

# Minutes of the Blue Ribbon Farms Airport Committee Meeting August 13, 2024 10am, Mr. Baritelle's residence

Andre Baritelle, who hosted this meeting welcomed those attending and introduced Airport Chairman John Cuny, who also welcomed attendees and noted a good turnout for this meeting. Present were POA Board Vice Chair Drew Zacharias, Board Treasurer Carmen Lynaugh, Board Airport Committee Liaison Andre Baritelle and Secretary Natasha Merkuloff Nichols. Also attending were Gary and Krys Gordon, Dave Woodcock, Sally Kincaid, Steve and Sharon Robinson, Jim Nichols, Dennis and Becky Jennings, Jeff Hecox, Corby Sommerville, Joes Cziok, Doug Medina and Rick Smith. It was announced that the meeting would be recorded; there were no objections.

## Old Business

1. Airport Committee Members – Those attending were asked to put a star by their names on the sign in sheet if they wanted to be considered a member of the Airport Committee and covered by the POA's E&O Insurance. Only official members of the committee are covered. Mr. Cuny and Mr. Gordan put stars by their names.
2. Tyler View/Maynard issue – Ms. Lynaugh provided information about how the apparent proposed sale of one of the Kattan lots has triggered an interest in clearing the obstructions in the 60-foot general easement along Tyler View, Lands End and Maynard. The easement provides ingress and egress, and due to its 60-foot width, is a taxiway, allowing an airplane to taxi from the lots along Tyler View to the airstrip entrance at the corner of Land's End Lane. She pointed out the easement carries with the land, and for many years it has not been an issue. However, with the possible development at the end of Tyler View, it becomes necessary to clear the easement. It is primarily mailboxes which are obstructions; there are a few other items which include some posts, shrubs and trees. Mr. Cuny pointed out the easement needs to be cleared up to 14 Lands End, the Lee property, which is for sale now. It was noted that a meeting with the property owners who have an obstruction is set for Saturday, September 17 at 10 am also at Mr. Baritelle's home. Later in the meeting Mr. Jennings asked for more clarification on the easement issue on Tyler View. That give and take is placed here for the sake of keeping discussions about this issue together. Mr. Cuny relayed that historically, when the airpark was developed, the issue of the easement along Tyler View was never dealt with. Mr. Jenings asked if the mailboxes were erected with the intent to obstruct traffic. Ms. Lynaugh responded no, probably people just built their houses and put their mailboxes there, and past Boards did not address the easement obstruction issue. Recently, we have had people asking about runway access when they're looking at properties on Tyler View, so the Board has to do something to ensure the easement is cleared. Mr. Zacharias pointed out at least one sale has been lost because there is no good access. Mr. Jennings asked whether the easement specifically says "taxiway?" Ms. Lynaugh responded the wording says, "ingress egress." But it's a 60' easement where a regular street is 40'. The 60' is to accommodate airplanes. It was

pointed out that two pilots had used that road as access to the runway, but one was a very small plane and the other had folding wings. Mr. Jennings stated that he and his wife had been looking at our airpark for years and had been deterred from purchasing any property on Tyler View due to seeing no way to access the airstrip with the mailboxes located at the edge of the pavement in the easement. There was more discussion about this subject, culminating with Mr. Cuny posing the question whether the Association wants to defend itself in an action that the Kattans may bring that their property cannot be used for access to the airstrip

