

**AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD WORKSHOP**  
**Fremont County Airport**  
**April 20, 2015**  
**9:00 am**

**Members Present:** John Marietta, Chairman; Leonard Mino; Jack Slagle; Tom Schielf; Jim Woolworth

**Members Absent:** Greg Tabuteau; Duane Cozadd

**Other Officials Present:** Commissioner, Ed Nordon; Commissioner, Debbie Bell; Commissioner, Tim Payne; Airport Manager, Richard Baker

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this meeting was to review the current status of skydiving operation conflicts at the airfield and to discuss consideration of an application for lease of the center jumper landing zone from “Out of the Blue” skydiving.

**Discussion**

**Skydiving Operations:**

- Commissioner Nordon requested an update on the current status of conflict between Skydiving businesses at the airport.
- Chairman Marietta stated that a safety workshop was held on 2/13/15 to address the latest concerns:
  - One concern was that there were 4 Skydive companies presently operating at the airfield when, according to an agreement created in 2012, only 3 were authorized. After investigation, it was determined that there are still only three: “High Sky Adventures” (Skip Moreau), “Skydive Colorado” (Jason Dawson) and “Out of the Blue” (John Mahan & Kendra Boysen). The perception that 4 companies existed came when Skip Moreau began operating in a T-hanger in Hangar #1 (Adjacent to “Out of the Blue”) as well as his long-standing location (Hangar #7). It was determined, however, that both locations are the same company (High Sky Adventures).
  - In a second concern, a conflict erupted between John Mahan and Skip Moreau because Skip was landing tandem jumpers in center pit, previously designated as Out of the Blue’s exclusive landing area. Skip was told that he could not use the center pit. He could land jumpers only in the south pit per previous agreement.
  - Skip complained that “Out of the Blue” jumpers were “swooping” (high speed parachute flight low to the ground) on their approach to the center landing pit and endangering people and vehicles in their path. “Out of the Blue” was advised in this meeting that swooping was not authorized in the area of east perimeter road.
  - There are 3 designated parachute landing areas at the field: the North pit, leased by “Skydive Colorado” (Jason Dawson), approved for tandem Jumps only; the center pit, unleased, public use but restricted to use by “Out of the Blue” only; and the South pit, unleased, public use, but restricted to use by “High Sky Adventures” only.
  - Skip Moreau now wants to make the center pit, public use, open to all companies for tandem jumpers only, and move all other jumpers to the south pit. In response, “Out of the Blue” has made application to lease the center landing pit for their exclusive use. “High Sky Adventures” is not interested in leasing the remaining south landing pit.
- Chairman Marietta was in favor of leasing all three landing pits to get out of the business of “controlling” skydive operations. If conflicts then arise, local law enforcement would be called to

settle the dispute. Tom Schielf said airport management should retain control of these areas and take action when violations occur. Len Mino stated that these violations and disputes will continue until the County takes visible enforcement action. Commissioner Bell expressed concern that tossing management of these ongoing disputes over the fence to local law enforcement would create an unnecessary and unmanageable draw on law enforcement. She also suggested that the Commissioners would like a consensed, unified recommendation from the Board.

- The north pit is already leased by “Skydive Colorado” with the stipulation that they construct a hangar there on or before 2/1/2017. Commissioner Nordon was concerned about tying-up those areas which could be needed for future hangar construction.
- The issue of liability insurance for Skydive operations was discussed. Liability insurance for such operations is not available thru independent carriers due to the risk. The United States Parachute Association (USPA) offers it’s members liability coverage. Of the skydive companies operating at Fremont County, “Skydive Colorado” and “Out of the Blue” are members of USPA, “High Sky Adventures” is not. This raised the question of indemnity should property damage or personal injury occur as a result of incidents caused by “High Sky Adventures” jumpers. Does this create a liability risk to the County? How do other airports handle this risk? Commissioner Nordon asked Dick Baker to contact Armstrong Consultants to determine if other airports require Skydive operators to be USPA members.
- Commissioner Nordon asked the Advisory Board if they supported the idea of leasing the center landing pit to “Out of the Blue”. He also asked if we could license and assess an annual fee, per business, for use of the landing area, in lieu of leasing it. Potentially a landing fee could be charged to “Out of the Blue” and “High Sky Adventures” without impacting the current lease in place for “Skydive Colorado” provided that any “license fee” be fair and equitable compared to the existing lease fee. The addition of a requirement for USPA membership, with associated insurance coverage, for skydive operators should also be considered, whether we elect to lease or charge a landing fee.
- Next Steps:
  - Review feasibility of imposing landing zone fee with USPA membership requirement.
  - Respond to “Out of the Blue” request for lease
  - Confer with County Attorney and define consequences of non-performance to terms of proposed license.

#### *Hangar #4 Sale*

- The County has made an offer, thru Coldwell Banker, to buy hangar #4 which has been up for sale. Subsequently, a private individual has submitted a higher bid, but below the asking price, on the hangar. That individual is now in negotiations with the seller for that purchase. The County does not plan to place another offer.

#### *Motorcycles in Memorial Park*

- Tom Schielf pointed out that motorcycles have been observed in the Memorial Park parking area doing stunts and maneuvering in ways that were hazardous to bystanders and parked vehicles. When approached, they said they were practicing and they had been referred to the area by Fremont Motor Sports.
- Commissioner Nordon stated that signage restricting such activities will be placed in the park, the Sheriff’s Department will be so notified and Fremont Motor Sports will be advised that this is not a motorcycle practice area.

There being no further subjects for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.