

SONOMA COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the December 19, 2024 Meeting

CALL TO ORDER:

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

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Hayssen, Jasper, Jones, McCord, Young

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

McCord moved with support from Jasper to approve the November 21, 2024, Aviation Commission Minutes. Abstained: None Opposed: None All Ayes: Yes. Motion Carried.

AIRPORT MANAGEMENT REPORT:

A. Complaint Update

Stout noted an addendum in the packet for October for complaints received after the October Commission meeting reports.

Stout reported, October was originally reported as 548 complaints and 66 commenters and that changed to 699 complaints and 67 commenters. November complaints received was 550 compared to 154 an increase of 257% with 39 individuals reported. Year to date complaints are at 4,083 compared to 993 in 2023, an increase of 311%. November general complaints received was 9 compared to 14 in 2023 a decrease of 36%. Year to date 46 general complaints received compared to 74 in 2023, a 38% decrease.

Commissioners inquired about possible bot complaints.

Stout reported that replacement noise management software, set to launch by January, will automate complaint tracking, improve user experience, and include features like user recognition and a Spanish version to enhance accessibility and Title VI compliance. Aivaliklis noted that 45-50% of complaint calls are voicemails, requiring significant manual transcription, which the new system will streamline with automation

Young, suggested mapping complaints to identify clusters by address, and Stout confirmed that addresses are currently tracked.

Hayssen inquired about a TSA complaint involving a disabled passenger detained due to implants triggering alarms. The incident led to a missed flight. Stout noted that this complaint was escalated to the regional level.

Jasper inquired about delays for deplaning passengers. Stout clarified that delays stem from airline staffing shortages and not ramp design issues. The ongoing repaving project will add two new spaces and rebuild two existing ones, for a total to six spaces.

B. Tower Report/Update: No Update from the Tower.

October operations were 7,810 compared to 7,565 in 2023, an increase of 3%. Year to date operations are at 70,159 compared to 70,495 down slightly.

C. Airline Update

The Airport did not receive the American passenger numbers before the October meeting. October was a new passenger record at 77,635 compared to 62,305 in 2023 an increase of 25%. November had 77,122 passengers compared to 59,535 up 30%. Year to date at 694,159 up 17%.

Projects Update

- **Runway Work:** The crack sealing work on the runway is still being coordinated.
- **Employee updates:** Two candidates for two new Operations Specialist positions are in background, anticipating onboarding in January. A recommendation has been made for the Airport Property Manager's position, with the new person on board by mid-January. McCluskey will be on maternity leave.
- **Approach Feasibility Study:** Draft comments from Cignus have been received, the Airport is working on responses. Aiming to be completed by mid-January and post by end of January. Preparing Board items for Phase 2 approval.
- **Airline Apron Reconstruction:** County Council identified an issue with the contract, which has been resolved. The project award has been moved to January 7th, with a pre-construction meeting in the second week of January. Work is expected to begin mid to late February. The goal is to keep four airline spaces open throughout the project.
- **Airport Restaurants Transition:** Most repairs are complete, a few punch list items remaining. Restaurant will hold a grand reveal in January, which the Airport help to coordinate and promote.
- **Airport Organizational Review:** Planning to submit staffing changes to HR by early January. Projecting 12 new positions over the next 4 years.
- **Asset Management System:** Tests with AeroSimple are still in progress. Aivaliklis added, AeroSimple is designing and coding to meet both the Airport and County requirements. enhancements must align with the County's accounting system.
- **Consolidated Rental Car Facility:** C&S Engineers and Mead & Hunt provided task orders for the Airport. Once approved, The Airport will manage the project in-house. Expecting to break ground in 18-24 months, freeing up 150 spaces in short- and long-term lots. Haysen noticed an additional car rental vendor. Stout confirmed, Next Car was added under Ace. Hertz is also approved to add a new brand.
- **Wildlife Exclusion Fence:** The punch list is in progress. Continuing to work with the wildlife biologist and FAA to close out this project. Project sign off once coordinated with the biologist.
- **Runway 02/20 Alternate Surface:** Update the graphics for the alternative surface is still in progress.

- **Runway 14/32 preliminary engineering study:** The Airport is working with the FAA on taxiway connector geometry to understand required upgrades to new standards. Hayssen asked if the changes were based on RSAT recommendations. Stout explained that while some come from RSAT, most are due to a 3-year-old update in the Advisory Circular on airfield design standards, which now require all taxiway connectors to be at a 90-degree angle to the runway. Four of our connectors on Runway 14/32 do not meet the current standard.
- **ARFF Building preliminary Concept Design and Budget:** Still waiting for the FAA's eligibility determination, the design is on hold.
- **ATCT Siting Study:** The FAA is finalizing their report on the siting work. The Airport is finalizing the 7460 for the two preferred locations.
- **Sustainability Master Plan:** Completion of the report is in progress. This should be complete sometime early next year and holding another outreach on the implementation of that plan.
- **Airport Microgrid:** we're interviewing proposers that will do our feasibility, and what that might look like for the Airport. Once approved early next year, that feasibility study would take about 6 to 8 weeks
- **Hangar Development RFI:** The response period closed Monday. The Airport received 2 proposals and will be reviewing and starting the next steps. Jasper asked if the two proposals were for just two sites. Stout clarified that one proposal covers multiple sites. Jones inquired if this was a request for qualifications, and Stout explained it was simply an expression of interest, not a formal qualifications request.
- **Apron E - Helicopter:** The Airport is working on the environmental review. Hayssen raised safety concerns, noting helicopters are often hard to see and only monitor local frequency, creating taxiing risks. Stout agreed, explaining the lack of pavement is why Apron E is being extended.
- **Apron A - Remote Parking:** The Airport received the conceptual layout from Mead and Hunt and is starting the preliminary environmental review. The consultant has questions about the ditch, which will affect the environmental review.
- **Building Demo:** The State Historic Preservation Office agreed with the Airport's assessment of the two sheds' historic value, and we're awaiting FAA approval of the environmental report.
- **Website RFP:** On hold since Marketing personnel is out on maternity leave.
- **Security System Maintenance Services RFP:** On hold until full inventory is conducted.
- **County Budget Process:** Looking to have some recommendations for the Commissioners consideration on the rates and charges in January.