3. Mowing the airstrip – Mr. Cuny discussed with those present the current texting messaging system regarding mowing and airstrip condition that has been used for the past few months, to make sure the recently implemented messaging system is working. Mr. Medema told those gathered that folks who live along the airstrip can text to say the strip needs mowing. Mr. Cuny said even if a person is just walking along the runway, let the pilots know if there's something wrong on the airstrip; if debris is out there, it is helpful to remove it. He thanked Bob Bagwell, Mr. Nichols, Mr. Hecox, Mr. Medema, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Zacharias, Mr. Woodcock, and others for their work. There was a consensus that the tall grass berm that Mr. Baritelle leaves between his property and the airstrip is helpful for delineation of the airstrip during landing. Mr. Cuny reminded the participants that there is a community tie down and/or run up area off the 90' turn of Lands End. In fact, he said a pilot had flown in the other day to look at the Lee property and used this spot for his airplane.
4. Irrigation – the grass is greening up thanks to the fog and irrigation. Looking good with the fertilizing that was done earlier. Mr. Cuny pointed out this is a dry time of year, so leave the grass a little taller so it can survive. Mr. Smith suggested 3"-4" to keep the grass healthy. He also reminded people who are on the irrigation ditch system that the system is shutting down on Saturdays to conserve water, and that it is the beginning of the end of watering season. This system, which provides the water used to irrigate the runway, will likely shut it off early to mid-September. Mr. Smith explained that years ago, the irrigation district determined that Blue Ribbon was a recreational use, due to the runway, so we have second highest priority to water, behind farmers. So, when you see us watering, (which typically is 20 minutes, twice daily) we are not bending any rules; we just have a higher priority. Ms. Jennings asked what it meant that we were a recreation area. The fact that we are an airstrip is considered recreation. Also, dog walking on and around the airstrip. Mr. Cuny encouraged people to walk to the runway to see if any problems are there, but please keep pets on leash, pick up after pets and avoid the center of the runway. There was discussion about people walking by others' houses and yes, many people allow others access through the easements which go along their land. There was discussion about warning signs about the cliffs. Mr. Nichols has a few no trespass signs, mostly because of people wandering to the edge of the cliff on his property. Mr. Cuny said we may want to put up warning signs closer to the cliff edge. Mr. Nichols and Mr. Smith will see if the signs that we currently have could be used. There was continued discussion about this subject. Back to the runway issues, Mr. Smith said the pilots were in pretty good shape with supplies. Ms. Lynaugh reminded the pilots that the Board budgeted to rent a spreader to see how that would work for spreading organic material to amend the soil. No one seemed to want to take the lead on this operation. There was a discussion about using an

aerator to improve runway condition. Mr. Nichols asked if the pilots wanted him to keep rolling the runway; Mr. Cuny said rolling helps as not all grasses on the runway are the same type and can vary in length and physical composition. A discussion ensued about de-thatching. Then the discussion moved to the soft spot at the east windsock. Mr. Cuny asked Mr. Sommerville to give some history about that area. Mr. Sommerville explained that in 1996 a gentleman put in two large ditches, and a dry well sort of thing to try to drain the area. That didn't work and Mr. Sommerville said the Association had to bring in several 10-yard truckloads of Sequim Valley topsoil. The discussion continued about layers of clay in the area making an impermeable layer in some areas. After more conversation, Mr. Cuny summarized that the runway grass is alive and growing. The west end is dry and has a large amount of clay. The East end at certain times is very wet. When this occurs, Mr. Smith has traditionally put an X out there to warn pilots of conditions. Mr. Cuny stressed all the pilots just want to make sure the runway is safe. It is his opinion the runway is in better condition and safer than it has ever been.

5. Animal Control – there was a discussion about the Canada Geese and ducks, which can both be dangerous, especially with aircraft. There have been numerous deer strikes on Kitchen Dick, and there seem to be more deer than in the past. Mr. Zacharias told the gathering that the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) will be culling the herds this fall, as they do periodically. Mr. Cuny talked about the fact that in the 1990s there was pheasant hunting in the County Recreation Area, and there was deer hunting here many years ago as deer control. Mr. Cuny pointed out deer are a risk on the runway. Mr. Baritelle said he's been seeing more coyotes lately. He said when dogs run free, they become deer control, and their feces tend to deter deer. Ms. Merkuloff stated that many people in the area love the deer, and the HOA shouldn't talk about hunting here. It was agreed that what the DFG does about culling is beyond our control. Mr. Cuny circled back to safety and mentioned the lots who still have not mowed. Ms. Lynaugh told the group that six notices have been mailed for non-mowing of lots; Mr. Kattan's lots are a major piece of that. The lots between the Lees and the Kantowitz' are being mowed and Mr. Butler said his contractor is coming this week. Ms. Lynaugh mentioned there are two lots with mowing exceptions granted based on our current CCRs, Article 5, Section 1, Vegetation Control to wit: "...The Board of Directors shall have the authority to grant exceptions to this policy for wildlife habitat enhancement and other justifiable purposes." Ms. Lynaugh stated these are the current CC&Rs and as we move forward with updating the GovDocs, the Airport Committee should be encouraged to participate in the update. She said two board members went and reviewed the two lots in question. Both lots have areas that could be considered wetlands; however, they did mow parts of their lots. Mr. Zacharias said the owners came to the Board meeting and brought information either from the County or from a Wildlife agency that there is evidence they were keeping a habitat for wildlife. The two properties have cut paths and margins to minimize fire risk. Ms. Jennings asked the time frame for the exceptions. Ms. Lynaugh responded these exemptions are indefinite and run with the property; however, if the property has a change in use, the exemption goes away. The exemption could potentially be grandfathered in even if the CC&Rs are changed. Mr. Cuny felt the committee should have input into any exceptions granted by the board. Ms. Lynaugh observed this is another example of

