

SONOMA COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the August 19, 2021 Meeting

This meeting was conducted virtually over Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER:

Young called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Young, Duste, Hayssen, Internicola, McCord, and Starrett **Absent:** None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Hayssen moved with support from Starrett to approve the July 15, 2021 Aviation Commission Minutes. Abstained: McCord All Other Ayes: Motion Carried.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONER:

Young welcomed Internicola as a new Commissioner representing District 3.

AIRPORT MANAGER REPORT:

A. Complaint Update

Stout reported in June there were 117 aircraft related complaints compared to 227 in 2020; a decrease of 48%. There were no general complaints, which was the same in June 2020. Year to date there were 712 complaints compared to 660 in 2020, an increase of 8%. 0 general complaints compared to 0, a 0% change.

Monthly noise reports going back to February were included in packet materials. The Airport will continue to include the respective monthly report for future meetings. Stout reviewed the 2020 Annual Noise Complain Summary.

In 2020 there were 997 complaints, of which 845 were Airport-related, made by 153 commenters. There were a total of 66,566 operations, which is down from 2020. 77% of received complaints were related to noise. The ten most frequent commenters submitted a total of 722 complaints, or 72% of all complaints received in 2020. Most complaints were received during the day, and primarily by voicemail. The webform and email are also commonly used for complaint submission. Windsor and Santa Rosa were the most common complaint origination locations, and 55% of commenters were located less than five nautical miles from the Airport. Hardcopies of the annual report will be at the County Administrators Office and the Transportation and Public Works office, and it will be posted on the website. The Board of Supervisors will also receive a copy of the report.

Hayssen noted that the number of operations in 2020 appears to be a record low, and asked for a projection of operations for 2021. Stout confirmed that we are up 15% from 2020.

Stout, Hayssen, and the Director of TPW, Johannes Hoevertsz, met with Supervisor Hopkins to discuss noise. The Airport has also completed the initial Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the approach and redesign, and is now in discussions with Purchasing regarding their requirement for a local contractor preference. The County typically requires a local preference, but it is often against

grant stipulations, so not typically applied to Airport projects. There are only eight FAA approved firms to complete this project.

Noise Committee meetings will begin again in the coming weeks.

B. Tower Report/Update

There were 8,488 operations in May, compared to 5,409 in 2020, an increase of 56%. Year to date there have been 35,757 operations compared to 31,102 in 2020, an increase of 15%

Craig Lucas, Tower Manager, noted that masks are still required in the Tower. Approach Charlie-5 has become Charlie-7, but this has not impacted flight paths. There are two new trainees at the Tower, and a new one is likely to join soon, along with a new supervisor in October.

Duste asked to confirm if the Tower will stay open later than 8 pm as traffic increases. Lucas noted that Stout would likely need to make the request and then his manager would approve. More justification is likely needed for approval of extended hours. This request has been made multiple times in the past and has been declined as the Airport does not meet operational requirements for additional time.

Stout noted that there is money in a federal bill for tower replacement, and if the bill is passed, the Airport would apply for funding.

C. Airline Update

In July, there were 48,926 passengers compared to 11,724 in 2020, a 317% increase, and 50,625 in July 2019. Year to date there have been 188,593 passengers compared 118,593 in 2020, an increase of 59%.

Avelo is looking at new destinations from Santa Rosa, and they are reviewing what might work in our market.

Internicola asked how the Avelo flights have impacted Alaska Airlines. Stout confirmed that Alaska Airlines started a Burbank route just after Avelo started operations. Avelo flights have not impacted other Los Angeles markets. The Burbank flights have captured the market the previously flew out of other Bay Area airports to this destination. At this time the Airport does not have route specific information for Alaska; it is typically not available from DOT for 90 days after the month flown.

Breeze Airways has put out a request for proposal to airports, which we plan to respond to. They currently operate Embraer195 and plan to purchase sixty Airbus 220s, which can fly transcontinental.

Stout confirmed that United Airlines started SFO flights on August 1st and still plans to begin Denver flights in October.

Young brought up rental car receipts, and highlighted the impact that these sales have on the overall economy in Sonoma County. Stout noted that last spring the Airport solicited new air service development consultants, and has now made a new selection – Crawford, Murphy & Tilly (CMT). One of the first projects that CMT will be working on is an economic impact study, which will begin in the next two weeks. We hope to have the report ready by Q1 2022.

