

MINUTES

CITY OF TULARE AVIATION COMMITTEE
Monday, April 22, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.
CITY HALL CITY MANAGER CONFERENCE ROOM (UPSTAIRS)
411 E Kern Ave

Mission Statement

To promote a quality of life making Tulare the most desirable community in which to live, learn, play, work, worship and prosper.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 6:01pm by Michael Schoenau, Committee Chairman.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Michael Schoenau led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

This is the time for citizens to comment on items within the jurisdiction of the Committee. The Committee cannot legally discuss or take official action on citizen comments that are introduced today. Each speaker will be allowed 3 minutes, with a maximum of 10 minutes per item, unless otherwise extended by the Committee.

No citizen comments.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

Communications are to be submitted 10 days prior to a meeting to be considered for this section of the Agenda. No action will be taken on matters listed under Communications; however, the Committee may direct staff to schedule issues raised during Communications for a future agenda. Citizen comments will be limited to 3 minutes per topic, unless otherwise extended by Committee.

No communications.

V. STUDENT REPORTS

No student reports.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

All Consent Calendar items are considered routine and will be enacted in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these matters unless a request is made, in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Calendar to be discussed and voted upon by a separate motion

- Approve minutes from meeting held on 02/26/2024
Robert Smith, Committee Member, motioned to approve the minutes from the 02/26/2024 meeting. Cris Colson, Committee Member seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- Nominate and vote in new Vice Chairman
Michael Schoenau, Committee Chairman, nominated Cris Colson as Vice Chairman. Chuck Miguel, Committee Chairman, seconded the motion. All were in favor.

VII. GENERAL BUSINESS

- Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. presentation
Marc Mondell, City Manager gave a pretense to the presentation, mentioning that Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. was asked to help show what the potential of the

airport might look like. They were asked to examine surrounding airports and compare, showing what some options may be for Mefford Field Airport. This is to begin the process of updating the airport's Master Plan.

Manny Correa, Office of Safety, Compliance & Facilities Officer, introduced Jennifer Stein of Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc..

Jennifer stated that she has been working with Kimley-Horn for 19 years and has been working on aviation related projects for the last 10 years. Her background is primarily in environmental and entitlement due diligence.

Jennifer introduced Lucas Adrian, who has been with Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc. for 2 years. Lucas represents the engineering side, working with a multitude of airports, helping complete necessary projects.

Jennifer began the presentation by giving a brief synopsis of what the presentation would entail, stating that they would be showcasing surrounding airports, discussing Mefford Field Airport's potential, and grant opportunities available to Mefford Field Airport.

Lucas shared San Jose Mineta Airport, stating that Mefford Field would not be the next San Jose airport, but that he used this for a comparison and contrasting exercise. San Jose is a hub airport with a larger runway, at 11,000 feet in length supporting larger commercial aircraft. They receive over 15 million annual passengers and also house a San Jose Airport Patrol and Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting facility. Services provided are passenger car rentals, major airframe and powerplant repair, and jet fuel storage (2 mill gallons). San Jose does not serve the General Aviation community.

Next Lucas shared about Fresno Yosemite International Airport, which has seen a couple million passengers since 2022. This airport is a hub airport. Their runway length supports commercial jets and they have facilities that house Air National Guard base, Army National Guard, US Forest Service, CA Dept of Forestry Air Attack base, Highway Patrol, County and City police stations and fire station. They do offer more General Aviation services than San Jose Mineta Airport, also providing more hangar space with approximately 100 hangars in various sizes. Services provided at Fresno Yosemite International Airport include 8 FBO's – fueling, ground handling, hangar leasing/sales, air charter and passenger car rentals.

Next presented was Meadows Field Airport in Bakersfield, Ca.. Lucas shared that this is a smaller airport, with more General Aviation use, however it still provides commercial flights, seeing over 100,000 passengers since 2022. It is not considered a hub airport. Meadows Field Airport sees about 254 daily aircraft operations, with over half of that being General Aviation use. Their airport offers approximately 50 hangars of various sizes. They provide services such as, 3 FBO's – tiedowns, refueling, GPU, Hangar space, passenger car rental, major airframe and powerplant repair and air charter. Meadows Field Airport provides a home to civil air patrol, a fire station and the county sheriff.

