



Minutes of the TAVCO REGULAR MEETING September 17, 2025

Tempe Aviation Commission meeting held via virtual Microsoft Teams meeting with call in +1 480-498-8745, 730410859#
Unites States, Phoenix (Toll) Conference ID: 730 410 859# at Community Development Conference Lobby.

Present:

Staff:

Lane Carraway	Jeff Tamulevich, Comm Dev Director
Jim Camargo*	Ryan Levesque, Deputy Director Comm Dev
Lance Labun	Jacob Payne, Principal Planner
Stuart Mitnik	
Peter H Schelstraete*	
Desiree Walker*	
Joel Hunter	Members Absent:
	Alana Billingsley
*Participants attending remotely	

1) Call to Order & Introductions

Meeting called to order at 5:30pm.

- 2) Public Appearances:** the Tempe Aviation Commission welcomes public comments at this time. The Commission may not respond to public comments unless the topic has been placed on the agenda. There is a three-minutes time limit per citizen.

Mr. David Sokolowski, Tempe Az. Mr. Sokolowski stated the following. I think it is important for Tempe to plan for UAM. The federal government and DOT are accelerating plans for UAM and Phoenix metro is in the top 10 locations. The FAA has advised governments to include it in local planning efforts, and Governor Hobbs updated the division of Advanced Mobility to prepare the state for UAM. I don't expect technology to appear overnight, but it could feel that way. At this point, we have an opportunity to educate the public about how it will complement Tempe's transportation system. I think most of the benefits will be from drone delivery. Some people think it will increase noise pollution, but research shows new technology produces 55 DBA, and that's less than the street. Federal regulation mandates that all EV's produce at least 55 DBA. So, you wouldn't know the difference. I support UAM because our transit system is funded with spare change from sales tax. It's difficult to provide excellent service and fill gaps in our transit network. Drones can provide delivery service at a low cost, or maybe even for free. Scooters in our city are very low cost. We don't have to provide the service, but we do have to provide some planning and infrastructure. I think drones are the same way and we can start by simply asking companies to offer their services in our city. Even if we did spend millions expanding transit service, we wouldn't compete with 10-minute delivery. It would be more effective for the city to provide drone service even if we have to pay for it. I expect bus service to become more expensive because of inflation. The market studies show that drones will become cheaper thanks to economies of scale. Some people can't tolerate the heat or take sun sensitizing medications and leaving the house isn't an option. Drones can provide services to people who need it, without traffic or pollution, and with less noise. UAM will provide a lot of benefits to Tempe.

It can reduce congestion, reduce traffic accidents, improve accessibility for people with disabilities and increase sales tax revenue for the city. If Tempe is an early adopter of UAM, we can dominate the market and support local business. I want the city to start planning, educating the public and building public private partnerships. I want to get the benefits as soon as possible.

Commissioner Walker asked what UAM is. Commission Labun stated it is Urban Air Mobility.

3) **Voting of the Meeting Minutes:**

Motion by Commissioner Hunter to approve Meeting Minutes from August 20, 2025; second by Commissioner Labun. Motion passed on **7-0** vote.

Ayes: Chair Carraway, Vice Chair Camargo, Commissioners Labun, Mitnik, Schelstraete, Walker and Hunter

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Billingsley

4) **Urban Air Mobility (UAM);** presentation by Lance Labun, TAVCO Commissioner, for discussion.

Commissioner Labun gave a presentation on Urban Air Mobility. The ultimate vision is autonomous flying vehicles transporting people across urban areas to and from vertistops (this is place to discharge and take on passengers). A vertiport is where a vehicle may recharge or receive low level maintenance. Initially the vehicles will be larger and heavier to accommodate a pilot. Ultimately, they will become smaller and lighter as the pilot is removed. Many prototypes are in stages of formal flight towards FAA certification. Archer is aiming at providing taxi service for the 2028 LA Olympics. Joby and Wisk are in flight testing toward certification.

