

On Jun 9, 2009, at 8:46 AM, Paul S. Rooy wrote:

**FONSBA Friends,**

Yesterday afternoon FONSBA Executive Board member Gary Norville and I attended a Volusia Council Of Governments ("VCOG") panel meeting on the subject of airport noise. This was the first time in recent memory that VCOG has entertained the subject.

Attendees included Panel Chairman Bob Apgar (DeLand Mayor), Volusia County Chair Frank Bruno, Sally Mackay (NSB Mayor), Khalid Rasheidat (NSB Acting City Manager), Rhonda Walker (NSB Airport Manager), Steve Lichliter (Ormond Beach Airport Manager), County Councilman Cooper (for the County encompassing Edgewater Airport), and Frank Ayers (ERAU). Curiously, James Speers (NSB Noise Abatement Committee Chair) was the sole entry listed on the agenda under the "Citizen" category.

Mayor Mackay, despite expressing support for the airport, advocated a plan for the local governments to petition the FAA en masse for regulation change providing mandatory operational restrictions at airports, and the imposition of landing fees to pay for building a "training airport" somewhere. Not addressed were: what to do with the inevitable noise complaints associated with a "training airport", nor how to fit the aircraft operations on dozens of existing runways into two "training airport" runways, nor the economic cost of imposing landing fees.

Councilman Cooper suggested that the issues be "nailed down" (defined) first, so that the panel would have some direction, and know when its task was complete.

Frank Bruno cited traffic increases at his local airport, and reported that aircraft noise is a problem in adjacent counties, as reported by other members of the Seven Counties Council.

During the public participation section, two or three noise complainers recited their usual litany of woes, and Jim Speers supported the "training airport" concept.

On behalf of FONSBA, I summarized the economic benefits of NSB Airport and of general aviation, pointed out that a lot of the noise complainers are recent arrivals who chose to buy a house next to an existing airport, and that air traffic growth has been roughly commensurate with growth elsewhere in Florida (such as the population, state and Volusia County vehicle registrations, and commercial air traffic growths). I highlighted that noise complaints are nothing new, but rather have been around as long as airports themselves, endorsed Councilman Cooper's suggestion that the issues be defined clearly, including the issue of the extent of the problem - only a small percentage of the population is actually complaining: per the 4/19/09 News Journal front page story, during 2008 only 23 people accounted for 79% of the NSB complaints.

On behalf of FONSBA I pointed out the alliance FONSBA has with NSB Airport Noise, Inc. on four items, including warning prospective buyers of the existence of airports, and urged the Panel to look into that measure.

I concluded by warning about adopting a never-ending succession of concessions until the airports wither and die on the vine, giving by way of example the NSB Noise Abatement Committee and its 9 voluntary restrictions: the City almost immediately unilaterally asked for another 4 un-vetted concessions; the noise complainers are not satisfied even with these additional 4 demands, but would further impose limits on how many airplanes can operate on the airport per hour, and after that, who knows what else?

Mayor Mackay suggested that the City of NSB buy a simulator for around \$400,000 for public use, and that Sunday training traffic be rotated around all the region's airports.

The meeting concluded with the objective of having a "technical meeting" to explore simulator use and Air Traffic Control runway use dispersal possibilities, followed by another Panel meeting afterwards.

We'll try to keep you abreast of further information as it becomes available.

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