



Gillespie Pilots Association Meeting Minutes

P.O. Box 711591
Santee, CA 92072-1591
1 May 2021

Zoom Virtual Meeting

GPA President **Captain Denis Breslin** called the meeting to order at 0900 via Zoom.

President Breslin reviewed the ROE and explained some of the “wave” and “chat” features on Zoom.

- I. **President Breslin - Welcome** Presented the meeting agenda and welcomed the guest speakers. He also presented a video of a Cessna landing at iconic St. Bart’s, where the aircraft on final approach crossed a road within just a few feet. In this incident, a male is seen taking a video while almost getting hit by the landing aircraft. The point was to be aware of your surrounding and to use sound judgement at all times.
- II. **Gillespie Pilots Association Website & live camera** (Currently INOP. There is a software issue that makes current websites incompatible with our camera – alternatives are being explored)
 - <https://www.gillespiepilotsassociation.org>;
 - **GPA membership dues are due** – still only \$10 for the whole year!
 - Check out the GPA on **Facebook**. Be sure to check out the GPA Facebook page.
- III. **Gillespie Airport Lessee’s Association (GALA)** - President Breslin shared information on how commercial flights are recovering from COVID, but slowly, and there is still quite a ways to go. He also discusses how there are several businesses operating at Gillespie that are in very dire financial straits and at risk of closure, especially if the proposed relief packages are not made available.

GALA representative **Cory Hazelwood** then spoke about the state of business at Gillespie Field. He also explained how COVID has devastated many of the businesses at the field and revenues are down across the board. One of the biggest issues are the rental rates and reminded everyone that those rates affect everyone, not just the individual businesses. GALA will be presenting a petition for relief to the GFDC at their next meeting (May 19th at 6:00) with three primary objectives:

- 1) Extend the grace period to repay the deferred rents associated with COVID.
- 2) Extend all of the leaseholds by five years.
- 3) Give leaseholds time to recoup their losses and qualify for refinancing.

The current system restricts the length of time a leaseholder can possess a property. As they approach the end of that timeline, the cost of any improvements cannot be recovered so the facilities will often fall into disrepair or negatively affect neighboring businesses. This policy needs to be revisited.

- IV. **SEE Airport Manager’s Report**; Cathe Johnson was not able to make the meeting but President Breslin was able to update the Association on Operations, which have picked up, but are still closer to 2019 levels.
 - The Cajon Air Center Phase III is ahead of schedule and due to be completed by the end of June (2021) with Phase IV starting in the Fall of 2022.
 - The construction has limited the east Transient Ramp to only 9 tie-down spaces. They are first-come, first-serve and all are asked to only park on the designated “T”s.
 - For the first week of May, the east perimeter access road will have limited use. Everyone is encouraged to use the streets, but if they need to use this way, flaggers will be on-site to direct.
 - The wash rack will also open soon, possibly before the end of June.



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- If you wash your aircraft, adhere to the County’s washing guidelines. They can be found under “Mobile Vehicle Washing” at sandiegocounty.gov.

V. **KMYF Procedures:** Recently information was distributed reminding pilots of the procedures flying into and out of Montgomery Field, specifically along the coast. They are not regulatory, but they are best practices and recommended for use. Generally, aircraft departing MYF to the west will fly north of Mt. Soledad and continue north. Traffic approaching from the northwest should fly south of Mt. Soledad before turning east towards MYF. (See attached PowerPoint map and explanation.)

VI. **KSEE Controller Stephen Price:** Stephen Price has presented to the GPA before and wanted to return and make himself available for any question the Association may have. He also shared how COVID affected the controllers and staffing. They currently have seven new controllers working at the facility, so at any given time there is very likely a trainee listening to, or working, the frequency.

- A question was asked concerning a west departure and having to quickly change over to MYF for a transition clearance.
 - i. A pilot can ask for an early frequency change to let the controller know what you intend, and most will try to accommodate you.

VII. **Gillespie Field Development Council** – The next virtual meeting is scheduled for Wednesday May 19th at 1800. They have changed their virtual platform to “WebEx”, so be sure to check their website for details on “attending” and providing input as well as the agenda for docketed items.

