

**Minutes  
Tempe Aviation Commission  
February 10, 2015**

**Minutes of the Tempe Aviation Commission meeting held on February 10, 2015, 6:30 p.m., at the Public Works Conference Room, Garden Level, City Hall Complex, 31 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.**

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

Lane Carraway  
Shannon Dutton  
Mark Garrigan  
Lance McIntosh\*  
David Naugle  
James Wennlund

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Gordon Gauss (Excused)

**Citizens Present:**

Paul Dunham  
Darlene Justus  
John Nunes  
Barbara Sherman

**City Staff Present:**

Steven Methvin, Deputy City Manager  
Marilyn DeRosa, Deputy Public Works Director  
David McNeil, Environmental Services Manager  
Oddvar Tveit, Environmental Quality Specialist

**Meeting convened at 6:35 p.m.**

Shannon Dutton called the meeting to order.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances**

**Tempe Resident John Nunes**

Mr. Nunes was in attendance out of interest prompted by recent news coverage of Phoenix residents' reactions to the September 18, 2014 flight procedure changes. Mr. Nunes recommended that Tempe interact with the FAA in a non-adversarial way. He recommended the commissioners and the city use restraint in dealing with the FAA, having observed more responsiveness when interactions are less adversarial.

**Tempe Resident Paul Dunham**

Mr. Dunham stated that arrivals are now flying over Weber Drive and Departures over Curry Road. He has observed the British Airways 747 departing directly over Curry Road.

**Agenda Item 2 – Meeting Minutes – Future Format**

Staff provided meeting minutes in a more issue-based resume format as opposed to the

\*Attending by telephone conference call.

transcript format used for previous meetings, explaining that the new format is more consistent with the City Clerk's guidance and formats used by other commissions, and provides more accessible information to the intended audience – City leadership and non-attending residents. Staff sought guidance from the City Attorney's office after the January meeting regarding both the format of minutes and the possibility of producing two parallel documents – formal minutes, and working notes for use by the commission. The City Attorney's office, along with the City Clerk recommended against parallel documents based on public records requirements, and re-emphasized the intended purpose and audience for commission meeting minutes.

The members discussed the proposed minutes format and stated that if the new format helps the City's leadership and residents better understanding the issues discussed and actions taken by the commission, it is consistent with the commission's goals. Additionally, recordings of the proceedings are always available if needed. Commissioners and staff expressed that content was not lost as a result of the new format, and concerns were expressed regarding the legal value of less transcriptive minutes.

**Motion:** James Wennlund moved to accept the proposed format. Lane Carraway seconded the motion.

**Action:** The motion carried with one of the members voting against accepting the new meeting minutes format.

### **Agenda Item 3 – Consideration of Meeting Minutes (January 13, 2015)**

Shannon Dutton asked for comments on the minutes and for a motion to approve.

**Motion:** Lane Carraway moved to approve the minutes. James Wennlund seconded the motion.

**Action:** The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

### **Agenda Item 4 – Update from Staff**

#### 1) PAUWG

The upcoming quarterly meeting of the Phoenix Airspace Users Working Group has been rescheduled for Thursday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The meeting is being hosted by Tempe at the Tempe History Museum at Southern Avenue and Rural Road.

#### 2) New Navigation Technology Performance Tracking

The FAA tracks the implementation of new navigation technology under "NextGen" in the national airspace system and at local airports. Air traffic efficiency down to the local airport level and airport capacity with implemented area navigation (RNAV) and Required Navigation Performance (RNP) procedures are accessible for Sky harbor (PHX) on the FAA's website: <https://www.faa.gov/nextgen/snapshots/airport/?locationId=43>.

The numbers for PHX show no delays arriving to the gate and taxi-times are stable throughout the years between 2009 and 2013. Typically good visual monitoring conditions complemented by electronic equipment to monitor movements on the ground, help air traffic controllers in the PHX tower direct planes efficiently to and from gates at PHX. This, along with good visual flying conditions, and NextGen technology, allows for greater efficiency in air traffic flow. The new navigation technology allows improved efficiency throughout the national airspace system. Efficiency in flight movement both on and off of the ground, and the resulting decrease in times when no planes are occupying the airspace during busy hours of the day, creates more noise for Tempe residents.

3) FAA Triggers for Formal Environmental Review

The FAA has established several triggers for when a particular action requires a formal environmental review and a process for public involvement under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Arrival route changes above 7,000 ft. and departure route changes above 10,000 ft. typically do not require a formal review. Arrival procedures terminate prior to Tempe airspace, meaning changes in how planes fly over Tempe to prepare to land at PHX under direction by PHX tower would not be subject to formal review regardless of altitude. Additionally, changes in flight procedures below 3,000 ft. are considered to have potential impact inside the 65 Day Night Level noise exposure contour, but may be determined to be categorically exempt from formal review by FAA. This could in theory remove all future departure changes over Tempe airspace from the formal process and public review. The commission expressed concern with this policy.

**Agenda Item 5 – Initiative from NTNA regarding the FAA’s implementation of NextGen at PHX**

Shannon Dutton introduced a request by the North Tempe Neighborhood Association to address the commission.