why the current CCRs need to be reviewed and updated; they are unenforceable in some cases. Mr. Baritelle observed they are ambiguous in certain areas, at best.

6. Traffic Patterns — Mr. Cuny told those assembled he attended an aviation conference in Puyallup, and attended a class by Tom Rogers, a FAA traffic pattern expert. He asked Mr. Rogers to come and make a presentation to the group. His website is [rogersaviationnw.com](http://rogersaviationnw.com). In the class he made some key points: the reason traffic patterns were developed was for planes to be able to see each other. Traffic patterns are set for an airstrip which give pilots using unfamiliar airport to know what pattern needs to be followed. They help identify where to land and take off. The biggest point he took from the seminar was that most fatalities are due to a straight in approach. He stressed his concern: safety on the runway. There was extensive discussion about flight patterns and the fact that our CCRs mandate a left-hand flight pattern. However, there are many airports, including Bremerton, Port Townsend, Diamond Point, Port Angeles, Sequim Valley who all use right hand approach. This group should be aware that the Board has formed the GovDoc to work on updating the current By-Laws and CC&Rs, and the Airport Committee should be part of the update process by providing input to make changes. Here, we have two windsocks, and in a no wind condition, we should be landing and taking off to the west. Mr. Baritelle mentioned the wildlife issue here and reminded mowers of the X he created which can be lit and wheeled onto the runway to warn pilots. Mr. Sommerville asked what the disadvantage was of the left-handed pattern and Mr. Cuny replied that patterns are no longer standard and have gone away from the left-hand pattern and are now looking at geography. He stated the left-hand pattern is not standard anymore all over the country. Each airport evaluates the pattern based on its needs. Mr. Cuny continued that he understood the FAA is trying to stay away from standard pattern because each airport is different. There commenced an in-depth conversation about landing patterns that continued for a long time. Mr. Medema stated that he was from Arlington and that the airport had a right-handed pattern to stay away from the population. Mr. Smith said that from a visibility perspective, a left-handed pattern is better, as the pilot can view down directly from his window, especially in a side-by-side configured aircraft. Mr. Cuny wrapped up the discussion by saying there seems to be agreement that a straight in pattern is not safe and further, with light or no wind, take off to the west. There was consensus agreement on this.
7. Predeparture warmups – Since all engines need to be warmed up, here at Blue Ribbon, we've decided to do runups away from the end of the runway, so we don't affect the people who live at the end of the runway too much with the noise of the engines. Do runups at your location or on a taxiway and not on the runway. In the early 2000s, we had half the traffic, and everyone was running up in front of McCorie's house. That wasn't fair to the McCorie's, and that's when the pilots came up with the idea of generally warming up and runup at their house, on someone's taxiway or frontage and more recently, at the 90' turn on Lands' End. Runups are not done on gravel. Mr. Smith said pilots sort of expect pilots to pull off into our setbacks for runups; there's no reason to sit out on the runway. Mr. Cuny said we could look into expanding the runway parking area to make a runup area there if there is interest. Mr. Woodcock reminded folks that if there's a good wind straight down the runway, land to the east, but if the wind is quartering out of the northwest, there's a

big rotor that comes off the Nichols' and Sommerville's houses, so if you're coming in that way, land long. He said on 8/12/24 a Bonanza landing at Diamond Point ended up short on their runway and wiped off the gear, coming in low and slow at 10 knots, hit the rotor and it came off.

