

SONOMA COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the June 16, 2022 Meeting

This meeting was conducted virtually over Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER:

Young called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Hayssen, Internicola, McCord, Young **Absent:** Starrett

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

*Hayssen moved with support from McCord to approve the May 19, 2022 Aviation Commission Minutes. **Abstained:** Young **All Other Ayes:** Motion Carried.*

Marlon noted that Hayssen called the May meeting to order. This will be updated in the posted minutes.

AIRPORT MANAGER REPORT:

A. Complaint Update

Stout incorporated charts into his monthly report.

Stout reported that in April there were 63 noise complaints compared to 149 in 2021, down 58%. Year to date there have been 232 complaints compared to 411 in 2021, down 44%.

A draft of the Annual Noise report was included in the monthly meeting packet for review. Young asked that Commissioner's submit any comments to the Airport by end of day.

Regarding May complaints, Hayssen questioned if all transponders were being turned on by all pilots. Sheber confirmed that there is limited coverage below 600 feet and many helicopters stay below 600 feet. He also noted that some of Helico's helicopters do not have ADS-B on them. Stout noted that Vector uses FAA feeds, and there is an ADS-B monitor on the fire station that picks up aircraft on the ground if their transponder is turned on.

Internicola would like to add helicopters as a discussion item at a future meeting.

B. Tower Report/Update

There were 7,439 operations in April compared to 8,287 in 2021, a decrease of 10%. Year to date there have been 30,748 operations compared to 27,269 in 2021, an increase of 13%.

The Spring Jinks took place this weekend. The Airport will be working with the FBOs for Bohemian Grove coordination, particularly aircraft parking.

Internicola asked how much busier the Airport would be as a result of these events. Sheber noted that there is less other aircraft activity to balance the increased traffic due to the Grove.

Hayssen asked if transient parking is used by the FBOs. Stout confirmed that the Airport rents most of the transient ramp to the FBOs. Overflow parking would be on Runway 2/20, which would be closed if needed.

Sheber noted that the Runway Safety Action Team (RSAT) met last month.

C. Airline Update

Year to date, there have been 3,583 airline operations, compared to 1,997, an increase of 79%. This accounts for just over 10% of total operations.

In May there were 51,606 passengers compared to 38,050 in 2021. Year to date there have been 223,095 passengers compared to 90,481 in 2021, up 147%.

The Board approved the agreement for aha! airlines this month, so they are on track to start service on July 14 with twice a week flights to Reno. They will also have a wine flies free program.

The summer schedule is still evolving due to fuel costs and pilot shortages, but it is projected that there will be a peak of 19 flights a day.

Young asked if the Airport will have enough traffic soon to require heightened security. Stout confirmed that heightened security is required at 500,000 passengers, which the Airport will exceed this year. The Airport has been in talks with TSA to prepare. The largest impact will be law enforcement response time. There will also be a security center, which has already been built out in preparation.

Internicola asked if there will be 21 flights a day in the fall. Stout confirmed that there may be 22 flights for 10 days this year. When 21 flights are reached, no new agreements can be authorized.

D. Projects Update

- **Terminal Modernization Project:** The framing, exterior walls, and windows are going in at the new gate. Passengers will be able to see out onto the Airfield from the gate. A Sopwith Camel and a red baron replica are being restored at the Airport. The plan is to hang these in the bag claim area as a re-creation of the dream sequence in the Peanuts movie. Creative Associates is working on related Peanuts artwork to include in the installation. The estimated completion date for the project is March next year. The baggage claim area is expected to open in October. Work on the front of the terminal is expected to begin next month.
- **Eucalyptus Tree Removal:** Bids have been received and the final purchase order is pending.
- **EAA Driveway:** Work is expected to take place July 18-21 to pave the current gravel driveway.
- **Approach Feasibility Study:** This is expected to go to the Board in August.
- **Taxiway A Overlay:** Once the grant is received from the FAA, a notice to proceed will be completed. The FAA is estimating that the grant may come in late-August, which would mean the Taxiway A Overlay project may take place in Spring.
- **Airline Apron Reconstruction:** No new updates on this project.
- **Master Consultant RFQ:** This is for all consultants that would be involved in the five-year capital/project plan for the Airport. Selections have been made, and agreements are being negotiated.
- **Becker Boulevard Chip Seal:** The Roads department has not made their final bid selection yet. The Airport will be working with them on this project.
- **Runway 2/20 Edge Marking:** Airport staff have re-striped the edge-marking on runway 2/20.
- **FAA RVR System Upgrade:** This is on the west side of runway 32.
- **FAA Runway 14 REILS:** This project will begin next week and will take approximately three weeks.
- **Water Bottle Fill Dispensers:** Zero Waste Sonoma has provided a grant to provide four water fill dispensers. One will be before security, one will be on the airline apron, one will be next to the Becker restroom, and one will be next to the bathroom on Apron E.

- **Airport Loop Remarking:** The sidewalk in front of the terminal will be closed during construction at the front of the terminal. As a result, traffic patterns in the loop will be adjusted and re-marked. The long-term goal is to have two lanes around the loop.
- **Future Board Items:** Budget hearings will take place this week. There have been no questions so far on the Airport budget. The hotel project will go to the Board on July 19.

Internicola asked if there would be increased TSA staffing needs with these updates. Stout confirmed that the Airport works with Trinity on projections so that they can prepare.

