

July 20th, 2023 6:00 PM

City of Redlands

Airport Advisory Board

Members Present: Thomas Cook, Deborah Forthun, Jason Golembeski, Dennis Nodine,
Robert Pearce, and Johnny Ghazal.

Members Absent: Karl Grove

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Public Comments

- a. Gilbert Brown; Coyote Aviation. "From the city's own website, the Airport Advisory Board acts as an advisory capacity to the City Council in all matters relating to the administration, operation, development, improvement, and maintenance at the Redlands Municipal Airport. Let's talk about administration and development. On March 16th, 2021, the Redlands City Council voted unanimously to terminate Coyote Aviation's lease on a small parcel of land at Redlands Airport. The city said Coyote Aviation had not submitted written notice to extend its tenure exactly 45 days before the first term expiration date as required. Because no prior dialogue with Coyote Aviation had ever occurred, the city council did not know that the termination date in the lease was an error that had already been identified by the Airport Supervisor and the Assistant Director of Facilities and Community Services. In fact, when the lease was drawn up in 2000, it was city's own attorney who made the mistake wrongly believing that the lease had begun 5 months earlier. In administering Coyote's lease extension in 2020, the Airport Supervisor and the Assistant Director called in writing for the correction of the wrong date. In 2020, immediately after the city's declaration of tardiness was made, Coyote made significant efforts to engage with the City Council to resolve the issue. Those efforts are documented in 19 emails and or letters between me and the city staff and City Council. Not one elicited productive communication. Now, although City Council members are aware of the termination date mistake and the fact that Coyote followed the directions of the Airport Supervisor in this extension, the members refused to consider the circumstances and will not participate in dialogue between Coyote. Essentially the city says to Coyote, *"we terminated your land lease preventing you from extending it because you did not submit your extension request by a wrong date printed in the contract and it doesn't matter that the City of Redlands Airport Supervisor told you to submit your extension notice on a date we would not accept."* At Coyote we understand the city's fiduciary responsibility to increase revenue but how does that balance with the pledges of City Council members to promote the success of small businesses. That promotion encourages investment in our city and our airport. That is the reason we invested in Redlands. In that light, is the taking of Coyote Aviation ultimately a wise move to make. Board members, in your capacity to advice on matters of administration and airport growth we ask that you approve a motion recommending to City Council the purchase of the Coyote Aviation facility for a sum determined by mutually agreed upon appraisal. We believe that to be a reasonable and fair solution.

Coyote's alleged violation of extension terms was caused by the city's actions in 2000 and exacerbated by the city's own guidance in 2020. Opportunistic treatment in Coyote Aviation will forever discourage future private investment at the airport. Your recommendations to city council may well mitigate that likelihood. Now is the time to go on record for supporting our small business at Redlands Airport." This block quote is verbatim.

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. Member Pearce moves to approve the minutes with the following changes:
 - i. Item 4 (ii) – change from Civil Airport Patrol to Civil Air Patrol.
 - ii. Item D – change last sentence to read “shall also be programed to start in FY2025”.
- b. Motion seconded by Member Golembeski. Motion approved by all members present except Member Ghazal who abstained. Section is clean and correct.

4. Communications

- a. Operations presented by Airport Supervisor Lawson
 - i. Civil Air Patrol had a welcoming event at the airport on the 15th of July.
 - ii. Plans still ongoing for a standing Saturday food truck event at the airport.
- b. Maintenance presented by Airport Supervisor Lawson
 - i. Brush has been cleared out adjacent to the runway 26 numbers for runway overruns.
 - ii. Coyote gate repair bid process is still ongoing.
- c. Grants presented by Airport Supervisor Lawson
 - i. FY24 grants to include design and planning for wash rack and design and planning for helicopter parking at the west apron.
- d. Budget presented by Senior Manager Donald Crow
 - i. Airport is 15% under budget and expenditures for year to date. 3-4% for revenue year to date.
 - ii. Final budget is expected in mid to late August.
 - iii. Member Pearce expressed deep concerns regarding the delayed publication of the airport budget. Member Pearce requested further clarification of several items he has previously requested clarification of but has not yet been clarified. The following items were clarified by AD Crow:
 1. City Garage - Maintenance of the Airport Supervisor work truck.
 2. Legal Fees - All pending and existing litigation is billed to the City Attorney's Office budget.
 3. Operations Principal – Interest charges billed to the airport from the financing of hangars 25-30 years ago.
 4. Special Contractual Fees – Miscellaneous airport projects that must be contracted out.
 - iv. Member Pearce expressed concerns on the vagueness of the budget. “There isn't one item that you can't hide something else within it.” Mr. Crow responded by saying “the layers of details in the budget is not something we distinguish, that is between the Finance Division and City Council.” This section of the minutes does not reflect the entire line of questioning by Mr. Pearce, though most of his questions were quite pointed. He seems to believe that monies are not being accounted for in the Airport budget, and the Airport

