



# Gillespie Field Development Council



**A Joint Powers Agreement Between the City of El Cajon and County of San Diego**  
*Airport Administration Building ♦ 1960 Joe Crosson Drive ♦ El Cajon, California 92020-1236 ♦ (619) 956-4800*

Bob Davison  
*Council Chair*

Barry Bardack  
*Vice Chair*

James Sly  
*Councilmember*

Wheeler North  
*Councilmember*

Phyllis Trombi  
*Councilmember*

## MINUTES OF THE GILLESPIE FIELD DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL JULY 16, 2025

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u>	<u>STAFF PRESENT</u>
Bob Davison	Jamie Abbott
Barry Bardack	Cathe Johnson
James Sly	Carmela Gutierrez
Phyllis Trombi	Lorie Maniss

For others present, attendee log is available in the Airports Administration Building.

### 1. ROLL CALL

Council Chair Bob Davison called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Barry Bardack, Phyllis Trombi and James Sly were in attendance. Councilmember Wheeler North was absent.

### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Chair Bob Davison led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA

There were no public comments.

### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilmember Phyllis Trombi moved to approve the May 21, 2025 minutes. Motion was seconded by Barry Bardack; motion passed.

### 5. COUNCIL CHAIR REPORT

There was no Council Chair Report

### 6. AIRPORTS DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Jamie Abbott presented updates on the following:

- County Budget Update
  - Budget was passed
  - County Airports is anticipating continuing with planned projects, pending FAA support
  - Further budget information will be provided early 2026
- FAA Roundtable
  - Airport stakeholders are invited to attend the virtual meeting
  - Tentative date is October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5:00pm-7:00pm

Mr. Abbott continued his update by outlining new strategic leasing guidelines to support the leasing process. The new guidance is part of a collaboration with airport stakeholders and lays out an approach for capturing reinvestments both into individual leaseholds, as well as the Airport Enterprise Fund (AEF):

- Allow leaseholders to reinvest 70% of the capital investment on their leasehold with the priority crediting sustainability and resilience investments.
- Require 30% to be contributed into the AEF of the minimum capital investment for continued investment into airport operations and infrastructure.

This approach ensures that improvements benefit both the leasehold property and the broader airport infrastructure and operations through:

- Regular and frequent capital investments in leaseholds
- Prolonged useful life of infrastructure
- Continued and increased property tax revenue through property improvements and reassessments.

- Ongoing job creation
- Strengthened regional economic activity

The guidance will be posted after the August 27th Board Hearing on the Airports website.

Mr. Abbott noted that this is not a board policy but will be included as an exhibit to the board letters.

## 7. REAL PROPERTY UPDATE

Carmela Gutierrez presented Agenda Items 8, 9 and 10 before the Council.

## 8. NEW LEASE WITH SKYVISIONX, INC

Carmela Guterrez gave a presentation on the proposed New Lease with SkyVisionX, Inc., at Gillespie Field. The presentation covered the Request for Proposal (RFP) of the former Sky Harbor Hangars which was awarded to SkyVisionX, Inc., after competitive evaluation and rating.

The proposed lease would commence on August 27, 2025 and terminate on August 26, 2075. The presentation covered the terms, including rent, capital investments and additional improvements.

Council asked who the owner of SkyVisionX, Inc., was and if the person was present during the meeting to respond to questions.

Mike Reirdon of Westways Aviation introduced himself as the owner and responded to questions from the Council regarding the future of the current tenants on the property.

Councilmember Trombi asked if there were RFP's submitted by persons who are not current leaseholders at Gillespie and asked if they were given the same consideration in the process. Also, was there any chance in the future for non-current leaseholders to obtain a lease on the airport property.

Chair Davison responded that he was a member of the Source Selection Committee and stated that the process was objective and fair for all applicants.

Councilmember Sly asked how many proposals were received. Chair Davison responded that five proposals were received.

Councilmember Sly moved to approve the following motion. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Bardack; Motion passed.

*"Gillespie Field Development Council recommends the Board of Supervisors approve the proposed new 50-year Ground Lease with SkyVisionX, Inc., as recommended by staff."*

#### 9. NEW 50 YEAR LEASE WITH AIRWORLD, LLC

Carmela Gutierrez gave a presentation on the proposed New 50 Year Lease with Airworld, LLC. The presentation covered the extension terms, as the current lease is set to expire on January 32, 2047, the new 50-year lease would commence on September 1, 2025 and expire on August 31, 2075. The presentation also covered rent, rental rate renegotiation date, and required minimum capital investments.

Chair Davison recused himself from this agenda item discussion and vote. Vice Chair Bardack acted as Chair for this agenda item.

The owner of Airworld was in attendance, which allowed Council to discuss some of the proposed terms of the new lease.

