

**Airport Advisory Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, April 18, 2023  
3:30 PM**

**San Antonio International Airport, Terminal A Conference Room**

**Members Present**

Marco Barros  
Ron Bright  
Frank Cruz  
Roger Dillard  
Jeff Fair  
Mark Fessler, Chairman  
Pat Garrison  
  
Marsha Hendler, Secretary  
Earl Jackson, Jr., Vice Chairman  
  
Deborah Omowale Jarmon  
  
Rami Motawea  
Diane Rath  
Amy Shaw

**Members Absent**

Charnelle Chin  
John Grisell  
Mayra Levy  
Ed Onwe  
Aurelina Prado

**Staff Present**

Tom Bartlett, Deputy Director  
Nicole Fowles, Board Liaison  
Karen Ellis, Chief Customer Experience Officer  
Katinka Howell, Assistant City Attorney

**Visitors Present**

Tommy Johnson, Federal Security Director,  
Transportation Security Administration  
James Duke, STV  
Dr. Michael Frye, AVS Labs, University of Incarnate  
Word  
Daniel Potter, AVS Labs, University of Incarnate  
Word  
Jovany Avila, AVS Labs, University of Incarnate Word  
Orion Jones, AVS Labs, University of Incarnate Word

**Call to Order / Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Mark Fessler at 3:41 p.m. The roll call was taken by the Board Liaison. A quorum of at least 10 members was present at roll call.

**1. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

*Motion:* Commissioner Diane Rath moved to approve the meeting minutes from the meeting held on February 21, 2023. Commissioner Jeff Fair seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by those present.

**Items for Briefing and Possible Action:**

**2. Introduction of Federal Security Director Tommy Johnson**

*Public Comments:*

There were no public comments on this item.

*Discussion and Motion:* Chairman Mark Fessler introduced Deputy Director Tom Bartlett, who introduced Tommy Johnson, the Federal Security Director of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Mr. Johnson provided his background in criminal justice prior to joining TSA in 2002. As the Federal Security Director, he is the lead TSA

representative for the commercial service airports in San Antonio, Corpus Christie, Laredo, Brownville, Harlingen, Victoria and McAllen. A question was asked about Del Rio, which Mr. Johnson noted no longer had commercial service and so was considered defederalized. Mr. Johnson asked each member to contact him with any questions or concerns they may experience with TSA or hear from neighbors, co-workers and others. He noted the Airport Leadership team at San Antonio and TSA worked well together to proactively handle situations. Commissioner Frank Cruz noted that he thought the TSA agents at San Antonio International Airport were personable and friendly, a positive reflection for the city. Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Johnson discussed the importance of the four TSA's K9 units that began in 2021. Mr. Johnson also noted that TSA was upgrading its computer tomography x-ray system, which will process the inspection of bags faster than the current system, by the end of summer 2023. In response to Commissioner Amy Shaw's question about firearms, Mr. Johnson shared that TSA usually finds two firearms in luggage at the checkpoints and the number of findings had already exceeded 2019 numbers. He also shared that he was proud of the fact that comments from passengers were generally more positive than critical. Mr. Johnson clarified that the Global Entry program was overseen by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency, which like TSA's PreCheck program provides travelers with the opportunity to process more quickly through the checkpoint. Several commissioners thanked Mr. Johnson for joining the meeting and speaking to the Commission.

*Vote:* No motions were made by the Commission that required a vote.

### **3. Autonomous Vehicle Systems Lab at the University of the Incarnate Word**

*Public Comments:*

There were no public comments on this item.

*Discussion and Motion:* Chairman Mark Fessler introduced Dr. Michael Frye, who leads the Autonomous Vehicle Systems (AVS) Labs at the University of the Incarnate Word. Dr. Frye spoke of the work of the AVS Labs in helping various entities utilize drones to help utilities and law enforcement. Dr. Frye spoke of the different grants that funded the AVS, including the CPS Energy Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UMS) program that would eventually like to use UMS, also known as drones, to identify obstructions, rotting conduit and other potential hazards near electrical lines which would lead to a more proactive response to these issues.

Dr. Frye emphasized the requirements of legally operating a commercial drone outside which includes obtaining a Federal Aviation Administration Part 107 License and following its rules, which include not operating a drone autonomously outside without a pilot and within visual sight of the operator. He also noted that knowledge of the restrictions of airspace is important.

Dr. Frye shared video of the different programs the AVS labs had been involved, and shared information of the community outreach programs to promote STEM activities in middle and high schools. Throughout the presentation, members asked clarifying questions on the programs.

*Vote:* No motions were made by the Commission that required a vote.

### **4. Director's Report**

*Public Comments:*

There were no public comments on this item.

*Discussion and Motion:* Deputy Director Thomas Bartlett shared the anticipation of the potential of the busiest summer yet at San Antonio International Airport. He noted that the airport had already seen one of its busiest days, April 16<sup>th</sup>) which had over 18,000 passengers. He added that the airport system would implement a Holiday Operations Plan for the Memorial Day Weekend which included providing additional parking spaces to the valet service.

Mr. Bartlett reminded the Commission members of the upcoming Industry Day to provide networking opportunities for local and national firms interested in bidding on upcoming capital projects, including the new terminal facility.

Mr. Bartlett also advised the Commission members on upcoming City Council items, including:

- The next B Session for the Terminal Development Program on May 11, whose topic has not been finalized but did include the post-solicitation briefing to award the contract for the Terminal A Ground Loading Facility and the pre-solicitation briefing for our Construction Manager At Risk contract for the new terminal facility, when the details of the solicitation will be released.
- He also shared the plan to take to council in May:
- A 2-year Funding Agreement with the Airline Consortium group for a Lower-Level Controls project for the Baggage Handling System in the amount of \$21M. This project will replace and update aging equipment for the Baggage handling System. The consortium manages the system, which serves both Terminals.
- A Terminal A Roof Recover project for about \$1.5M to address leaks in the flat areas of the Terminal A Roof.
- Revision to our Air Service Incentive Program to provide greater incentives for targeted international flights.

Lastly, he shared of that the Golden Knights were at Stinson Municipal Airport through Thursday, April 20

**5. Commission Member Announcements/Upcoming Topics for Next Meeting**

Commissioner Deborah Omowale-Jarmon shared the Bronze Eagles will be at Stinson Municipal Airport on May 6, 2023. Commissioner Jeff Fair mentioned that ST Engineering had internship and apprentice opportunities with information to be provided on the May 9, 2023 meeting. Commissioner Frank Cruz shared his appreciation of serving on evaluation committees and encourage other commission members to take the opportunity to serve. Commissioner Marco Barros shared that Aviation Director would participate in the State of Aviation on Friday, April 21, 2023. Commissioner Ron Bright asked that Chief Customer Experience Officer Karen Ellis provide an update on the AMAC conference at the next meeting.

**Adjournment**

This meeting was adjourned on 4:52 p.m.