it being blown with the wind. The pile grew to 36 feet because the City of LA has been doing more work on streets and there was a need to hold the materials." Ms. Sanchez went on to say, "Eventually, the City will retrofit a plant in South LA and one in Sylmar to refurbish and recycle asphalt. Right now about 20% is recycled, with these new plants 50% will be recycled." Mr. Romo indicated he does not have a time frame, but it appears there are a couple of maintenance yards that will take the bulk of that.

Mr. Schultz stated he noticed half of the pile was covered going from west to east, but the other half that is deeper into the airport wasn't covered.

Mr. Romo indicated it may be that the Santa Ana winds blow from east to west.

Mr. Sanders indicated he spoke with the leaseholder who stated they are not having an issue with the second half being uncovered; it was also mentioned that keeping the pile wet would help keep it compacted.

#### **4.) PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS - Discussion**

Ms. Natalie Arazi indicated she is the first Vice President of the Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council and the Chair of the Economic Revitalization and Development Committee; however, tonight she is attending the CAC as a private citizen speaking on behalf of her neighborhood. Ms. Arazi stated she is attending tonight's meeting to talk about the proliferation of sound pollution that neighbors are experiencing in the area. She indicated she has lived in Lake Balboa for ten years on Collett Avenue, which is east of the airport, and she is very familiar with what normal noise is. Ms. Arazi indicated at one of her neighborhood council meetings last year; someone mentioned there was a place for issuing sound complaints but didn't get the website. Ms. Arazi stated she started keeping a log whereas last year she recorded nineteen incidents of noise, which seemed out of the ordinary. Since the beginning of this year she has recorded fifty-five incidents. Ms. Arazi stated her neighbors have approached her about this issue. She went on to say this has resulted in people who have had their children woken in the middle of the night or have not been able to put their babies to sleep because of sound noise. Ms. Arazi also stated they are now hearing jets idling in their living rooms with the windows and doors closed, which has not happened before. Ms. Arazi went on to say she has been woken up by a jet landing, registering on the Web Trak at 94 decibels, on January 24<sup>th</sup> at 91 decibels, and last night a landing at 99 decibels. Ms. Arazi indicated with the Noisier Jet Phase Out, Ordinance number 181106, decibel levels as of January 1, 2014 should not register above 80 decibels, and there are a number that are registering well above that. She stated this is not an isolated incident, and it seems to be getting worse. Ms. Arazi indicated they will be discussing this tomorrow at their neighborhood council and that Mr. Len Krugler will be speaking at the meeting. Ms. Arazi expressed the desire to get the noise levels back to a level they would consider normal prior to this.

Mr. Krugler confirmed he will attend the Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council meeting tomorrow.

#### **5.) NEW BUSINESS**

No items were discussed.

#### **6.) OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Sanders asked Mr. Romo if there has been any progress on the issue of early turns.

Mr. Romo stated in response to Commissioner Telles and her discussion with Gina Marie Lindsey, LAWA has made a commitment to go to the board either the second meeting in March or the first meeting in April with a management report; it is an overview of the early turn program. LAWA will return to the board, most likely in April, with a staff report that asks the board to reaffirm its support of the early turn program and to update it so that it is very clear it applies to all aircraft. Mr. Romo reminded those in attendance that this is a voluntary program. Mr. Romo went on to say whether pilots turn because they are directed by the tower or because they forget, there is nothing LAWA can do to adjudicate that. It is going to take continuous and continual outreach. Mr. Romo stressed that as the airport authority/operator LAWA does not have the jurisdiction over how aircraft are handled once they are airborne. He went on to say that LAWA will do their best to reeducate the pilots that they should be proceeding all the way out to the flood basin before they make their turns.

Mr. Sanders expressed that these issues are being attended to and indicated he is confident that over the course of a short period of time LAWA's stated position through the means that Mr. Romo just

mentioned will have the opportunity for the CAC to make an impact, so they can start quieting down the issue of early turns, but it will take time.