Jennifer shared about Visalia Municipal Airport, stating that they see approximately

89 daily aircraft operations on average, with 77% being General Aviation use. They have over 161 aircraft based at their airport. Services available at Visalia Municipal Airport include 1 FBO – refueling service, passenger car rental, major airframe and powerplant repair, charter service and a flight instruction school. They also house an air ambulance.

Next, Jennifer presented Porterville Municipal Airport, stating it is a smaller airport. This airport sees approximately 119 daily aircraft operations on average, with 63% of that being transient General Aviation use. Services available at Porterville Municipal Airport include 3 FBO's – 24-hour self-service fuel station, major airframe and powerplant repair, charter service, flight instruction and an airport restaurant. This airport has emergency response services based from their airport, including air ambulance, CalFire/US Forest Service air attack. They are considered a local facility.

Lompoc Airport was the next airport presented by Jennifer. They have about 40 aircraft parked at the airport and see roughly 82 daily aircraft operations on average, with 50% being transient General Aviation. They offer approximately 60-70 hangars of various sizes. Services available include 2 FBO's – 24-hour self-service fuel station, major repairs on airframe and powerplant, and passenger car rental. Other operations at this airport include skydiving. There are no emergency response teams housed at this airport. This is considered a local airport.

Jennifer also presented Columbia Airport, near Sacramento. They offer approximately 90-100 private hangar of various sizes and have roughly 103 aircraft based at the airport. This airport sees approximately 125 daily aircraft operations on average, with 50% being transient General Aviation use. Services provided at Columbia Airport include 1 FBO – car and aircraft rental, refueling, flight instruction, major airframe and powerplant repair and private hangars. They do have emergency response teams based from their airport, including CalFire Air Attack Base and Air ambulance. This is a local airport.

Lucas took over the presentation, discussing Tulare's Mefford Field Airport. He shared that Mefford Field Airport is a much smaller General Aviation airport with a smaller runway of 3901 x 75 ft. There are approximately 35 private hangars of various sizes, with 27 aircraft being housed at the airport. Services available at Mefford Field Airport include 1FBO – aircraft refueling, maintenance and parking. Lucas mentioned that agricultural aircraft has a larger presence at Mefford Field. There aren't many services around the airport like hotels and restaurants, other than the restaurant at the golf course across from the airport. Lucas made the comment of what other services could we tap into that surrounding airports have, using examples of a pilot school or more hangars.

Jennifer opened up time for questions and comments. Cris Colson, Vice Chairman, suggested looking at more surrounding airports to see what they offer even for non-aviation and using that as inspiration for Mefford Field. Marc Mondell, City Manager said there is a consulting firm that will be helping market the airport to bring in interest from businesses that may want to come into the area.

Jennifer shared funding sources available for Mefford Field Airport for airport improvement. The first was the BIL funds, with 2 different programs over 5 years with an annual allocation. These funds are available for all types of airports. The first source under the BIL is the Airport Infrastructure Grant (AIG) which has approximately \$14.55 billion in available funds, and the second is the Airport Terminal Program (ATP) which has approximately \$4.85 billion in available funds. The ATP would not be available to Mefford Field, as these funds are set aside for airports with Terminals. The second source of funding is the AIP grant which are issued annually by the FAA and are for airports to use at their discretion. Jennifer continued to provide information regarding what types of projects these funding sources could cover. AIP funds are very limited to anything related to runways, taxiways and safety. The BIL funding would be more beneficial for revenue generating projects such as hangar improvements, apron rehabilitation, Airport Master Plan update, security improvements and more.

The AIP is granted on an annual basis so long as they are funded by congress. The next cycle is for FY 2025 and an eligible airport must meet NPIAS criteria for airport sponsors and have an FAA-approved Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP). There is opportunity to receive a grant match from Caltrans for 5% or up to \$10,000.