Internicola asked if Hertz will be operating again at the Airport. Stout confirmed that they have an outstanding balance with the Airport. Once their bankruptcy is settled, we will offer them an off-airport agreement.

Duste asked for information on Lyft and Uber operations. Stout confirmed that Uber provided 520 rides in July and 442 in June while Lyft provided 288 rides in May. These numbers are lower than their peak ridership, but Stout noted that this may be due to a driver shortage. He also confirmed that we now have five approved taxi providers, which is up from zero earlier in the pandemic.

D. Projects Update

We have been asked to provide an update to the Board of Supervisors, and are preparing an Annual Report that will go to the Board on August 31. The following topics are covered in the report:

- **Airline Rates and Charges:** – Crawford, Murphy & Tilly (CMT) helped the Airport create updated Airline Rates and Charges to help us cover the costs of operating the new terminal. This will likely take until fall 2022 to prepare, and will likely go into effect in January 2023.
- **Consolidated Rental Car Facility (ConRAC):** The ConRAC is on track, and the fee for the facility is being finalized. The goal is to go to the Board by the end of 2021 for concept approval and setting a new consolidated facility charge.
- **Emergency Generator:** A generator for the terminal has been purchased for \$859,000, with a grant covering \$359,460 and the Airport Enterprise Fund covering \$399,540. A Tier 4 compliant generator is required due to Bay Area air quality requirements and increased the costs from the original proposal.
- **Solar Panel Installation:** The project broke ground Monday on this project. Long Term Parking Lot B has been closed due to the project. All employee parking and Avis overflow has been moved into this lot to make room for guest parking in Parking Lot A. Parking on Flightline Dr is now paid parking and used as overflow. The Airport is now offering valet parking through the Airport parking provider, SP+. Valet will be offered until at least January. After the completion of the solar project, demand will be re-evaluated. Long Term Parking Lot B will be at 50% capacity over the next four months. A press release will be going out today to announce the commencement of this project. Larger Airport tenants will be able to purchase excess power generated by the solar panels and those arrangements are still being finalized.
- **Terminal Modernization Project:** The contractor is building the new ticket counters to be able to put American and United in the lobby. They are on track to open the new ticket counters and new bag room on September 14. Phase 2 construction on the ramp is also beginning. The Gate 1 modular building has been removed, and the construction fence around the restaurant patio is being built.
- **Administration Emergency Generator:** This grant will allow us to run our offices and operation center.
- **Noise Abatement:** We are working to update the website to make it easier for complaint submission, and are working with FAA to get traffic graphics of STS.
- **Carbon Offset Program:** The Airport has been working with the Good Traveler Program to allow travelers to offset their flight impacts. The goal is to eventually have a policy for the Airport to offset staff business travel miles and Airport vehicle miles.
- **Energy Efficiency Upgrades:** The Airport has been working to get the Airport certified as a green business, and are approximately 85% complete. The Airport has been working on general energy efficiency improvements, including lighting upgrades in the administrative offices and ramp lighting. There are also 14 ChargePoint EV stations and 4 Tesla stations.
- **Current FAA Grants:** The Airport has 13 active FAA grants, totaling \$51,380,225, including:

- AIP 52 Airport Wildlife and Security Perimeter Fence Environmental Review
- AIP 55 Airport Layout Plan Update
- AIP 57 Airport Terminal Construction Phase 1
- AIP 58 Airport Terminal Construction Phase 2
- AIP 59 Coronavirus Aid, Relieve, and Economic Security (Cares) Act
- AIP 60 Airport Pavement Monitoring Report (Pavement Condition Report)
- AIP 61 Runway Safety Area Project Environmental Mitigation Phase II (Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting)
- AIP 62 Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting Vehicle
- AIP 63 Airfield Sweeper
- AIP 64 Voluntary Airport Low Emissions Grant for Ground Support Equipment
- AIP 65 Airport Coronavirus Response Grant Program (ACRGP)
- AIP 66 Airport Coronavirus Response Grant Program – Concessions Relief (ACRGP)
- AIP 67 Airport Relief Grant Program (ARGP)
- **Future FAA Grants:**
 - Airport Relief Grant Program (ARGP) – Concession Relief
 - Airline Parking Apron Rehab
 - Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting Vehicle Building
 - Airport Taxiway A Overlay
 - Airport Wildlife and Security Perimeter Fence Construction
 - Runway Intrusion Mitigation Program Environmental and Construction
 - Runway 14/32 Overlay and Lighting Upgrades
- **Eucalyptus Tree Removal:** There are 1,800 eucalyptus trees on Airport property, many near Apron F on the recently purchased property. The bid documents are in process with bids expected to go out late in September.
- **Gate 2 Concessions:** The Airport has selected a preferred concessionaire and are working on tenant improvements. The Airport has to install a grease trap separator, change the flooring, and update electrical and extend water to allow them to operate in the terminal. In addition, Yo-Kai Express, a hot, fresh noodle bowl vending machine that will also go in gate 2.
- **Master Consulting Agreements:** The Airport will be going out for a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for consulting services for the next 5 year capital plan.
- **Operation Center:** As the Airport nears category 2 security requirements, the need for an operations center has been identified. They will be monitoring airport operations. Planning to have this staffed by October, and it will be fully operational by the end of the terminal project.
- **Paving of the Experimental Aircraft Association Driveway:** Projecting to get this done by the end of the year.
- **Marketing:** Currently working to get our advertising programs back up and running. A board item is scheduled for August 31, which would allow the Airport to advertise on Expedia sites.

