Questions to ask a flying club

From the Arizona Flying Clubs guide: arizonaflyingclubs.com

Club: _____ **Date visited:** _____

The most important questions

1. **Does the airplane (or do the airplanes) have any significant damage history?**
   Airplanes with structural damage that has been repaired may have non-standard flight characteristics, and may not be as safe.
2. **Have there been any aircraft incidents or accidents in the last 5 years that have been reported to the FAA or the FSDO?**
3. **Who makes the big decisions? Is it a board vote, or do all members get a vote?**
   Some members prefer to be hands-off, while others prefer to be involved in fleet, maintenance and financial decisions.
4. **What is the total time of the airframes?**
   Most pilots prefer to avoid airframes with more than 10,000 hours total time.
5. **Do all members pay the same monthly dues? Or do board members get a "free ride"?**
   Officers at some of the clubs do not pay monthly dues. This may have an impact on their motivations when making decisions, and increases the costs for members who are not on the board.
6. **How does the club feel about long distance trips, and what is the minimum usage per day?**
   Some clubs prefer to keep the airplane local, while others love having members take it on multi-day trips.

Money

- [ ] What is the join fee, and how much of it is refundable equity when I leave? Can I resell my share?
- [ ] What do the monthly dues cover (insurance, hangar, annual, databases)?
- [ ] Is the hourly rate wet or dry? Is it on Hobbs or tach time?
- [ ] Do I need to buy non-owned insurance, and how much coverage?
- [ ] When did rates last go up? Is there a reserve for engine overhauls, or will there be special assessments?

Availability

- [ ] How many members share each airplane? How far ahead do I need to book a weekend?
- [ ] How hard is it to book the airplane? Ask for a screenshot of last month's online schedule.
- [ ] Is Mexico or Canada allowed?
- [ ] How much maintenance downtime did the airplane have last year?

Aircraft & joining

- [ ] How old are the airframes and engines, and what are the times since overhaul?
- [ ] Who does the maintenance, and how are squawks reported and fixed?
- [ ] What experience is required, and what does the checkout involve? Are there CFIs in the club?
- [ ] Is there a waiting list? Can I talk to a few current members, and see the airplane and the books?