Commissioner Mitnik asked what altitude were the vehicles tested at? Commissioner Labun stated he believed it was 1,600. Commissioner Mitnik stated that FAA requires a minimum altitude of AGL 500 feet. All of this will need to be at 500 feet or below to keep out of normal airport traffic. Commissioner Labun stated that the vision is to operate at 2000 feet over urban areas.

Commissioner Mitnik asked how much noise do they make at takeoff? If they are local delivery items or taxis, you will not have airborne noise you will have noise like a car in your driveway. Commissioner Labun stated he could not find those numbers.

Commissioner Mitnik asked Commissioner Labun, are you active in the community? Commissioner Labun stated he is a member of the Vertical Flight Society which is the old American Helicopter Society.

Commissioner Hunter asked, the passenger usage of this is already been trailed in China as an operation, what municipalities here in our country are looking into what Mr. Sokolowski suggested? Public and Municipal funding to get this service available. Commissioner Labun stated that there are 15 states that have at least one local entity that is interested. Los Angeles is already committed. New York City has conventional helicopters operating as air taxis to and from Manhattan heliports to three regional airports.

Chair Carraway asked, does Sky Harbor have a group working on this? Commissioner Labun stated that the person he spoke to at Sky Harbor said they had a report, and he would give me a copy. I have not received it yet. I will contact him again for a copy. Chair Carraway stated that our proximity to Sky Harbor it would make it very difficult to do anything. I feel like the downtown Tempe area simply because with the planes coming in and even at 2000 when you get further you have Priest there. I question how this would function around an airport. Commissioner Mitnik stated that around any airport it causes problems. That's a lot of airspace they cannot be in. Chair Carraway stated they would need to have a flight path. Commissioner Labun stated that Tempe would be a very desirable destination from Sky Harbor along with some of the business centers in Chandler.

Commissioner Mitnik stated that he strongly suggests that everyone listen to the air nav and listen to Biltmore. Half of their activity is airplanes going North and South through Sky Harbor and they have specifically designated areas.

Commissioner Hunter asked, is there any significant differences between the passenger versions of these vehicles and the ones you showed is that are in development and the ones that might be used in a delivery service? Commissioner Labun stated the size will be different because of the delivery drones. I am not familiar with them but they are quite small and the range is not as great. Total power capacity would not have to be as great as if they were carrying passengers.

5) Commissioners' Business; suggestions for future agenda items.

Chair Carraway stated that the Commission will not be meeting in October. We will have an update from Mr. Payne on the Quarterly Report and Mr. Jordan Feld is supposed to join us with updates on the contours.

Mr. Jacob Payne stated that there have been no new noise complaints since the last meeting in August. Two months of no new noise complaints. There was an item brought up at the last meeting about looking into options for recognizing Oddvar for his services to the Commission. The Commission does not need to have a motion in this item can talk about that now. Mr. Payne opened the discussion for suggestions. Commissioner Mitnik suggested dinner and a plaque and asked if the City has funding that deals with retirements? Mr. Tamulevich stated, no but there are standard practices but that is done in the departments. Commissioner Mitnik asked when Oddvar actually did retire from the City, they did have a celebration at that time. There is nothing specific for Boards and Commissions. Commissioner Mitnik asked if the Commission was notified of the retirement event held for Oddvar? Mr. Tamulevich stated that it is typically internal. Chair Carraway suggested he will reach out to Oddvar to schedule a dinner event for his recognition.

6) Staff updates and announcements:

Mr. Payne stated that the Commission has a vacancy from a member no longer here. I am working with the City Clerk to get that position filled. There are also a couple of terms ending at the end of the year. There is a rule now that Commissioners on City Boards can only do 2 consecutive terms.

7) Schedule Next TAVCO Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 19th.

8) Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Labun to adjourn; second by Commissioner Mitnik. Motion passed on **7-0** vote.

Ayes: Chair Carraway, Vice Chair Camargo, Commissioners Labun, Mitnik, Schelstraete, Walker and Hunter

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Billingsley