E. Runway Safety Action Team (RSAT) Update

The Airport received a report back from the FAA Airports district office on requests for modification standards that were recommended under the RSAT. They rejected all of them and asked us to complete an airspace review. Stout is confirming that this is the proper channel.

F. Sheriff's Garden/Jail Facilities

The garden is under Airport control and waiting for cleanup. Young noted that we seem to have accomplished what we wanted to. The issue now is the detention facility itself. Stout noted that the MOU for fair market price for the yard passed, but did not go ahead due to COVID.

G. COVID-19 Update

Due to an increase in Delta variant and following mask requirements. TSA is extending the mask mandate into January. Masks are not needed in open hangars or outdoors.

H. Job Fair

The job fair took place in July and there were over 150 potential applicants attending. The Airport made connections with future partners including the Economic Development Department (EDD) and JobWorks. Tom Owen (Sonoma Jet Center) said that they hired 2 people from the job fair. Gregg Rorabaugh (KaiserAir) had a number of interested applicants, but no one showed up to the interviews. Currently planning to host another job fair in October.

ACTION ITEMS:

A. Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) Update

A letter was drafted on Hayssen's recommendation and Commission support to support the proposed hotel project on Airport Blvd and Laughlin Rd. The Commission agreed that the final letter would be signed by Hayssen, Duste, Internicola, and McCord. Stout will confirm who the letter should be addressed to so that we can send it out.

Duste moved with support from McCord to approve the Hyatt Place Hotel Letter of Support.

*Abstained: Starrett and Young **All Other Ayes:** Motion Carried.*

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Internicola noted that the Airport is congested around the rental car counters. Stout confirmed that the wall in the lobby will be taken down on September 14. Shortly after, the rental car counters will move to where United and American operate.

Internicola also noted concern over the possible closure of the Reid-Hillview Airport due to lead levels near that airport. Stout noted that the Airport did not receive feedback when the lead study was done. He also noted that at this time alternative fuels are not widely available. Tom Owen (Sonoma Jet Center) noted that Avfuel is working to procure alternative fuels, but this will likely have a high cost and include alternative fuels. He confirmed that Sonoma Jet has previously sold sustainable jet fuel at a rate of \$1-\$1.50/gallon higher than regular jet fuel, but noted that there are credits available for the purchaser of this fuel. Gregg Rorabaugh (KaiserAir) noted that KaiserAir is also looking into sustainable fuel options, but it has been an infrastructure challenge.

McCord requested putting sustainable and alternative fuels on the agenda for a future Aviation Commission meeting. Internicola concurred. Stout and Young agreed that this would be discussed at

the September meeting. Young asked that anyone send related information to Stout. Josh Hochberg (Sonoma Jet Center) noted that head of their trade association (National Air Transportation Association), who is also head of the Sustainable Fuels Coalition, may be interested in speaking, and Owen noted that someone at Avfuel may be interested.

Hayssen noted that he appreciates the information provided in the meeting packets. He also wanted to confirm the duration of the metered parking on Airport Blvd. Stout confirmed that this will likely be paid parking indefinitely due to a forecasted increases in traffic.

ADJOURN:

McCord moved with support from Internicola to adjourn. All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jon Stout, AAE, CAE
Airport Manager