The NTNA submitted a letter from Barbara Sherman to the FAA Administrator on January 30, 2015 asking for meetings to be held with the FAA, Phoenix, and Tempe, and that the meetings be open to the public. Since NTNA has asked for meetings in the letter to the FAA Administrator, the city will await FAA’s response to NTNA’s letter prior to considering any city involvement. If the FAA does not respond, the city may then reach out to request a meeting.

Barbara Sherman presented a list of twelve issues for which NTNA is requesting city support:

1. Tempe and Phoenix should be able to agree on an operational definition of compliance with the “Sparky” waypoint and a method of notice to non-compliant aircraft.
2. With maneuvers off the approach paths planes fly substantially further north and further south. Discussions and solution to these arrival problems are needed.
3. The east side of the airport deserves temporary noise monitoring equivalent to the west side.
4. Phoenix and the FAA must consider how adjustments to procedures to mitigate the noise problems they have created in Phoenix will affect Tempe residents.
5. The FAA or Phoenix should provide Tempe with timely notification of future flight procedural changes.
6. Three noise monitors in Tempe should be relocated by Phoenix so that they can provide useful information.
7. Tempe, rather than Phoenix, should operate aviation noise mitigation programs in the City of Tempe.
8. Tempe should lobby on the national level for solutions to aviation noise.
9. Tempe should consider starting a program for (aviation/ rail/freeway) noise mitigation that would make neighborhoods disadvantaged by noise more sustainable. Many programs such as weatherization, CDBG, and utility programs could be used to provide help to noise impacted homeowners and/or businesses.
10. Phoenix Sky Harbor should pay penalty fees to Tempe for non-compliance with FAA flight procedures.
11. Tempe should consider starting a positive public relations program for airlines that comply with the riverbed departure procedure.
12. A vehicle, which includes the industry and impacted communities and neighborhoods, needs

to be created so that continuing communication and solutions to problems can be addressed.

The order in which the list was presented does not reflect a prioritization on part of the NTNA.

The following topics were discussed after the presentation:

a.) Temporary Noise Monitoring

The most recent noise exposure maps were completed prior to the September 2014 changes in PHX instrument departure procedures. Accordingly, temporary monitoring is necessary to accurately map post-change noise levels. Commissioners expressed the need for the FAA to consider how any proposed tweaking of the new flight procedures in response to Phoenix concerns would impact Tempe airspace and residents. Better noise monitoring on the east side of the airport is needed in addition to the temporary monitoring implemented on the west side to support current and future FAA decisions.

Appropriate relocation of permanent noise monitoring sites and reconsideration of the number of monitoring sites on each side of the airport must be evaluated when the existing PHX FAR Part 150 Noise Compatibility Plan (NCP) and programs are reviewed. The commission discussed the need for support from the city to prompt a long overdue review of all elements of the PHX FAR Part 150 NCP, including the airport's noise monitoring system. The last review and update were completed in 1999.

b.) Sound Insulation:

Tempe residents should be considered under the same criteria as Phoenix residents if financial assistance with sound insulation is offered to compensate for noise exposure under the new departure paths.

c.) Regional Coordination:

Tempe has struggled for decades to be considered when Phoenix makes decisions that impact its own residents. Commissioners discussed the value of a more regional approach to public involvement due to the airport's impacts on many communities and neighborhoods throughout the Valley. Concerns regarding airport noise have spread beyond neighborhoods and communities in close proximity to the airport, and now include the entire region. The commission discussed opportunities for NTNA to join forces with other affected neighborhoods and communities. In the past, the Maricopa Association of Governments Regional Aviation System Plan attempted with little success to persuade the FAA to facilitate a regional review of proposed airport improvements. Commissioners agreed that some sort of regional effort on the airport noise issue would be more effective than isolated local efforts, and encouraged the city to assist in coalescing such an effort.

d.) Public Awareness – TAVCO and Tempe 311:

Because of recent media attention on the aviation issue and concerns in Phoenix, the commission discussed the possibility of moving the aviation issue and the noise complaint form to the front page of Tempe's website. Concerns were expressed regarding the effectiveness of the complaint form on the Tempe 311 site, and the possibility that this served to discourage complaints and artificially deflate the numbers collected and used to reflect residents' concerns. Staff explained that the website levels on which issues and complaint forms reside are established by the City's Communication and Media Relations Team in conjunction with the City Manager's office based on collective consideration of all of

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the issues of interest to residents.

**Action:** In response to staff request, commissioners will collectively prioritize the items presented by NTNA and defer further discussion of these requests to the next meeting.

**Agenda Item 6 – Drones**

**Action:** Shannon Dutton received consent from the other members to move this topic to the next meeting agenda. Staff will coordinate with the airport regarding any information requests related to drone use and sensitive areas in Tempe.

**Agenda Item 6 – Commissioners' Business (topics for future discussion)**

No additional topics were added to item #5 and #6.

**Agenda Item 7 – Schedule next TAVCO meeting**

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for March 10, 2015.

**Agenda Item 8 – Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Prepared by: Oddvar Tveit

Reviewed by: Marilyn DeRosa

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Authorized Signature  
Deputy Public Works Director- Water Utilities