8. Paraglider – Mr. Cuny called the paraglider pilot who recently has been using the BFR airspace. As they talked the paraglider gentleman said he was unaware that he was not visible to planes using our airstrip when he was flying along the bluff and in certain areas. He agreed to turn around at McDonald Creek. Mr. Cuny invited him to come sit by the east windsock to see what pilots cannot see, so to speak. The gentleman prepared a fan graph, showing the area Mr. Cuny pointed out as the problem, and the gentleman will make that available to other paragliders. In response to a question from Mr. Sommerville, Mr. Cuny said a paraglider can take off anywhere, and yes, sometimes from Sequim Valley
9. Drones – Mr. Hecox talked to the drone pilot who was taking drone video of the Lee's house at 14 Lands End. The drone pilot was unaware he was supposed to contact someone at Blue Ribbon about the drone flight before flying. The group was told some of the new drones are programmed not to fly near an airport; this airport is not one of the ones that's large enough to program in. Mr. Cuny pointed out that we have the right information on the website regarding use of drones in the area of the POA and we need to continue to remind realtors of our requirements to have a second person serving as a viewer during their flights. We may want to send reminders to local realtors. It was also noted that neither the County Park nor the national wildlife refuge allow drone flights. Mr. Medema said the whole unmanned air system isn't controlled well. Mr. Cuny reminded those present we've also discouraged kites. Ms. Kincaid asked if they could fly kits under a certain height, for instance under 50' which is a limit on trees here? Mr. Cuny said regulating that is the problem and mentioned Cline Spit as a great kite flying location. There was general discussion about whether kites could be flown anywhere in Blue Ribbon Farms, and it quickly became apparent that this may be another GovDoc issue.
10. Mason matter – Ms. Merkuloff told the gathering that the Board had directed our attorney, Judy Endejan, to move forward with all possible speed in this matter.
11. Governing Documents (GovDoc) Update – Ms. Lynaugh and Mr. Baritelle briefly touched on the process to update the CCRs and By-Laws. And Ms. Lynaugh pointed out there have been several issues raised today that would make pilots want to be involved in the committee. Mr. Zacharias pointed out it would behoove the pilots to work with realtors to make them aware that this is an airpark, and suggest they advertise in periodicals that specifically are for aviators such as Barnstormers or Controller. He continued that property value increases if it's got airstrip access. It may avoid some of the issues raised, as some people who buy here say they didn't realize there was an airport here. Mr. Lynaugh suggested that perhaps at some point in the future the committee could put together an information sheet to send to local realtors outlining the area, introducing them to our CCRs, making them aware of some of our restrictions and talking about this as an airport community. Mr. Cuny said putting it on the website would be good as well. Mr. Sommerville brought up SB5796, now the Washington Uniform Common Interest Ownership Act (WCIOA, Chapter 64.90 of the Washington State Code) and pointed out it would affect the GovDoc revisions. Mr. Baritelle felt that at least half of the requirements will end up

with attorneys fighting it out before it can be implemented. He said it covers more than just this HOA, but condominiums and combined property owners, one set of laws to cover several different associations. Some of the new provisions will affect us eventually, he felt. For example, a regular audit requirement. Ms. Lynaugh said the GovDoc group will need an attorney to assist; however, this is on hold due to the current legal issues facing the association.

12. Board membership — Mr. Cuny mentioned there may be some people leaving the Board at the next POA meeting, and asked those present to think about serving on the Board.
13. DART/CERT Disaster Drill – Mr. Woodcock reported that the DART/CERT disaster airlift response team will be practicing on September 7, 2024, 11am-2pm. Blue Ribbon as well as Sequim Valley and Diamond Point airstrips are three airports that the Clallam County Emergency Management Service has designated to help in the time of an emergency. There will be a plane demonstrating a drop of first aid medical supplies like insulin. A helicopter landing zone will be set. It will be an interesting event. Mr. Cuny said it's a good reminder that this airstrip is used for emergency services, such as the LifeFlight helicopter which landed to take one of our residents to Harborview. Mr. Cuny wondered if we could put on the website that we are an emergency landing place, and perhaps do a map of the airstrip and landing sites.
14. Blue Ribbon Website – Ms. Lynaugh reported we have hired a new webmaster, as Dan Masys wanted to retire. We will be looking at re-doing the website, and welcome input.
15. New Chair for Airport Committee – Mr. Cuny asked for people to think about stepping up and taking his position as chair of the Airport Committee. Mr. Zacharias will consider it. Mr. Cuny pointed out it's good to talk things through with the pilots and the community. That is why he asked Ms. Kincaid to send out a note to Ladies of Greywolf. We are a community of all residents and that's what makes this airport so nice.
16. Mr. Cuny thanked those attending and adjourned the meeting at 12:09pm.