



Fly2PIE News

**St. Petersburg-Clearwater
International Airport®**
A Pinellas County Government Service

Winter/Spring 2009

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

During these tough economic times, we all have to prioritize how we spend our money. Our airlines continue to be a good value. We see it everyday as our planes come and go filled with passengers that fly for low fares and receive a quality travel experience.

The airport is an enterprise fund department of Pinellas County Government and receives no subsidies from the local tax paying public. Our challenge is to operate cost effectively in order to maintain low cost fees to the airlines for airport use charges. Our airline rates and charges are perhaps the lowest in all of Florida. This helps to support the growth and profitability of existing airlines and plays a vital role in attracting new airline service.

We have no long term debt or to put it another way, no mortgage on the terminal. Projects, such as the renovation of the terminal, are paid on a “pay as you go” basis, principally from grants received from Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Florida Department of Transportation, as well as other capital funding sources. The terminal project is designed to be built in phases as funding becomes available. The current phase should be finished in time for the busy late year holiday season.

The federal government’s Economic Stimulus program includes a set aside of \$1.1 billion in support of capital projects at the nation’s airports. Only a small portion of this money is available to state airports. The Airport has prepared a priority list of projects to compete for a portion of the Stimulus funding. The first round of funding is for “shovel ready” projects which mean they can begin construction almost immediately. Other funding may become available for projects that can commence within one year. In order to position ourselves to compete for Stimulus funding, the Airport submitted to the FAA a \$27 million “wish list” of projects. The list of projects was primarily focused on the terminal and interior roadway circulation, but included improvements to our airfield. We identified about \$6 million in “shovel ready” terminal improvements that include new doors and elevators, a new public address system, improvements to the Ticketing “A” check-in area, new seating, and replacement of major sewer and water lines.

We have faced many ongoing challenges with our current terminal renovation project and made many difficult choices of what to include. The Stimulus funding allows us to continue with new upgrades that will enhance our customer’s experience as well as continuing to update aging airport systems. Hopefully, we will receive all or a large part of our “shovel ready” project request.

As you know, the Airport is a vital link in our tourism industry. We project that in 2009, we will serve between 700,000 to 750,000 arriving and departing passengers. This is due to the continued growth in Allegiant Air’s service. Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater estimates over \$160 million in direct spending in Pinellas County is from passengers arriving at the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport. Bringing in more passengers (tourists) is good economic development for us all.

It is our ongoing goal to provide the best customer service to our community and do our part to support economic recovery. Remember, we are Your Tampa Bay Gateway!

More to come....Noah Lagos, A.A.E.

AIR SERVICE NEWS

New getaway packages including two-night accommodations at the Beau Rivage Resort & Casino in Biloxi, Mississippi, non-stop jet service, and ground transportation at the introductory price of only \$199 per person are now being offered from St. Pete-Clearwater. Three weekly flights on Allegiant Air’s MD-83 aircraft begin April 1st . Contact 1-877-462-2328 or www.beaurivage.com

USA3000 Airlines also announced the addition of service to Cleveland and St. Louis beginning May 1st. Flights to Chicago will discontinue at the end of April.



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AIRPORT PLANNING STUDIES & PROJECTS - *The latest news on ongoing projects and planning studies at the airport.*

Terminal Renovation Project Update

Our terminal renovation project began almost a year ago and portions of the project are opening to the public. The new Ticketing A restrooms were opened in time for the busy holiday season. This marked the public's first look at the tropical color scheme for the renovation project.

Ticketing B reconstruction is nearing completion with a new configuration for ticket counters to accommodate more stations and provide ease in passenger movement. Ticketing B will feature the new interior design look with new flooring, columns, wall coverings, and display monitors.

The contract for new carpeting was awarded and the terminal will receive new carpeting throughout; tile contract bids are in progress. Airport seating will be replaced and seating layout patterns have been established. After specifications are completed this spring, quotes will be solicited from vendors. We will also build a new Visitor Information Booth in our Baggage Claim facility.

A major part of the infrastructure renovation was upgrading some of the air conditioning systems for the airport terminal. With new chillers in place, the system was up and running at the end of February.

The contract for the passenger boarding bridges was awarded. Currently, designs and schedules are being completed for installation.

Renovating a terminal that has been built in 12 phases dating back 55 years has been a tremendously challenging project. The airport has made considerable strides in keeping this project on time and within financial guidelines. The renovation is on schedule to be completed by late 2009, in time for the holiday season.

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT - *The latest on projects at the airport and surrounding airport-owned real estate. For more information, contact Properties Director Bob Humberstone at (727)453-7820 or bhumber@pinellascounty.org.*

Hallmark Development announced the sale of their last available office condominium unit at the Airport Business Park. The 25,300 square foot office complex reached 100% occupancy and consists of six individual offices that include medical, real estate, and financial services companies. The convenient site location and quality construction was the key to Hallmark Development's successful completion of the project.



LOTTERY TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE AT AIRPORT GIFT SHOP

Stellar Partners is now offering Florida Lottery tickets at its Airport Gift Shop.



Airco Golf Course, a Par 72, Championship 18 hole public golf course is located adjacent to the airport. Airco has a putting green, warm-up/hitting station, restaurant, and golf shop.