Sheber asked if there is an estimate for when work on the front of the terminal will be completed. Stout noted that the current estimate is the end of this year.

Internicola asked if Airport Express would have a modified pickup location. Stout confirmed that their location would remain the same.

Sheber asked if a stop sign could be put at the exit from Kaiser Air. Stout confirmed that it would be.

McCord asked if there is an alternate lane for the Long Term A exit. Stout confirmed that there is no lane at this point; however, with the Conrac construction, exits will be shifted away from the terminal. McCord also asked if there would be additional staff or training for staff as they manage the changed conditions. Stout confirmed that the Airport is working with them on additional training, and staffing may change based on updates.

Hayssen asked for more information on the tree ordinance. Stout noted that there is an ordinance that typically applies to native trees and mitigations if they are cut down; it does not apply to Eucalyptus trees.

ACTION ITEMS:

None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Sonoma Jet Hangar Development Concepts

Stout noted that a Request for Interest (RFI) went out four years ago for hangar development and then COVID delayed the progress. Two other developers dropped their interest during COVID, and only Sonoma Jet Center's proposal remains. Stout confirmed that another round of RFIs will be going out this year regarding the other two spots available for development.

Josh Hochberg provided an overview of Sonoma Jet Center's proposed redevelopment of Apron D and surrounding area. This plan would involve removing old shade and t-hangars on the apron and constructing new general aviation hangars and large corporate hangars. There would be an increased hangar cost due to added amenities, but revenue from large hangars would help subsidize their construction as mitigation.

Stout noted that the current hangars on this apron (As and Bs) were constructed in the 1950s and are reaching the end of their usability. If this re-development is approved, it would take at least two years to get underway.

Hayssen commented that he has experience with these hangars and agrees that they are not the best hangars. He also asked how many of the A, B, and old shade hangars are rented out, and Stout confirmed that all are currently rented out.

Young asked how many of the full hangars are actively used. Stout estimated 50% are actively used.

McCord asked if it would be possible to find out how many hangars would be constructed in comparison to how many would be removed, including hangar dimensions and rent estimates.

Current rent is \$195 for new shades, \$165 for old shades, \$162-\$211 for A hangars, and \$232 for B hangars. E hangars are the newest and rent for over \$400.

Hochberg estimated that unsubsidized rent would be approximately \$800 per month. He asked what dimensions would be ideal for new hangars. McCord recommended looking at what aircraft at the Airport would need new hangars and what sizes are most in demand.

Young commented that he rents a hangar on Apron D, and he agrees that the space is not being used to its potential. He asked how long the term would be before ownership of the hangars reverts to the County. Stout noted that it is estimated to be 30-40 years. State law restricts terms longer than 40 years. Young asked if a large hangar could store multiple small aircraft.

Hayssen asked for confirmation of term length for private hangars. Stout confirmed that they are month to month. Hayssen also asked for information on the proposed aircraft maintenance facility and potential future customs facility. Hochberg noted that Customs does not have a plan to come to the Airport.

Stout clarified that the lease itself for this development would not be brought to the Commission.

John Swanstrom commented that he rents two hangars in the impacted area, and he wants the Airport to be viable in the future. He noted that the proposed plan is in favor of general aviation, and Sonoma Jet Center would do the best job with this re-development. If another plan is sought out, it could be less favorable for general aviation.

Young noted that the general feeling seems to be positive towards the proposed redevelopment.

NEW BUSINESS:

Young asked if the July meeting would be canceled, and Stout confirmed that he would like a cancellation of the July meeting to be considered. There were no objections, so the July meeting will be canceled.

Helicopters will be added as a discussion item for the August meeting. Helicopter operators should be notified that this will be on the agenda.

McCord would like to add a discussion item for security customer service. Stout confirmed that we will invite them to attend the meeting.

Internicola asked when the community meeting with Supervisor Gore would be taking place. Stout confirmed that it will be taking place August 24 at 2pm. The meeting will be to talk about FAA noise requirements.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

McCord commented that security took photos of McCord's car when his sister drove it to the Airport. He is not sure what was done with the photos, but it was not the best experience for her.

Stout noted that parking enforcement is also verbally abused by customers, but the Airport is working with them to ensure the best customer service. Photos are used when citations are issued, but are deleted otherwise.

Young commented that he appreciates the convenience of the Airport, but recognizes that the convenience comes with noise and other aspects to balance.

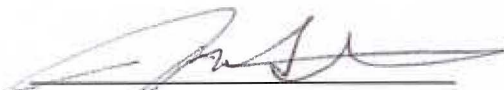
Internicola commented that he would like to better understand the benefits of general aviation. Sheber commented that he has seen Airports replaced by other industries, and he hopes that people continue to see the positive aspects of the Airport. Young commented that there are three categories of aviation at the Airport: commercial, commercial general aviation, and small general aviation. Most people are only familiar with the commercial aspect, but the Airport is required to have general aviation, and there are many positive aspects to it. Hochberg offered to host Internicola for a tour at Sonoma Jet Center.

Hayssen commented that there is a diverse aviation community in Sonoma County, from experimental aircraft to commercial airlines. He also thanked Stout for the updates on the terminal project.

ADJOURN:

Internicola moved with support from Hayssen to adjourn. All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jon Stout, AAE, CAE
Airport Manager