

Blue Ribbon Farms Property Owners Association Airport Safety Training

Held on 8-26-25

The Airport Committee Chair John Cuny welcomed 26 members of the POA to the first Airport Safety Training. The training was held on Lot 39 by the airstrip irrigation pump house. He thanked everyone for coming out to learn about our airstrip.

Those in attendance were: John Cuny, Bonnie Medema, Doug Medema, Dennis Jennings, Mark Long, Eileen Long, Carmen Lynaugh, Jeff Hecox, Scott Blackwood, Jennifer Blackwood, Andre Baritelle, Bob Bagwell, Rick Smith, Aline(Lenie) Smith, Drew Zacharias, Jim Nichols, Natasha Nichols, John Worth, Pat Schoen, Carol Bucich, Joel Czoik, Jenn Gibbings, Janice Brady, Janis Hernandez, David Van Duine, Lia Robinson and prior POA member Jay Sakas.

John introduced Andre Baritelle, the POA Board Chair to give information about Lot 39. Lot 39 also known as the common area is owned and maintained by the POA. Andre explained that Lot 39 includes the 64-foot-wide airstrip and on the east end from the windsock to Kitchen-Dick Rd. the property extends north to the north side of Maynard Rd., some of the pond is on Lot 39. The airstrip is approximately 2,000 ft. long and 64 ft. wide and on each side of the lot 39 is owned by private owners. These lots that abut Lot 39 have a 120 ft. building setback from the property line into their properties where building may not be built. It was also explained that Maynard Rd., Tyler View Pl. and a portion of Lands End are private roads within the POA that are also taxiways.

John started his talk with the question why is the runway here? He explained that our POA was designed around an airstrip to be used by the members. The runway is the place where acceleration and deceleration of planes using the airstrip happen. A plane when landing they can be going speed from 45-70 mph and they don't have brakes to stop the plane. This is important for non-pilots to understand that when landing at speed the plane is not easily controlled by the pilot. all pedestrians must be clear of the airstrip during take offs and landings.

Discussion regarding the windsock and what it is used for? The windsock helps to determine the direction and speed of the wind on the airstrip. The pilot uses the windsock to determine which direction to use for takeoff and landing on the airstrip. A pilot looks at the windsock and determines where the tail of the sock is, to determine the direction of the wind. Pilots usually want to take off and land into the wind. If there is no wind they can use either direction.

What is a traffic pattern? The traffic pattern for our airstrip is a left-hand pattern as required by our CC&Rs. The pattern is the path that the pilot uses to land on the airstrip. For a west landing the pattern is over the houses on Greywolf which is the south side of the airstrip, then a left turn at Lotzgesell to land.

Pilot visibility is different based on the location of the aircraft's wings. Low wing airplanes can have obstructed visibility below them when landing and taxiing the plane.

What improvements have been done on the airstrip? The airstrip has a sprinkler system; this is to maintain the grass and also water reduces the amount of dust so that plane propellers are not eroded by dust in the air.

How many pilots are there currently? We have 10-13 pilots using the airstrip. Some are more active than others. We have approximately 35 homes that have direct access to the airstrip. With a potential total of approximately 65 homes that could have access to the airstrip. Buckhorn Rd. residents can park a plane on an area next to the airstrip that is being provided temporarily on Andy Baritelle's vacant lot on Lands End side.

Can we walk dogs? The only private streets that the developer made for the whole POA are Greywolf, Maynard, Tyler View and part of Lands End, the rest of the streets are private streets for the use by the owners on the streets and not the whole POA. If you want to cross the airstrip it is private property and you should get the permission of the owners. The insurance for the POA is aware of the airstrip being unfenced with private properties on each side. Dogs must be leashed when not on owners' property in accordance with the POA rules from our website.

Do we have any alerts for airplanes using the airstrip? No, people need to look around and be aware of if a plane is landing or taking off. You need to have your head on a swivel to see planes using the airstrip. Some planes are very quiet, so you must look for them. Planes are safe and you are safe if you are aware of your surroundings, and understand planes are not very manurable when on the ground and pilots may not see you on the runway when they are using it. It is the pedestrian's responsibility to know what is going on around them and not be distracted by things. Pilots do try to look for deer and birds on the runway but they can be hard to see along with pedestrians.

Can we fly our kites and drones? Kites are discouraged in the airpark due to potentially being dangerous as the person using them can be distracted. Drone or UAS may be flown in the POA however, there needs to be an observer with a radio in addition to the person operating the UAS, this is in accordance with the rules posted on the POA's website.

Do we have crash rescue equipment on the airstrip? No, pilots may have something with them. We have had a few crashes but no injuries over the years.

When do pilots contact the FAA? We are a private airstrip so we are not required to contact anyone unless flying through controlled areas such as Whidbey Island, Seattle and the approach is over 4,000 feet or higher.

Emergency use of the airstrip? During an earthquake bridges may fall and we will be an island. Our airstrip could be used as a transfer area by DART (Disaster Airlift Response Team). DART has used the airstrip for practice dropping supplies. Also, the airstrip has been used by Life Flight emergency transportation a resident in the past.

After the questions and answer were completed Rick Smith took his airplane up and demonstrated takeoff and landing and where the pattern is located.