Councilmember Sly verified that this was not an open procurement and noted the previous lease dates and the new term length. As it technically becomes a 68-year lease. He asked staff what the economic justification to the airport beyond the standard 50-year lease.

Jamie Abbott responded that SB 654 was part of the rationale prompting a non-competed lease. Also, the County is able to take into consideration improvements that have been made as well as future investments.

Mr. Sly asked, without doing an open solicitation, SB 654 allows up to 50 years max per guidance, what is the economic justification to the airport and to the public assets for extending this lease beyond the normal scope for the lifetime of these leases. If it is based on future investments and improvements, the process needs to be formalized.

Mr. Abbott noted that this information will also be part of the board package going forward including elements we could consider in the lease negotiations.

Councilmember Sly moved to approve the following motion. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Trombi; Motion passed with Council Chair Davison abstaining from the vote.

*"Gillespie Field Development Council" recommends that the County Board of Supervisors approve the proposed new 50-year lease with Airworld LLC."*

#### 10. NEW 50 YEAR LEASE WITH MITRE AVIATION, L.P.

There was one public comment received for this item from Darren Miller of Mitre Aviation. Mr. Miller wanted to thank Airports staff for their hard work on this lease. He stated that he was in full agreement with the lease terms and was looking forward to following through with the planned improvements on the leasehold. He requested approval of the proposed motion and would be available if the council had any questions.

Carmela Gutierrez gave a presentation on the proposed New 50 Year Lease with Mitre Aviation, L.P. The presentation covered terms, rent, rental rate negotiation date and minimum required capital investment. Lease commencement would begin September 1, 2025 and terminate on August 31, 2075.

Councilmember Trombi asked if this was considered a new lease and if so, would that include a property tax assessment.

Ms. Guitierrez stated that it was considered a new lease, however the tax assessment information would need to be discussed with the County Tax Assessor.

Councilmember Sly stated that the original start date of this lease was 2008 and it would not be going out to public bid until 2075 noting that a fair market process would allow for new investors to enter the market. Mr. Sly asked how long public assets can be withheld from a competitive bid process.

Jamie Abbott highlighted the upcoming development of the 70 Acres and further stated that there will be many new opportunities in that development to bring in new investors.

Mr. Sly reiterated that his statements are questioning the lease process and questioning at what point do we establish guidelines for the acceptable use of the assets and needs of the airport. Note that the process should be transparent and defensible. How will we determine which leases will be acceptable.

Councilmember Trombi moved to approve the following motion. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Bardack; Motion passed.

*"Gillespie Field Development Council recommends the Board of Supervisors approve the new 50-year lease with Mitre Aviation, L.P., as recommended by staff."*

## 11. AIRPORT MANAGER UPDATE

Cathe Johnson presented the Airport Manager Update. The month of May had 16,956 operations. During that month, we received 96 noise complaints from five households. This included 352 overnight operations, in which there were five complaints received. In June, there were 15,559 operations with 139 noise complaints received. Overnight operations totaled 281 which resulted in four of those complaints. It was mentioned that staff had received some phone calls and one letter from a citizen who lives near the wildfires and has a view of the airport. They were very appreciative that Gillespie Field was able to serve as a base for Cal Fire and were relieved and happy with every helicopter flight over their home to support the fire fighting efforts.

Ms. Johnson announced that the FAA Runway Safety Action Team meeting (RSAT) will be held via Zoom on August 19, 2025 from 9:00am to 11:00am. The purpose of this meeting is for improving surface safety. Stakeholders operating in the Air Operations Area (AOA) are invited to attend. This includes fixed based operators, maintenance personnel that tug aircraft and pilots who operate on the airfield. For those interested, please email your request to be added to the meeting invite.

## RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COUNCIL FOR ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING FUTURE GILLESPIE FIELD DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Chair Davison discussed having an air show or community event at Gillespie that would allow the public to see the airport and surrounding businesses. Possibly forming a committee to research possibilities.

Cathe Johnson mentioned that the Gillespie Pilot's Association may be interested in partnering with the council and hosting a community event. Ms. Johnson suggested that the council reach out to the GPA president for assistance.

12. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.


13. NEW BUSINESS

Councilmembers Trombi and Sly informed the group that the East County Economic Development Council is having a bus tour of Gillespie Field including the Industrial Park. This is to highlight the economic impact and community value of Gillespie Field. The event will take place on July 28, 2025.

14. ADJOURN

Council Chair Bob Davison adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m. The next meeting of the Gillespie Field Development Council will be at 6 p.m., Wednesday, September 17, 2025, in City Council Chambers, 200 Civic Center Way, El Cajon.

By: \_\_\_\_\_



Lorie Maniss, Office Support Specialist