D. Future Board Items

Stout reviewed the list of Future Board items.

ACTION ITEMS: None

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Limited Maintenance Provider/Access

The Airport will to send out the questionnaire around the New Year. Young suggested to remove item from the discussion items until responses are received. Young and Jones will put item back when questionnaire is complete. Integration into Constant Contact is in progress. Hayssen asked if the office wrote up the questionnaire, and Stout explained that the Young and Jones provided questions, which were then formatted for distribution via Constant Contact. Young added, the goal is to assess the demand and consider long-term planning. Jasper asked if offsite maintenance personnel can operate on the field, and Stout confirmed they cannot; a specialized operator or FBO would be needed. Hayssen asked if offsite personnel would pay the same percentage and provide insurance, and Stout noted that FBOs have brought in specialized providers to assist their customers.

B. Jail/Road Yard Update

Scheduling a closed session with the Board of Supervisors to discuss the appraisal and next steps.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No email or chat comments received before or during the meeting. Young opened comments to attendees in person.

Jeff Stewart president of blue star gas. They operate two King Airs at the Airport. They have, about 400 operations per year, part 91 at the Airport and fly about a thousand hours a year. They have concerns regarding runway 32, particularly related to significant ponding and poor drainage that worsened after 14 inches of rain in November. This has caused severe hydroplaning, especially with King Airs, and they believe it's only a matter of time before a runway excursion occurs. The ponding is in a new area, not the historically problematic zones. In operations, they've had to align to the left of the centerline on both landing and takeoff. Additionally, after a jarring nose wheel landing in November, they requested a runway inspection. While no debris was found, the impact required a thorough inspection of the nose wheel for airworthiness. They would like to know if there are any plans for repairs to the runway.

Ann Fitzgerald neighbor. They sent a letter to the Board, Mr. Stout, and others regarding the helicopter issue and the skid pad issue. Their question is how to receive a response, as they had requested one at the bottom of the letter but did not receive a reply. The issue was not addressed in the discussion today, nor was it mentioned in the Commission's meeting. Additionally, they noted that when comments are made at the Commission, they are listed in the notes, but there is no follow-up, and they are wondering how that process is handled.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Young clarified that the Aviation Commission does not control air traffic, emphasizing its limited role of advising and making recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The Commission allows the public to observe airport activities and raise concerns, but it cannot resolve issues like the helicopter situation, as

it cannot dictate air commerce. Young encouraged continued participation but noted that not all questions could be answered immediately.

Hayssen added that the Airport Land Use Commission, focused on reviewing development proposals, ALUC also has a limited role and will not address helicopter concerns. Hayssen also shared an update on the Airport Land Use Commission, mentioning that five members attended the recent meeting, with Salmon re-elected in Windsor. He noted progress in revitalizing the Commission and filling all seven spots. Hayssen confirmed the projects were located near the Airport. Stout inquired about selecting Commissioners, and Hayssen explained that it involved communication with 5th District Supervisor Linda Hopkins, who made a recommendation.

Jasper inquired about the status of the voluntary recommended helicopter procedures for noise abatement. Young asked if the procedures had been finalized, and Aivaliklis confirmed that a draft had been sent to helicopter operator's and other airports. The update is targeted for January. Hayssen asked if any feedback had been received from flight schools, to which Aivaliklis confirmed that no feedback had come from the flight school.

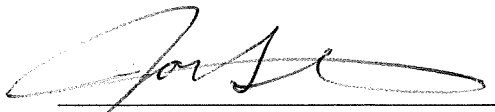
Jasper attended the groundbreaking for a new hotel near the Airport and shared his positive impressions of the development, which includes a rooftop restaurant and offers convenient accommodations within walking distance of the Airport. Hayssen addressed concerns about a potential link between the hotel and increased air activity, stating he doesn't believe there is any correlation. Jasper agreed, noting that while the hotel's development is a promising resource, it hasn't yet increased Airport activity.

Young confirmed that the 14/32 runway upgrade is in progress. Jasper inquired about previous culvert repairs, and Stout explained that they were completed in July, with follow-up work in August and September. Grooving to improve drainage is scheduled after the asphalt cures, with repairs ongoing due to settling. Stout mentioned that work will begin in January, following the collection of bids. Jasper also raised concerns about Taxiway Romeo, and Stout will investigate. Hayssen highlighted hydroplaning safety risks, and Jasper welcomed the upcoming repairs.

ADJOURN

McCord moved with support from Hayssen to adjourn. **All Ayes.** Meeting adjourned at 9:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jon Stout, AAE, CAE
Airport Manger