

Airport / Community Roundtable
Meeting No. 277 Overview
Wednesday, December 7, 2011

I. Call to Order / Roll Call / Declaration of Quorum Present

Chairperson Richard Newman called the Special Meeting of the Airport/Community Roundtable to order, at approximately 7:11 PM, in the David Chetcuti Community Room at Millbrae City Hall. Steven R. Alverson, Roundtable Coordinator called the roll. A quorum (at least 12 Regular Members) was present as follows:

REGULAR MEMBERS PRESENT

John Martin, City and County of San Francisco Airport Commission
Dave Pine, County of San Mateo Board of Supervisors
Richard Newman, C/CAG Airport Land Use Committee (ALUC)/**Roundtable Chairperson**
Elizabeth Lewis, Town of Atherton
Coralin Feierbach, City of Belmont
Sepi Richardson, City of Brisbane/**Roundtable Vice-Chairperson**
Art Kiesel, City of Foster City
Naomi Patridge, City of Half Moon Bay
Larry May, Town of Hillsborough/**Marge Colapietro**, City of Millbrae
Sue Digre, City of Pacifica
Steve Toben, Town of Portola Valley
Jeffrey Gee, City of Redwood City
Ken Ibarra, City of San Bruno

Kevin Mullin, City of South San Francisco

REGULAR MEMBERS ABSENT

City and County of San Francisco Board of Supervisors (Vacant)
City and County of San Francisco Mayor's Office

City of Burlingame
City of Menlo Park
City of San Carlos (Vacant)
City of San Mateo (Vacant)

Town of Woodside

ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT

Airline/Flight Operations
Andy Allen, United Airlines

Federal Aviation Administration

None

ROUNDTABLE STAFF / CONSULTANTS

Steve Alverson, Roundtable Coordinator

Andee Thorpe, Roundtable Support

Connie Shields, Administrative Assistant

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT STAFF

Mike McCarron, SFO's Director Bureau of Community Affairs

Bert Ganoung, Noise Abatement Manager

David Ong, Sr. Noise Abatement Systems Manager

John Hampel, Noise Abatement Specialist

II. Public Comment on Relevant Items Not on the Agenda

Roundtable Administrative Assistant, Connie Shields addressed Roundtable members, indicating that after eight years of service to the Roundtable, her position was being terminated at the end of the month. Ms. Shields expressed her appreciation for the time she spent working with the Roundtable. Vice-Chairperson Richardson expressed her gratitude to Ms. Shields for her service to the Roundtable. Chairperson Newman invited Ms. Shields back to the next Regular Meeting of the Roundtable on February 1, 2012 for a more formal recognition of her contributions, and concluded by expressing his gratitude to Ms. Shields as well.

Brisbane resident Jeff Zajas addressed the Roundtable expressing his concern about the letter that was sent to the FAA re: the PORTE THREE departure, and how long it took to get the Roundtable to take action on the overflight issue in Brisbane. Mr. Zajas indicated that it had been twelve months since the issue was first brought to the attention of the Roundtable. He also expressed concern that the FAA's next response will only provide a timeline for their response, and not an actual resolution to the problem. Mr. Zajas indicated that he was concerned about the lack of urgency on the matter, and concluded by saying that this noise issue in Brisbane needs to be acknowledged.

III. Preparation of a Response to Grand Jury Report Findings

Roundtable Coordinator Steve Alverson opened this portion of the meeting by stating that the agenda item under discussion was about one item only: developing and approving a response to the Grand Jury Report's findings. Mr. Alverson directed the Roundtable's attention to the memo that was prepared in support of this agenda item. He also introduced Andee Thorpe, who was present to make "live" edits to the draft response letter. Mr. Alverson also drew the Roundtable's attention to a "proposed revised draft" letter that was provided by Vice-Chairperson Richardson and distributed via e-mail earlier today.

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Chairperson Newman indicated that the draft response letter that had originally been prepared by Roundtable staff was included in the meeting packet, and that it had been provided with numbered lines to help members keep up with changes that were going to be made.

