



Pittsfield Charter Township

Department of Public Safety

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Mandy Grewal, Supervisor

Matthew E. Harshberger

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July 23, 2020

Matthew J. Kulhanek
Airport Manager
City of Ann Arbor Municipal Airport
801 Airport Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Re: Complaint of low flyover incident at the Ann Arbor Airport and surrounding neighborhoods

Mgr. Matt Kulhanek,

Pittsfield Township has received information concerning an incident involving the low altitude flyover of a large C-17 cargo-aircraft at the airport on July 19, 2020. The large aircraft created a serious disturbance in the residential areas surrounding the municipal airport due to the extremely low flyover altitude of such an enormous aircraft that resulted in excessive noise and reportedly some property damage, as well as seriously startling numerous residents who were not aware that it had been a planned event. Apparently, Solo Aviation had prior knowledge of the flyover and it was an approved event/flyover by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) tower operator(s).

Pittsfield Township requests to know how a flyover of such a large aircraft, and at such a low altitude, can be allowed or approved by the airport management and/or the FAA tower. Furthermore, it is our understanding that over the course of the past month, incidents of low altitude flying have increased in frequency.

As a matter of public safety; alleviating public nuisance; and adherence to the Township's noise ordinance, we would like you to provide us with information and specific steps you intend to implement in order to eliminate both the increasing incidence of low altitude flying at the Ann Arbor Municipal Airport and to ensure no recurrence of the events of July 19th outlined above.

Your immediate attention to the issue and a response to this letter is requested no later than the first week of August so we are able to address the ongoing safety and noise concerns of hundreds of Pittsfield Township residents in the vicinity of the Airport.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you by the first week of August.

Respectfully,


Matthew E. Harshberger
Director of Public Safety

cc: Mandy Grewal, Ph.D., Pittsfield Township Supervisor



CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

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Municipal Airport

August 3, 2020

Matthew E. Harshberger
Director of Public Safety
Pittsfield Charter Township
6227 W. Michigan Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Re: Low Flyover Incident at the Ann Arbor Airport

Chief Harshberger,

I received your letter dated July 23, 2020 regarding the flyover of the military C-17 cargo plane on July 19, 2020. I share many of the same concerns raised in your letter and received numerous phone calls from local residents that day, some with curiosity but more with concerns. While an airport based business may have had a short advance notice of the flyover, I can assure you that the City and the airport management had no advance notice. I found out about it when my phone blew up shortly before noon that day. I was working at City Hall that day and was unaware of what raised the commotion until I could reach out to the FAA control tower.

Please understand that the airport and the City have no control over airspace above and around Ann Arbor. Airspace is under the sole control of the FAA and the decision to allow the low approach for training purposes, as requested by the aircraft's pilot, was granted by the FAA air traffic controllers. I'm not aware if the pilot's relationship with a local airport business impacted his request or if the air traffic controllers were even aware of any relationship when they granted the request. In speaking with the local tower manager, Terry Keefe, he stated he was not aware of the low approach approval until his phone started ringing as well.

As for steps to be taken by the airport, I have already shared my concerns over this type of low approach approval with the tower manager and explained the impacts it has on the airport's efforts to be a good neighbor with our local residents. We have no authority to implement an order or ban activity in the airspace which is the sole jurisdiction of the FAA. I would suggest that the Township reach out to Terry Keefe, Ann Arbor Tower Manager, at 734.769.1830 or via email at terrence.m.keefe@faa.gov for additional

answers. I have shared his contact information with a number of local residents who raised concerns over the low approach flyover. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew J. Kulhanek". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "M".

Matthew J. Kulhanek
Airport Manager