

PUBLIC COMMENT
MAY 22, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING
AVIATION FACILITIES WITHIN TOWN LIMITS

Apparently, the arrogance of the owners of the Desert Rose Inn LLC has no limits. To have the idea that since they get a business license to operate a helicopter tour business that allows them to build a heliport behind their business. Several issues which the Town of Bluff, needs to address.

1. Who is responsible for designing this heliport?
 - a. Did the Desert Rose Inn contact a licensed aviation facility architect?
 - b. Were the Guidelines as outlined in FAA Advisory Circular 150/5390-2D dated January 5, 2023 consulted?
2. The FAA has no record of FAA Form 7480-1, concerning the construction of a heliport in the area. Record of FOIA request submitted to the council as a matter of record.
 - a. If the owners had filled out the form, then the FAA would be able to place the heliport on Aviation Sectional Maps and in the GPS mapping system.
 - b. I sent a message to the Council concerning the low flying aircraft just the other day by two C-130 aircraft which were below the rim and between the San Juan River and HWY 191.
3. Copper Cliffs 1 & 2 are starting to build out and infill with residences. In the past year 3 new residences have been constructed. Hence the noise generated by the operation will impact more and more people. Looking at the noise issue will in the future require the town to monitor this activity. Also, it has been stated that the operations will depart and move to the San Juan River corridor. Further information on how noise affects wildlife can be found: [A review of the effects of aircraft noise on wildlife and humans, current control mechanisms, and the need for further study - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#) In addition, since the Town is surrounded by cliffs, the noise will bounce off the cliff walls enhancing the noise within the community. How will the town respond to noise complaints, enforcement is critical.
4. Although he has indicated that he has a business license to operate a Helicopter Tour operation. Did the town issue this permit? Does the Desert Rose Inn LLC have permits from the Navajo Nation to operate tours over their land, has Bureau of Land Management issued permits for aerial tours?
5. How will fuel be stored on site for such operation. What will be the size of the fuel storage either JET A or Aviation Fuel. Will maintenance facilities also be required to perform routine work. Will the local fire department be able to staff any incident that could occur either a crash or fuel spills.
6. Comments have been made that will create jobs for the residents of Bluff. Let us look at the jobs created, Pilot, Fueler/Mechanic, & maybe a Host or Hostess to manage the tour attendees. So, in reality, the number of jobs created really does not qualify as a big job growth business.

7. We have more dust in Bluff then we can handle. How does the Desert Rose Inn plan on handling this problem created by landing and takeoffs. Will they plant grass requiring the use of water to support the operation. This is a resource that is in decline plus the way of our water rate schedule is the more water you use the less you pay.
8. The owner of Desert Rose indicated that the Bluff Airport is not usable. No water & no electricity. All are problems that he could deal with just as 30% of the Navajo Nation does, truck water/use generators. Since he needs to build a hanger at either location, that would still need to built. Security is another concern has been indicated how is security different we do not have a police force in town, hence in building a hanger will be required if security is a concern at either location.

I have spent the last 50 years managing Aviation Operations on wildland fires for the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. I have instructed Aviation Safety Courses at the National Level for 10 years for the Forest Service, through out the United States. I have received numerous commendations for my contributions in Aviation Safety, including a National Award for the rescue of firefighters in a helicopter crash in 1972. I also have dealt with Aircraft Accidents both fixed wing / helicopter accidents in my position as an Air Operations Branch Director. Since I have extensive experience in Aviation Operations, I can say that this operation has concerns that raise the hair on the back of my neck.

Aviation operations within the town limits does not seem compatible with the town goals. This is another example of I am rich and business owner so no reason to follow rules. I would point out that the Desert Rose Inn, never contacted any residents concerning this idea of Helicopter Operations. Being a good neighbor requires a dialogue between interested parties.

As a Land Owner directly across from the Desert Rose Inn, I am adamantly opposed to any aviation activity. If the Town allows this to occur my property values will decrease will the Town or Desert Rose Inn reimburse me for my monetary loss. Additionally, as I have pointed out approval of aviation operations in the Town of Bluff, could lead to significant liabilities concerning noise pollution and requiring the Town to mitigate the noise pollution in the residences affected.

I hope that the Town Council listens to the citizens of Bluff and refuse to support aviation operations with the town.

Respectfully,

Wes Shook / Carol Shook
748 West Willow
Bluff, UT