- All GPA members are *highly encouraged* to attend the GFDC meetings and to be involved in both group’s work. The GFDC is the body to take issues affecting Gillespie Field before the County Board of Supervisors. Their work has a direct impact on the airport’s operations.

VIII. **Commercial Development:** The County Board of Supervisors met on March 17th, 2021 to take action regarding the Ground Lease with SGCLMC-WELD Investment Company, L.P. commercial project. It concerns the development by Amazon of the 31 vacant acres off the west end of Gillespie Field. There was some public opposition to the development, but ultimately the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to approve the project. This project was supported by the GPA, specifically the potential for 500 good paying jobs and increase to the AEF funds.

- Recently a group has filed a suit challenging the previous environmental impact study. These types of suits are not uncommon nor unexpected. The County’s response to the lawsuit is pending.

IX. **Historic Aircraft Display** – We continue to follow the County’s lead with respect to meeting, so the same procedure will continue which started in April 2020. Those who have regularly displayed at SEE through early 2020 will be approved for sign off. Once in-person meetings resume, it will revert back to the original process and require physical display.

- June 1st is a *possibility*, but nothing has been determined yet. An e-mail will go out if the process changes.

X. **Safety-Bird Strike -CFI Alana Courier:** Coast Flight Academy CFI Alana Courier spoke to the GPA about a bird strike she encountered in early April. Alana was flying over the Jamul practice area with a commercial student conducting ground reference maneuvers. While at about 1000’ AGL, she took over the controls to demonstrate the procedure when the bird, a hawk, struck and imbedded itself in their Archer’s left wing. Alana was initially surprised, but then immediately started a climb and diverted directly to SEE. While she flew the airplane, remembering to **Aviate-Navigate-Communicate**, the commercial student took care of the radio, advising SEE they had a bird strike and needed to land. They were cleared for 27L and landed safely with the bird still lodged in the wing. (See attached PowerPoint



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photos) Alana said they really didn't see any significant reduction in performance until they slowed for approach, where the yaw was much more noticeable.

- Alana explained she had considered declaring an emergency, but they had the plane under control and there was only one other aircraft in the area, so she didn't feel it was necessary. She does feel now it would have probably been a good idea and would encourage others not to hesitate in declaring an emergency.
- GPA recommends pilots declare "Mayday" when in doubt
 - i. It lets everyone in the area know there is a plane in distress
 - ii. It gives ATC authority to give priority handling to you
 - iii. Clears airspace "just in case" something goes wrong

There were several questions and comments letting everyone know that if they do have a bird strike, even if there is no obvious damage, they need to have their plane inspected. As to declaring an emergency, it was also mentioned pilots may be apprehensive for fear of having to make a report. Generally if there was no serious or flagrant violation of the regulations, a report is not required. *Don't hesitate to declare an emergency!*

XI. Facility Changes: President Breslin briefly discussed the potential obsolescence of the ILS. Most of these ground based systems are over their 20-year service life and are expensive to install and maintain. With LPV approaches becoming ever more precise and less expensive, they could soon replace the ILS. There are still several situations where an ILS is necessary (see the attached PowerPoint for criteria), but the FAA could remove 200+ ILS approaches over the next 5 years.

Also discussed are the potential changes, or standardization of airport signage to make navigating to FBO's and parking on the airport easier. "FBO Ramp", "GA Transient Ramp", and "GA Tenant Ramp", are just a few of the terms you might see. An AOPA review of airport diagrams found as many as 30 different parking terms for the same type of ramp in Southern California alone. As a result, a new coalition has been formed to address the confusion.

XII. Comments and Questions: Tom Hannawa, prior GPA President, encouraged all GPA members to reach out to those they meet at the airport to let them know about the GPA and what it does. He has spoken to several long-time Gillespie pilots who were not familiar with the GPA.

XIII. Raffle winner - Red Bird simulator: Jeff Bennett. (Initially there was a different winner, but they left prior to the meeting's end and a secondary name was chosen. *Be sure to stick around to the end for the raffle results!*) Redbird winners must use the gift in the month it is awarded or lose out.

Next GPA meeting **Saturday, June 5th, 2021.** We will be working with the county to see if the meeting can be in-person or if we need to remain virtual a little longer.

Meeting adjourned at 0958 by GPA President Captain Denis Breslin.

Respectfully submitted,
J. Wes Morris, GPA Secretary