Mr. Gary Aragon indicated he lives on Gaviota Street in Lake Balboa; half a block north of Victory and east of Woodley. He has lived there for ten years and has been coming around to CAC meetings for the last year. Mr. Aragon stated he usually sits quietly at the meetings but is finally at his wit's end. He expressed his appreciation for what has been said, but stated it is starting to sound like lip service to him. He also indicated the entire neighborhood is starting to get really upset about this. Mr. Aragon indicated he watches planes take off, and by the time they get to his house, they are literally perpendicular to his house. He stated their entire loop is over the neighborhood, and they never make it to the basin or the freeway. They are disturbing not only his neighborhood, but fifteen neighborhoods adjacent to his. Mr. Aragon hopes the voluntary program will be reckoned. He stated he is a school teacher who has ten weeks off during the summer, and if this situation is not handled by then, he will spend his entire ten weeks knocking on doors and getting something started.

Mr. David Haddad lives on Kittridge Street; a few blocks east of Woodley and north of Victory. He has lived there for twenty-two years. Mr. Haddad stated it seems the nicer the day, the more planes there are. He indicated that while he knows LAWA is making an effort to get the word out and doing the best they can, he just wants to have his voice be heard. Mr. Haddad indicated it has gotten worse over the years and sometimes planes are as low as 150 feet or below 200 feet. He stated sometimes with the Santa Ana winds, single engine planes will land heading north. The planes will sometimes come over their house, almost cruising, where you don't really hear the engines. He expressed his concern considering the recent plane crash not too far from his area. He stated that although he has been told not to worry about plane crashes, that element is still out there all the time, and it is worrisome. Mr. Haddad indicated he films the planes sometimes and posts the links on YouTube; he films them heading in an easterly direction, right over Kittridge, and they are definitely making their turns way before the basin. He stated he understands what it's about; they are trying to save fuel. He also indicated it seems there are more jets late at night. Mr. Haddad said the problem seems to be continuing and hopes to make progress in a way that will help the residents out.

Ms. Roxan Hartstein, a resident of Lake Balboa, stated she had Councilwoman Nury Martinez send a letter to Gina Lindsey at LAWA last November 10, 2014. Ms. Hartstein indicated it has become a big issue with the noise level. She expressed concerned with the planes dipping so low that they're really close to the homes (less than 200 feet). She stated the decibel levels inside the house with the windows closed are so loud it's disturbing. Ms. Hartstein mentioned the plane crash at Vanowen and Hayvenhurst, and that it is a big concern. Ms. Hartstein stated the whole area around the airport is being really disturbed. She indicated for a year and a half they've been dealing with this issue and it has gotten continually worse. Ms. Hartstein stated they've been tolerating this, and now it is becoming very dangerous with the airplane that just crashed. She stated if he had been flying over the golf course it might have been a different story. Ms. Hartstein stated there needs to be some kind of resolution. She stated they don't live by LAX, but they are treating this airport like LAX, and the residents are getting the brunt of the disturbance.

Mr. Craig Welzbacher, a resident of Lake Balboa, indicated that since the last meeting he has taken pictures of planes, which he was asked to do because Web Trak doesn't list the tail numbers of the smaller planes most of the time. He indicated over the last month he has seen many new planes he has never seen before. His concern is that because this a voluntary program he wonders how they will be able to reach out to all of these new planes if they are constantly coming here. Mr. Welzbacher asked for a meeting with Mr. Sanders to set the parameters of what they would like the voluntary route around their neighborhood to be so that it's not mismatched. Mr. Welzbacher concluded by stating this is not getting better and would like to meet to discuss further.

Mr. Sanders thanked those who made comments and indicated this is an ongoing process. Mr. Sanders asked members of the council for any suggestions or who may wish to make comments.