Vice-Chairperson Richardson thanked fellow members for their attendance at this special meeting. Vice-Chairperson Richardson indicated that Chairperson Newman used his prerogative and his way to prepare the draft response letter under review this evening, and indicated that she felt Chairperson Newman's letter totally disregarded the issues that the communities are having with respect to airport noise. Vice-Chairperson Richardson expressed her concern about the growth of airport operations, and how this has impacted communities tremendously. She indicated that noise concerns have gone by the wayside and that in order to make the meeting productive, she prepared, with the help of an attorney, the proposed revised responses provided that evening. Vice-Chairperson Richardson stated that she felt her proposed revised draft letter was comprehensive and precise.

Chairperson Newman indicated that the draft letter provided in the packet for this meeting was the same one that had been distributed before, and that it was prepared by Roundtable staff, not him. He indicated that when the draft response letter was distributed to Roundtable members for review, he did not hear from any other parties objecting to the letter. Chairperson Newman indicated that he would entertain other suggestions for an orderly meeting.

Member Steve Toben stated that he did not think it would be difficult to utilize Vice-Chairperson Richardson's proposed response letter; indicating that he felt it was straightforward, clear, and precise. He indicated that taking a line-by-line approach in reviewing the original draft response letter would not be easy. He concluded by saying that Vice-Chairperson Richardson's approach was straightforward and accurate.

Member Ken Ibarra expressed some confusion about the proposed response letter provided by Vice-Chairperson Richardson at the eleventh hour, asking if the letter was authored by the City of Brisbane. Member Ibarra indicated he had not seen the proposed response letter, and that he was concerned that this was not an efficient way to go about responding to the Grand Jury Report. He asked if a version of the letter in the packet was already redlined by Vice-Chairperson Richardson/Brisbane was different than the official letter submitted by the City of Brisbane. Vice-Chairperson Richardson said that it was a different response.

Member Kevin Mullin asked whether City of Brisbane staff were prepared to summarize verbally the difference between the proposed response letter and the draft letter prepared by Roundtable staff.

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Clay Holstein, City Manager for Brisbane, responded by saying he might only confuse matters further stating that the letter was prepared by Vice-Chairperson Richardson and a private attorney without support from City staff.

Vice-Chairperson Richardson indicated that she had provided the proposed response letter in order to help Roundtable members make the meeting productive. Vice-Chairperson Richardson indicated that if they were not ready to take action that evening, than they should postpone the meeting.

Chairperson Newman responded by saying that the deadline for submission of the response letter is January 4, 2012, and that there would not be any time between now and then for the Roundtable to meet again. He concluded by saying that the purpose of this evening's meeting is to tackle the letter tonight.

Member Dave Pine expressed frustration that there were now three versions of a response letter for them to consider: the original response letter on page 167 of the packet, the redline version provided by the City of Brisbane on page 175 of the packet, and then a new letter. He indicated that they should start with the draft response on page 167 of the packet, and that people can call attention to other documents when necessary.

Chairperson Newman asked whether they needed a motion to determine the approach to responding to the Grand Jury report's findings moving forward.

Roundtable Coordinator Steve Alverson stated that Member Burrows' motion from the last Regular Meeting is what led to this special meeting, and that the motion included using the draft response provided in the packet.

Member Marge Colapietro indicated that the proposed revised draft provided by Vice-Chairperson Richardson did not include redline changes to help members discern the changes from the original draft response letter. She continued by saying that the packet included response letters from cities and towns, and that Roundtable members represent people in their communities. Member Colapietro expressed disappointment with the fact that the Roundtable was forty-five minutes into the meeting and had not gotten anywhere.

Member Naomi Patridge stated that she could not distinguish the difference from Vice-Chairperson Richardson's letter and the Roundtable staff-prepared letter. She indicated that she appreciated the chart that was included in the packet, which showed what cities were saying. Member Patridge indicated that a lot of work probably went into Vice-Chairperson Richardson' proposed response letter, but that it was provided at the last minute and was not redlined to depict the changes between the original letter and the proposed revised draft letter so that each representative could verify that their city's concerns were addressed in the proposed revised draft.