Airco offers a great value to local residents and visitors alike with low rates and a customer friendly operations. For tee times call 727-573-GOLF (4653)

AIRPORT OPERATIONS & NOISE AFFAIRS UPDATE - For questions about PIE's Noise Abatement and Mitigation Program, contact the Noise Affairs Office at (727)453-7880 or airportnoise@pinellascounty.org

If you have concerns or complaints about aircraft noise from St. Petersburg-Clearwater Int'l Airport, please contact the Noise Hotline at (727)453-7877 or visit our website at www.fly2pie.com/noise. The website features a flight tracking option, frequently asked questions about aircraft noise, and an automated complaint form for reporting noise incidents to the airport.

Noise Abatement Task Force (NATF)

Representatives from the community, airport, and aviation tenants form the NATF meet to discuss noise affairs at PIE. All meetings are held quarterly in the Airport Conference Room 234 and are open to the public; minutes are posted on the website. Upcoming meetings will be held at 3:00 PM on:

April 22, July 22, and October 28

AIRPORT RECEIVES APPROVAL OF NOISE RELIEF LANDING PROCEDURE AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR "CUTTING EDGE" NOISE STUDY

On May 1, 2007, the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) passed a Resolution directing the Airport staff to pursue a new airline approach procedure that would help alleviate aircraft noise for communities that lie directly to the north of the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport (Airport). Recently, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) gave their approval of this new instrument approach procedure for commercial airlines landing to the south on Runway 17L.

Presently, airlines landing to the south, in good weather, can only fly over Tampa Bay during daylight hours, but at night must fly over communities located north of the Airport. The new arrival procedure referred to as the "VOR-B Approach" enables airlines to fly, day or night, weather permitting, over Old Tampa Bay which will reduce noise impacts to communities to the north that are in close proximity to the Airport.

The Airport's Noise Abatement Task Force and United Parcel Service (UPS), in conjunction with Airport staff and the consulting firm of Jeppesen Data Plan, Inc. (Jeppesen) have been working towards the approval of this new procedure for several years. Jeppesen conducted an airspace study for the Airport which resulted in the design of the new approach procedure. UPS provided critical input in the design process and used their flight simulator to fly a variety of test landings. The FAA required that an airline sponsor the new approach. "Without the cooperation and sponsorship by UPS, we would not have received FAA approval of this new voluntary noise abatement procedure," said Airport Director Noah Lagos.

FAA would not allow the Airport to impose this as a mandatory noise abatement procedure; therefore, the use of the "VOR-B Approach" by the airlines is on a voluntary basis. The Airport is working with our air carriers to disseminate and implement this new procedure. As the sponsor, UPS has agreed to fly it. "It will take time for the airlines to educate and train their pilots before we start to see the "VOR-B Approach" being flown with some regularity. Even though the procedure is voluntary, we believe that the scheduled carriers will fly the new approach in good weather conditions," said Noah Lagos.

Wyle Laboratories Inc, an airport consultant, conducted a noise study, which included an analysis of the potential noise increases and decreases associated with the proposed "VOR-B Approach" procedure. The study also measured noise impacts on neighboring communities. It used cutting edge noise metrics that measure what people hear over their homes on a single event level rather than the FAA standard "DNL" metric which measures "cumulative noise". The Airport has been recognized by a national aviation publication for its non-traditional approach to evaluating noise impacts. This study was also recently recognized at the statewide Florida Airports Council Noise & Environmental Conference, where the Airport received the Community Affairs Award in recognition of outstanding achievement in the development of a noise abatement program that achieved improved community goodwill.

SUPER BOWL XLIII

Ten months of preparation went into supporting the surge in aircraft operations associated with Super Bowl XLIII. At game time, a total of 135 aircraft were parked on the airfield. Over the course of the entire Super Bowl weekend, the Fixed Base Operators accommodated 258 corporate aircraft. In fact, two runways had to be closed just to accommodate parking needs for all the additional aircraft.

Two charter flights from Pittsburgh were also added for the event. Sporting Tampa Bay Host Committee's Red Polos, the airport's volunteers provided passengers information on Tampa Bay's SuperBowl XLIII activities for the week.



AIRPORT VOLUNTEERS

The airport is very fortunate to have 22 volunteers assisting in the Visitor Information Booth, our Operations Office, and on special airport projects. The Visitor Information Booth is staffed seven days a week, morning to evening, during peak flight arrival times to assist passengers and provide tourism information.

In 2008, these volunteers provided over 1600 hours of service to our community and our visiting tourists. Many also attended tours of Pinellas County to keep informed about the many things to do and see here. Thank you Airport Volunteers!!



United Way of Tampa Bay

The Airport received United Way of Tampa Bay's Bronze Award for the third year in a row. Employees demonstrated their generosity by again increasing their donations to the community.

County Seeks Public Input on Budget Reductions

Upcoming public budget meetings will be held from 5:30 to 8 p.m on:

- **Monday, March 23: Osceola High School, 9751 98th St. N., Seminole**
- **Thursday, March 26: Gibbs High School, 850 34th St. S., St. Petersburg**

The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners plans to cut 20 percent from its overall general fund for the next fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1. This is necessary to meet the current challenges resulting from the national economic downturn and to plan for the continuation of reduced revenues in the county. As they consider the reduction or elimination of public services and programs, commissioners will host public budget meetings in March to solicit feedback from residents. The sharp decrease in county revenue reflects the national economic crisis, local reductions in real estate values and property tax caps. Commissioners are currently involved in the process of setting priorities on the county services and programs. Knowing that it cannot continue to provide the current level of service, the commission wants to know the community's priorities. The feedback provided at the public meetings and through other public outreach efforts will be used in the decision making process as the budget is resized. The goal is to offer core services, which will be delivered in a consistent, predictable, and reliable manner.

For more information, call (727) 464-3000 or go to www.pinellascounty.org/budget.

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