Mr. Parker indicated that the residents may wish to attend the BOAC meetings, which is a public meeting. He also stated the BOAC has more power than the VNY CAC.

Mr. Williams suggested that those who wish to attend the BOAC make sure it's an action item on the agenda and not just a public comment. Mr. Williams stated it is the tower that needs to tell these aircraft that they do not get to turn until after they pass the reclamation plant. He went on to say if the tower has an excuse as to why they can't do that, then they need to tell them. Mr. Williams stated he went online and reported a number of aircraft on Sunday and yesterday because of the unexpected noise. At the same time he looked on Web Trak and noticed a guy doing a loop; he searched the aircraft's track and discovered that it started in Santa Monica and then came to VNY, flew 50+ times around our airport and then headed back. Mr. Williams indicated that the plane is owned by a guy in Austin, Texas. He went on to say that what happens is the word gets out that you can fly to VNY and you can start making noise, and you can start making loops, and you can fly from any airport and VNY isn't going to do anything about it. Mr. Williams indicated when he attended a helicopter noise meeting this past month he had a chance to talk to Steve May and Glenn Martin. Mr. Williams expressed to Mr. Martin that the problem originates in the tower and that Mr. Martin is the only person who can solve this problem. Mr. Williams indicated Mr. Martin was surprised that this is still an issue. Mr. Williams stated, for the record, everybody knows this is a problem, and everybody dragging their feet no longer has an excuse; this has to get solved and it has to get solved now. It's a phone call to the management at the tower to tell them the law is laid down, otherwise we're going to start doing other things that are not going to be pretty and are not going to be comfortable.

Mr. Silver stated there is a disconnect between the number of residents' complaints and the physical data (i.e. an increase in Avgas over the last three years and a reduction in total number of operations). He went on to say they need to analyze what is causing that; they need more data to analyze this problem. He stated they're repeatedly focusing on the flight schools, and it's true that the FAA has control once they leave the ground, but it seems the BOAC may have some ability to get reports from the flight schools if nothing more than to pull the number of training operations.

Ms. Rabe stated the procedures are in place. She went on to say she did three touch and go's to find out if the tower was the issue or not. She stated only one time did the tower ask her to head left by ten degrees, but it did not put her plane over the homes. She did witness one airplane cutting short during this process, but she stressed the signs are there. There are instructions in the Blue Book that every single pilot uses. She went on to say the one instrument all pilots use when they come to another airport is ATIS. She suggested that the FAA put a remark at the end of ATIS that says, "No early turns." It should not take a lot of time; it should not require higher officials to come talk to the CAC, and it should not have to go to the BOAC.

Mr. Sanders reiterated this is a work in progress and stressed the airport is doing what it can to try to tell the tower to take these actions. He stated as a pilot he has seen the signs and attempts not to make those turns. He indicated it will come from a source that is common to all and that is the tower. Mr. Sanders indicated the CAC can't change it, the airport is going to make the effort to change it, and it will be the FAA that does change it.

Mr. Silver suggested those interested should listen to the ATIS.

Mr. Rankell stated this has been going on for a year and since they first heard from the neighbors; the neighborhood is in no better condition than it was a year ago. He went on to say what they keep hearing from the airport is they are working on it. He stated he would like to let the neighbors know what it is they are working on it. Mr. Rankell stated the CAC needs to understand exactly what LAWA is doing, what steps and actions are being taken, and to report back to the CAC month over month with a presentation of what LAWA has done, what they're doing this month, and what they're going to do next month. Mr. Rankell expressed concern for this residential community. He stated while the FAA has a very large hand to play in this, the problem is new, and LAWA does retain rights on these leaseholds. He suggested that LAWA specify to leaseholders that they can't rent to certain types of operations that draw the irritation of the residential community.

Mr. Sanders informed the council his intention is to let the activities of LAWA presented by Mr. Romo get through to the BOAC to see what that result would be. He anticipates the next time this will be an agenda item will be April at the very soonest. He stated council has to let LAWA do what they can to institute further action on the FAA.