accounts may in fact be used as a slush fund.

5. Old Business

- a. Discussion and possible action related to the Ad Hoc Sub Committee for Community Engagement.
 - i. Member Cook motioned to disband the ad hoc sub committee in favor for a standing Planning Committee for an Early November Fly-In Event. Seconded by Member Dennis Nodine. Approved unanimously.
 - ii. Member Forthun motioned to appoint members Nodine, Cook, and Golembeski to the newly formed Planning Committee. Seconded and approved unanimously.
- b. Discussion and possible action related to the election of officers.
 - i. Member Pearce motions to nominate Member Golembeski for Chairman of the Board. Seconded by Member Forthun. Approved unanimously.
 - ii. Member Pearce motions to nominate Member Cook for Vice Chairman. Seconded by Member Forthun. Approved unanimously. **This section is clean and correct.**

6. Possible agenda items for the next meeting

- a. Member Pearce requests the discussion and possible action regarding the governing ordinance(s) related to the operation, function, and reach of the Airport Advisory Board.
 - i. Member Forthun requests that AD Crow distribute the current ordinance(s) that govern the Airport Advisory Board.
- b. Member Cook requests the discussion and possible recommendations to city council regarding the Coyote Aviation land lease dispute.
 - i. Mayor Pro Tempore Barich advised that this matter has already been decided in court. Pro Tem Barich went on further to say that on August 4th the final will be released.
 - ii. Member Forthun asked, "what if the actions of a court of law go against the wishes of a community?"
 - iii. Mayor Pro Tem Barich responded with "we have elections every 4 years, if you don't like what we're doing, vote us out."
 - iv. Member Cook requested that public comment be opened again for this topic. The request was denied.
 - v. Member Forthun further reminded Mayor Pro Tem Barich that the city residents have not yet had an opportunity to voice their opinions on the dispute.
 - vi. Mayor Pro Tem Barich said "everything is documented. We will get what we can from the courts. Everything was in black and white. The lease we had with this gentleman wasn't picked up. We tried to work several times with other things. I must admit we were unreasonable the first time, but we lowered the rent quite a bit. We have discussed this in closed session with the City Council and we feel we've bent over backwards for this person and that the courts have decided. We will go on with what the San Bernardino Courts decide. The final decision is on the 4th."
 - vii. Mayor Pro Tem Barich stated that "this has been ongoing for some time and that [the board] had plenty of time to do something."

- viii. Member Cook stated, “when I was appointed, I was advised to not talk about Coyote Aviation.”
- ix. Member Pearce stated, “they could go right up to the Supreme Court of California. It’s not done. You’ve made an awful lot of enemies in the city. That’s what I’m hearing. I’m not just talking about the airport group. I’m talking about neighbors who catch a little word here and there.” **The quotations in this section are severely truncated. While the record according to these minutes casts both the Board and Council Liaison in a bad light, the audio recording calls into question how free the Board members were to discuss this topic without facing political pressure from the City Council.**

7. Board Member Comments

- a. Member Ghazal introduced himself. He is a licensed civil engineer and land surveyor. His motivation for joining the board is a wish to give back to Redlands. The board welcomes Member Ghazal to the dais.

8. Meeting Adjourned to August 17th, 2023 6:00 PM

Section 4.d. iv. Staff’s review suggests that this section is not verbatim as are other sections of the minutes and that this section contains a shorten version of questions brought forward by Board Member Pearce.

Section 6.b. Staff’s review suggests that selected quotations within this section although may be verbatim are not comprehensive and thus may not fully represent the discussions that took place.