Mefford Field currently has \$150,000 in AIP entitlement funding that was awarded in 2021 and has to be spent by September 2024. There is an additional \$450,000 in AIP entitlement funding that was awarded between 2022 and 2024. Additionally, there is roughly \$400,000 in BIL AIG funds, with a portion expiring in July of 2025. Marc Mondell asked what typically is the match of funds on these grants. Jennifer responded with 10%. However, IF the City receives the Caltrans grant match of 5%, then the City would only need to come up with a 5% match. The Caltrans grant match is on a first come first serve basis.

Lucas recommended using available funds to complete a Pavement Management Program, as discretionary funds are locked until this is complete. He also suggested updating the Airport Layout Plan/Master Plan, as it is most likely out of date and an up to date copy is required by the FAA. The third suggestion was to do a Disadvantage Business Enterprise Plan, which is also an FAA requirement. Lucas' last suggestion was for a Historical Building Investigation, which would be needed to develop adjacent landside property.

Additionally, Lucas stated that the ACIP for the FAA needs to be developed/updated in addition to one for Caltrans.

Lucas went in to sharing about the Pavement Management Program. He stated that at minimum, the FAA requires a visual inspection be completed. This would include measuring cracking and types of cracking. Lucas made the recommendation to also do a Geotechnical Investigation, which includes taking core samples and NDT testing. This would give better insight into what the subgrade is and soil issues are so that a better recommendation of improvement can be made. From the inspection and testing, this would generate a Pavement Condition Index report (PCI). This report helps paint the picture to the FAA of the condition the pavement is in, showing the real needs of funding for runway and taxiway improvement. The Pavement Management program would be funded out of the AIP funds.

Jennifer continued the presentation by sharing information regarding potential grant funding for structural repairs of the Mefford Hangar. To determine eligibility for grant funding, a Basic Historical Resource Report would need to be completed. This report follows National Park Service guidance on restoration. It would offer proposed use and non-use or limited use of the structure. The report would be valid for 5-10 years. Jennifer said this report would be important to any developer that would want to utilize the hangar or space around it. BIL funding can be used for this report.

Marc Mondell recommended going a different route and doing an RFP to investigate what the private sector might do with the building, salvaging the super structure and reinvent the space, while honoring the history of the building. He suggested not pursuing grants for the hangar. He believes this building has great potential to be a good funding source for the airport. Marc asked Jennifer and Lucas if the Basic Historical Resource Report would be required if not seeking grant funding for the building. A CEQA analysis would be required even if not requesting grant funding to help determine what could be done with and around the hangar.

- Discussion of ACIP's
Manny Correa, Office of Safety, Compliance & Facilities Officer, stated that the ACIP's will be updated now that there is a new consultant for Mefford Field Airport. Projects that have been on the ACIP in previous years may stay but may be rearranged for priority purposes.
- Update regarding maintenance at Mefford Field
Peter Aranzazu, Airport Manager, shared that Airport Management and other City staff went around the airport with the City of Tulare Streets Department to look at the runway and hangar areas to see what pavement improvement could be done in house.
Peter also shared that coating was taking place outside and inside the hangars. The next step would be to add whirly birds to the tops of the hangars to add ventilation. This is all in effort to help protect and prolong the life of the hangars. Peter also shared that they are providing maintenance to the springs on the hangar doors.
- Open Hangar event
Peter shared that this is an event hosted by Joe Sotello, a tenant at the airport. 26 pilots turned out for the event, making it a successful event.

VIII. ITEMS OF COMMITTEE INTEREST

No items of committee interest.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 7:37pm by Michael Schoenau.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Brown Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, including the receipt of the agenda and documents in the agenda package in an alternate format, please contact the City Manager's Office at (559) 684-4200. Notification of 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to

make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35, 104 ADA Title I), and allow for the preparation of documents in the appropriate alternate format.