Member Elizabeth Lewis stated that the chart provided in the packet was not taken into consideration in writing the draft response.

Chairperson Newman stated that most of the letters from the member jurisdictions did not exist at the time the Draft response letter was written, which is why so many people are here. He then suggested taking public comments at this point.

Public Comments: Brisbane resident Jeff Zajas stated that finding #6 states that the Roundtable does not include any individual residents nor do they have any citizen representation on any subcommittee. Mr. Zajas believes that there are people in the communities would love to get involved and have done so, and would offer at least a sounding board for some ideas. Bylaws include the ability to do ad hoc committees and the Roundtable has not used that at all, even though many would have appreciated being involved. Roundtable should look to the communities more for a viewpoint.

Brisbane resident Peter Grace said he welcomed the Grand Jury Report, stating it was helpful; acknowledges noise problem in Brisbane. Several meetings have stated that noise was not addressed, no smoking gun, and the Grand Jury response does. Focusing on the use of current technology to link actual noise to actual aircraft, and focus on single events should be continued. Regarding the noise measurement equipment that tracks current departures, 32% flights from SFO are over Brisbane and its one tracking monitor for the whole city.

Portola Valley resident Vic Schachter has been a resident for 20 years, but is new to Roundtable. Community is upset with noticeable, anecdotal, day-to-day increase noise pollution. Thank you for good faith efforts to address issues, Grand Jury report is welcome. Best of luck in success. Political and legal options are being discussed in communities.

Jim Lyons, a resident from the Town of Woodside, voiced specific objections to items 1, 2, 3, 5, and 9; stating that their conclusions were wrong and should not be adopted. Mr. Lyons stated that the conclusion to item 1 that 'there is no evidence supporting claims that there are severe noise impacts' was wrong; citing a December 2010 report entitled, "Aircraft Overflights and Noise Analysis," which he said showed scores of instances where noise levels exceeded 80 to 86 decibels. Mr. Lyons continued by saying that item 2 is also incorrect, indicating that the SFO Noise Abatement Office's Noise Monitoring System measures every single aircraft noise event that occurs in a 24-hour period. Mr. Lyons continued by saying that item 3 expresses a legal opinion that has no support, so the Roundtable should not agree to this unless there is an opinion of legal counsel; that the Roundtable website is difficult to use per item 4; and that the response to item 9 wrongfully implies that noise complaints received by SFO are a reliable source of feedback. Inadequate noise complaint system should be fixed.

Chairperson Newman closed the public comments. Vice-Chairperson Richardson asked if, in this instance, the public comments should remain open in case someone has information on a specific section that could be of assistance and people should be allowed to speak. Chairperson Newman agreed.

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Chairperson Newman opened up the discussion beginning with Finding Number 1, stating that if there were no proposed modifications, they would move on to the next Finding, and so on.

Member John Martin suggested voting on each section to see if there is a majority vote. If not, then they would address the section. If there was a majority vote, they would move on to the next Finding. Chairperson Newman agreed and called for comments or a motion for lines 11 on page 167 through line 9 of page 205.

Member Lewis referred to the chart provided in the Staff memo that the communities have already voted by way of their own letters. Response 1 should be changed to 'agree' from 'partially disagree'.

Member Kevin Mullin expressed need for caution using the chart. For example, the City of South San Francisco opted specifically not to dispute any of the findings. The City did not specify that it agreed with the findings, but the chart states that they agreed. The grid is helpful, but the 19 responses are highly individualized responses that focus on their own communities and needs. If the Roundtable is not legally required to submit a single, detailed response as the Roundtable that satisfies everyone's concerns, then he rescinds his suggestion from the previous meeting. He does not see the need for the Roundtable to submit a consensus document that will satisfy everyone – it is impossible.

Chairperson Newman agreed with Member Mullin's statement.

