

Hello Everybody,

This is an open letter to the Truckee Tahoe Airport Board of Directors.
Rick Bentley, 650-450-4241, rick@thebentleys.com.

I first moved to Truckee in 2004. I bought my first plane a few years ago and I'm now on my third year of a hangar waitlist. I assumed at first that the long waitlist was due to issues around the lockdowns and that professional operators with the airport's best intentions in mind were working to solve the problem.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Having spent the last month investigating what is going on at TRK, I have found that the current board and its unqualified GM seem to only want to raid the airport's money to spend on non-aviation related projects while actively trying to **reduce** flight operations as an operational metric.

The FAA requires every airport to
(https://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_compliance/hangar_use#q2)

- monitor the use of hangars on the airport and take steps to prevent unapproved non-aeronautical use;
- minimize the length of time to provide hangar space for those on a "waiting list"

This GM, by what appears to be direct instruction of this board, has done neither. I know for a fact of more than one hangar with boats in them over the winter. I know this because I've agreed to pay for one renter's boat storage so I can get my plane in his hangar. It's management's job to know this, not mine, so clearly the GM is taking no reasonable steps to prevent non-aeronautical use of the hangars.

Why do I care? The gross mismanagement into our current lack of hangar situation has impacted me personally with:

- 1) over \$100k spent repositioning aircraft
- 2) over 100hrs spent repositioning aircraft
- 3) significant risks to my life, property, and the lives of others:
 - a. Frost on my aircraft, from parking on the ramp
 - b. Water in my tanks, from parking on the ramp
 - c. Cold engine starts, from parking on the ramp with no place to plug in my engine heater
 - d. Low battery flights, from parking on the ramp in the cold with no place to plug in my battery tender. I've had three alternator failures, a fully charged battery is truly a safety issue.
 - e. Risk of damage from weather, requiring aircraft repositioning to other airports (which, unlike Truckee, have competent leadership) at inopportune times (night, ahead of approaching weather, during suboptimal weather, etc.)

What do we have at Truckee?

- 1) Half century old hangars, built to substandards, with the roofs falling in (at an airport awash with money, before the money was misappropriated for non-aviation use by the board).
 - 2) Multi year waiting lists and 0% vacancy rate, putting FAA funding at risk. I'm three years into it and it looks like I have 3 more years to go before I get a hangar.
 - 3) Waiting over a year to even start repair on damaged hangars.
 - 4) Half a decade since any new hangars have been built.
 - 5) Renting out hangars below market rate so that they are used for boat storage etc. instead of aircraft storage, putting FAA funding at risk.
 - 6) Not monitoring use of hangars, putting FAA funding at risk.
 - 7) Zero covered parking on the ramp
 - 8) Zero electrical hookups available on the ramp
- I could go on.

Here is a highlight of some of the risks that the board and its GM have exposed themselves to.

- 1) The Board has exposed itself, both as an entity and as individuals, by:
 - a) Appearing to be operational in nature.
 - b) Committing fraud when it said that the GM they hired "has relevant experience within the industry"
 - c) Board breached its fiduciary duty when it hired an unqualified GM and provided him with two consecutive severance packages.
 - d) At least one board member either knew, or was reckless in not knowing, she was perpetuating a falsehood when she told me that market rate could only be determined by studies and not the market.
 - e) Suddenly raising the rent on selective airport operators by over 10x with false and unnecessary market rate reports.
 - f) Breached its fiduciary duty by refusing revenue for the local community in the form of property tax.
 - g) Breached its fiduciary duty by refusing revenue for hangar rentals.
 - h) Created a hazardous operating environment for pilots, passengers and the public beneath in an effort to reduce flight operations.
 - i) Created a hazardous operating environment for pilots, passengers and the public beneath in an effort to reduce noise at the expense of safety.
 - j) Diverting funding from important airport projects like building hangars, building another fuel island for unleaded avgas, providing covered ramp space, providing electrical hookups for aircraft on the ramp, providing more parking space for those using the airport, et. al.
- 2) The GM has demonstrated gross misconduct by:
 - a) Colluding with the board in all of the above, plus:
 - b) Committing fraud, also an act of moral turpitude, by falsely stating that the hangars are currently rented out at market rates.
 - c) Allowing existing hangars to fall into disrepair.

- d) Waiting over a year before beginning repair on damaged hangars, while simultaneously not allowing private parties to repair said hangars.
- e) Not minimizing the length of time to provide hangar space for those on the waiting lists but instead doing everything possible to increase the time, putting FAA funding at risk.
- f) Not monitoring the hangars for non-aircraft use, putting FAA funding at risk.
- g) Operating a mountain airport with no transient hangar parking space for years at a time.

If you care, I can detail all of these issues.

I strongly suggest you start representing the interests of the aircraft owners, pilots, and businesses as well as all your other stakeholders. You've alienated a group of competent and resourceful people who have the most at stake at the airport.

I am in the process of making sure the correct entities are created, and that they are well funded, to help take on the role of getting the airport running safely and effectively again. Supporting board members with the relevant knowledge of safe and effective airport operations as well as legal avenues are the current two prime considerations.

With great sadness for the current state of our airport,

Rick Bentley
Local resident and frustrated aircraft owner.