

ZEPHYRHILLS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING

A Regular Airport Authority meeting was held on Monday **March 18th, 2013** at 5:30 p.m. in the Robert H. Johnson Council Chambers of the Municipal building.

Secretary Larry Lynch called the meeting to order at 5.30 p.m. Roll call was taken. Present were members Larry Lynch, Rachel Nash, Ed Knapp and William Castle. Dan Evans and Juan Vega were absent.

Staff present was Airport Manager Michael Handrahan, Deputy Airport Manager, Nathan Coleman and Airport Administrative Assistant Lucy Huber.

APPROVAL/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

It was decided that the minutes for the meeting held February 18th, 2013 will be Approved/Corrected at the next meeting held in April.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Residents of Frontier Drive

William Ellis of 5632 Frontier Dr. spoke to the Board. His concern is the low flying skydive jump planes flying over his neighborhood. He said most accidents happen during take off and landings and these planes do landings over high volume residential areas. He is also a pilot and described incidents he has had with the SkyDive planes. He said this problem needs to be addressed.

Board member Ed Knapp spoke about the jump airplane flight patterns. In the research he has done, the skydive plane's decent is not in the pattern and he is concerned about close calls. He said this is a complaint that many people have and would like to see it addressed.

David T.K. Hayes of 3137 Diana Dr. spoke to the Board. He said that while he understands the concerns of the residents of Frontier Dr. they do everything they can to keep the noise level down. He said that the pattern they use is safer as they stay away from the general aviation on runway 4/22. The bottom line is that Frontier Drive is located right off the end of two active runways and in the pattern of those runways. He disagrees that SkyDive City is doing anything unsafe or illegal. Mr. Hayes spoke of hoping to double their business if possible.

John Watson of 5339 Frontier Dr. spoke to the Board. Mr. Watson said he has owned property on Frontier Dr. for 18 years. He became a pilot in 1966 and said he has never seen such careless activity by pilots as the ones in question. He has photos of aircraft flying too low. He described a couple of unsafe maneuvers that he has witnessed. He counseled the people to take photos and contact the FAA. He said something has to happen before a tragedy occurs.

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David Ruffell of 37404 Laurel Hammock Dr. spoke to the Board. He is a pilot and also involved with SkyDive City. He asked if the residents' concerns were with the noise aspect or safety aspect of the Skydiving planes. If it is the noise that is the greatest concern then SkyDive City is sympathetic to that and they work often with the pilots to keep the noise level to a minimum. They are willing to continue to address this problem. If it is a safety concern, he said that Skydive City has proven that they have a very safe record.

Larry Lynch said the residents' concerns are regulation violations.

T.K. Hayes disputed some of the complaints and accusations that had been made. He said that the FAA has never visited them concerning anything to do with their pattern or perceived safety or violations.

Ed Knapp said it was a simple matter of courtesy. He agrees that he has also observed unsafe flying patterns and has documentation of over 40 pilots on the field that have also.

T.K. Hayes said that they do make as many concessions as they can make but in all honesty they do not have any intention of changing their pattern for any reason. They are allowed to fly in these patterns and it saves them both time and money. They do all they can do stay safe.

Ed Knapp continued to express that the safety issues needs to be reevaluated and he and many others are very concerned about possible future accidents. He also agreed that it is both a noise and a safety issue.

Matthew Bergeron of 5227 Frontier Dr. spoke to the Board. He shared his observances of unsafe procedures that he has also witnessed.

Airport Manager Mr. Mike Handrahan said that he spoke to one of the chief Skydive pilots about this situation. He said that SkyDive has since informally reviewed their processes and will try to be more cooperative with their altitude and noise perspective.

Ron Visser of 5737 Frontier Dr. spoke to the Board. He has talked to people at the airport and to people at SkyDive City. He is very concerned about safety issues and has observed unsafe activity. He wants the situation to be addressed.

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INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

It was decided that these items could be deferred to a future meeting.

Board Member Bill Castle said he had heard about a leak in the pond at SkyDive City and that there is a well used to fill this pond. Mr. Handrahan has met with David Henderson, City Utilities Director, and it was decided that there is a well out there, but it is not tied into City water.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Bill Castle moved to adjourn the meeting. Rachel Nash seconded. All were in favor and meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m.