Mr. Merkin stated he is bothered by the fact that flights have been coming from Santa Monica, and it's the first time he has heard that. He stated Santa Monica Airport gets a lot more attention from public outcry than public outcry from LAWA, and it's only going to get worse. Mr. Merkin stated he didn't remember Ms. Rabe's suggestion regarding ATIS being mentioned before.

Mr. Sanders stated it had and it's an FAA responsibility.

Mr. Merkin asked if there was any way to put that in writing to the BOAC as an idea to suggest to the FAA.

Mr. Sanders stated Mr. Merkin could draft a letter in concert with Ms. Rabe and send it to the board.

Ms. Rabe stated there aren't that many flight schools around and suggested that if the BOAC cannot act quickly on the issue, maybe the councilwoman could send a letter to all of the flight schools that come to VNY and tell them about the early turn issue.

Mr. Sanders indicated that Mr. Krugler has already approached flight schools and continues to do so. Mr. Sanders reminded the council as well as the public that the CAC represents the airport as an advisory council service to the BOAC. He also indicated the FAA governs everything above that millimeter of flight that takes place from the land and LAWA manages everything on the ground. The airport can make an influence and they are attempting to do so.

Mr. Williams suggested giving flight schools an incentive for coming to VNY (e.g. monetary fines for turning early).

Mr. Khorsand asked Mr. Krugler for a timeline once the BOAC approves of LAWA's suggested recommendations and the implementation of the procedures.

Mr. Krugler indicated he doesn't know, and he also stated he doesn't think it would be legal to impose fines.

Mr. Romo restated the early turn program is voluntary.

Mr. Bernardoni stated without the FAA's involvement the CAC can't make any headway. He also asked if there are any current discussions about having the FAA attend another CAC meeting.

Mr. Sanders suggested at the conclusion of the resolution and the actions that the BOAC do take, we offer an opportunity for the FAA to come out and respond.

Mr. Silver stated “no new access restrictions” (i.e. Landing fees, fees on weight, number of operations, fees and fines) stopped in 1991. He stated the only things we can do are voluntary, but that doesn’t mean you can’t go to your congressman or woman and put pressure on them to put pressure on the FAA.

Mr. Sanders concurred with Mr. Silver and encouraged the public to contact their council people and talk to their congressmen.

## **7.) EMERGENCY ITEMS SINCE POSTING OF AGENDA – Discussion/Action**

No items were discussed.

## **8.) ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS’ COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Khorsand asked Mr. Williams if he had any updates on the helicopter noise follow up meeting.

Mr. Williams indicated they have not heard the FAA’s statement yet, which should come around February 15, 2015.

Ms. Del Donne asked Mr. Romo who controls all the towers and if someone at LAX controls VNY.

Mr. Romo indicated each tower has a tower manager; VNY’s manager reports to Mr. Washington who has been to the CAC meetings twice.

Mr. Merkin would like an update on the Prop Park in the next couple of months.

Mr. Sanders indicated he had an update scheduled for this evening, but it was canceled. He will make a note.

Mr. Sanders reiterated the Working Group Reports will be coming up next month and asked the members to email him.

Mr. Schultz thanked Mr. Romo and Mr. Krugler for their efforts.

Ms. Rabe asked Mr. Romo what the hour of operations will be for customs at VNY.

Mr. Romo indicated the final schedule is to be ultimately set, but it will be forty hours per week with coverage between 11:00AM and 7:00PM. CBP will require twenty-four hours’ notice for their services.

Mr. Rankell indicated based on the location of the recent plane crash the issue of early turns needs to be looked at not only as a noise factor but also a potentially public safety factor as well.

Mr. Silver suggested an agenda item next month to formally request a report from the Noise committee.

## **9) ADJOURNMENT:**

8:07 p.m.