Vice-Chairperson Richardson appreciated Member Mullin's comments. Vice-Chairperson Richardson stated that the problem is that Brisbane's concerns are not being recognized. The airlines have refused to come to the table, making a mockery of the Roundtable's power and ability to influence change. The original draft letter totally disregards Brisbane's issues. The best thing to do is draft a letter of Roundtable's response lies in the letters and responses from each individual letter from the cities and communities involved.

Vice-Chairperson Richardson MOVED that the Roundtable's response should be the letters from the individual cities. Member Ibarra SECONDED the motion.

Member Dave Pine agreed that finding a consensus would be nearly impossible. However it seems odd that the Roundtable not respond to the Grand Jury that is addressing the Roundtable's performance. The Grand Jury Report should have gone to the Roundtable, not the individual cities. Member Pine thinks that the Roundtable should respond as a group. The Roundtable has been evaluated and it sounds wrong to not respond. However, there would be no consensus from this group and it would be easier to give up.

Chairperson Newman pointed out that the Grand Jury sent original reports to the member cities and sent a photocopy with a note that said no response required. Every jurisdiction responded in its own way. Chairperson Newman said he would be content to go with Vice-Chairperson Richardson's idea to send a letter indicating that the individual letters speak for themselves.

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Member Ibarra stated that the Roundtable should move forward and the Roundtable has its work cut out to prove to the cities and to the Grand Jury that it is a viable body.

Member Jeff Gee indicated that he felt that a consensus could not be achieved due to the diversity of opinions and impacts. He added that the Grand Jury Report was a performance evaluation of the Roundtable, and that the Roundtable was not “cutting it.” Member Gee indicated that the Roundtable needs to deal with the Grand Jury Report in a pragmatic manner, citing the Roundtable website as an example, which he said was inaccurate and contained outdated information. Member Gee continued by saying that they needed to take the Report seriously, and take steps as an organization to get the resources they need to get things done.

Member Gee continued saying that for everyone that came out tonight and spoke, this isn't it. Whatever the Roundtable does with the Grand Jury Report is not going to resolve its issues overnight. We need to figure out how do we work with airport and pilots to really impact and mitigate. Whatever we decide as a group tonight, it isn't over. The Grand Jury Report is just a paper that says “thank you, here are our opinions.”

Member Larry May indicated that looking at the letters from the cities and the matrix, it appeared that the opinions of the member jurisdictions were adequately addressed in their respective letters. Member May endorsed the previous motion.

Member Naomi Patridge stated that the City of Half Moon Bay responded to the Grand Jury Report according to how it concerned Half Moon Bay, or put “N/A.” She continued by saying that Vice-Chairperson Richardson's letter should be sent officially from the City of Brisbane, but to get consensus won't happen.

Member Sue Digre indicated that this process has been difficult, but also a learning situation. She indicated that if it were her city being affected, they would really want to be involved as much as possible, and the City's residents would want to get involved as well. She asked to hear the motion one more time. Member Digre spent time within the portion of her city that is affected by noise and found herself agitated as the airplanes flew over every two minutes.

Vice-Chairperson Richardson thanked everyone for their participation; acknowledging how frustrating and intense the process has been. Vice-Chairperson Richardson indicated that it was very frustrating to hear peers and colleagues minimize the issue. She asked fellow members to read her responses, further stating that their evaluation, as a group, had been bad. Letting the airport and airlines do what they want irrespective of the community, she added, is wrong. Vice-Chairperson Richardson continued by saying that the letter from the Chair or staff has a legal opinion and response, and yet there is no legal aid in their letter. She concluded by saying she appreciated everyone's participation in the meeting.

Chairperson Newman asked Vice-Chairperson Richardson to restate her motion.

Vice-Chairperson Richardson restated her **MOTION**, which was previously **SECONDED** by Member Ibarra to direct the Roundtable Chairperson to send a letter to the Grand Jury indicating that there will not be a single-unified response from the Roundtable as the responses from the member jurisdictions represent the collective response of the Roundtable members. The motion passed UNANIMOUSLY

IV. Adjourn

Chairperson Newman thanked everyone for their time and adjourned the meeting at 8:15 PM.