

**EPHRAIM-GIBRALTAR AIRPORT COMMISSION**  
**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2014**  
**GIBRALTAR TOWN CENTER**  
**9:00 A.M.**

**Approved:**

**Call to Order:** The Ephraim-Gibraltar Airport Commission meeting was called to order by Jon Neville at 9:00 a.m.

**Roll Call/Quorum:**

Members present: Jon Neville, Martin Franke, Myrv Somerhalder, Gary Chaudoir and Don Freix.

**Agenda/ Proper Notice/Adopt Agenda:** MOTION (Franke, Freix) to adopt the agenda as posted. Carried. MOTION: (Freix, to strike agenda item #8. Dies for lack of a second.

**Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting:** MOTION (Freix, Somerhalder) to approve the minutes of November 20, 2014 as written. Carried

**Public Comment:**

- Bob Klein asked that meetings be scheduled during non-working hours.
- Linda Merline objected to Peters operating helicopter tours out of the Ephraim-Gibraltar Airport.
- Bob Klein opposed to tours, it is not the type of commercial operation that the county wishes.
- Mark Sneen (Juniper Inn) stated the airport is not a good neighbor nor does it police its activities. He is opposed to the helicopter service. The nature of the county is a quiet destination. The sound factor cannot be negated.
- Ray Klecker stated it has negative business and residential impacts. The case for helicopter tours is not seen.
- Bill Wolff asked how the tours will benefit our community and quality of life. The previous vendor aircraft became more obtrusive.
- Don Diekman is opposed to the tour operation. He asked how many tours are expected in a season. Neville responded with 8 flights in the summer.
- Steve Krzyzanowski came from a city and wanted to get away from the noise. Does not want it to become like the Wisconsin Dells.

**Review of Year-to-Date Income and Expenses:** The report was reviewed. Franke questioned the placement of the proceeds of the brush proceeds.

**Review Up North Helicopter Tour Proposal/Contract:** Neville stated the contract calls for Up North Helicopters to pay \$300 per year and fuel sales for one year. This is the same contract approved to offer to Grizzly Scenic Tours but was declined. When approached by Up North Helicopters several months ago, the commission agreed in principle based on the Grizzly contract offer. Questions at that time included number of flights, what kind of income would they and the airport make. The airport is required to try to make money, it is a business. For many years the airport lost money. There was great criticism in general of losing money, over the last several years the commission has turned that around and was just in the black 3 of the last 5 years. The commission is constantly looking for ways to increase income and decrease expenses.

Neville stated that Peters had 8 flights in Sturgeon Bay last year, each flight is approximately 15-20 minutes. If there were 20 flights per year that would be 1 every 2 weeks. If he would have a contract with the airport the commission can determine where he flies and at what height. Franke added that 2 helicopters have been based at the airport for over 5 years. To the best of Franke's knowledge there had not been a complaint. Being federally funded Franke did not know if Up North Helicopters could be denied operation out of this airport. Klein stated he has made multiple complaints over the years about helicopter traffic. Helicopter traffic has always been a problem because there is no enforcement of policies. Somerhalder stated a noise study was done several years ago and the airport was classified as low. Neville stated Gibraltar has a local noise ordinance. Freix stated the operations of the tours have not been discussed. The FOEGA benefits in the letter from Peters is questionable. Freix also questioned the amount of information available and the lack of Peters attendance at the November meeting. Klein complained about noise

during Fall Festival by Up North Helicopters. Peters responded that operations were out of Sister Bay. The use of the airport was limited to keeping the helicopter overnight and a personal ride for Peters' friends.

Nathan Peters of Up North Helicopters stated there is no regulation on the approach path. The faster a helicopter climbs and descends the more the blade slap is minimized. The 1000' AGL is the industry standard climb rate but there is no specific regulation regarding noise abatement. Peters stated he operates under FAA 91 not 135. Operating out of an airport is safer. His commercial operation flies to a higher standard, they have fly friendly initiatives and go out of their way to address complaints. Once an aircraft is in the air there are no regulations but it is Up North's standard operating procedure to fly friendly. Up North has experience flying in sensitive areas. Tour pilots adhere to strict safety standards. Peters felt there might be 6 - 8 sightseeing tours per weekend. Any one area would be limited to about 20 seconds. The basic tour rate is \$850 per hour. Peters stated that his helicopters have operated on a non-tour basis in the area.

Other comments included:

- Complaints are made but no action is taken.
- There is no one at the airport to police users.
- Contract does not include a specific flight path.
- It is up to the public to police and report tail numbers to the commission.
- There is minimal benefit, no specifications on a flight pattern.
- It is the commission's job to facilitate commercial operations, it is more important to listen to the constituents.

*MOTION: (Freix, to reject the agreement the contract. Dies for lack of a second. MOTION: (Somerhalder, Franke) to table the contract. Carried*

**Review 2015 Airport Rate Schedule:** Neville recommended rates stay the same but drop the \$9 fee for parking over 4 hours with same day departure as it is a disincentive. Franke agreed on the same day departure change. Neville further recommended eliminating the turbine fee and doubling the twin fee. Franke agreed on combining turbine and twin classifications and added eliminating charter fees. Neville recommended eliminating the turban and doubling the twin fee. *MOTION: (Freix, ) to adopt the revised fee schedule with the stipulation to discuss charters and be able to modify the schedule at a later date. Freix withdrew the motion. MOTION: (Freix, Franke) to take out the \$9 4hour same day departure parking fee, combine twin and turbine parking with a fee of \$26 and leave the charter fee as is to the town and village for adoption. Carried*

**Sale of Surplus Beacons:** Neville stated there are outdated beacons at the airport. *MOTION: (Freix, Chadoir) to recommend sale of the surplus beacons to the town and village boards. Carried*

**Chairman Report/Comments:** Neville stated that wholesale fuel prices are dropping; the cost per gallon is \$0.80 lower than the last purchase. Neville will be gone February through April, Franke will chair the meetings in his absence. The invoiced AWOS site preparation costs have not been received to date. The lawnmower cannot be delivered until spring; the funds will be carried over to 2015. Wentworth has not removed the gear up Bonanza. Wentworth is being charged \$13/day for parking; a certified letter has been sent to this effect.

**Airport Report:** The airport is seasonally quiet. Plowing is done as necessary and as prioritized. The public hearing for the hangar expansion is scheduled for January 7, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. at the Gibraltar Town Center meeting room. The next meeting is scheduled for February 19, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.

**Friends of the Airport Report:** Neville reported there are 45 renewals to date. Contributions have been good.

**Adjourn:** *MOTION: (Neville, Chadoir) to adjourn 10:35 a.m. Carried*

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hagen, Clerk