

SONOMA COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the April 20, 2023 Meeting

This meeting was conducted using a hybrid of in person and over Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER:

Young called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Hayssen moved with support from Starrett to approve the February 16, 2023 Aviation Commission Minutes. All Ayes: Motion Carried. The March Aviation Commission meeting was canceled.

AIRPORT MANAGER REPORT:

A. Complaint Update

Stout reported that in February there were 51 noise complaints compared to 30 in 2022, an increase of 70%. In March there were 67 complaints compared to 31 in 2022, an increase of 116%. As of March there have been 150 complaints compared to 115, an increase of 30%.

In February there were 2 general complaints, compared to 0 in 2022. In March there were 3 complaints compared to 3 in 2022. As of March there have been 17 complaints compared to 6.

Hayssen noted that the 5th District makes up 84% of complaints. He also noted that the City of Sebastopol has not made as many complaints recently. Hayssen also expressed concerns over some of the general complaints. In particular there were complaints against Trinity, and it would be good to get a resolution on those. Borovkoff confirmed that we have not yet received a resolution from Trinity, but we will follow up with them. He also commented on the kudos that the Airport received for the badging office. He expressed that he has also had a good experience going through the badging process recently.

Stout mentioned that the Airport is working on additional badging improvements, including updated SIDA training.

Hayssen asked who oversees the Trinity contract for security. Stout confirmed that the TSA oversees their contract.

McCord agreed with Hayssen that the general complaints are concerning. There should be a solution that prevents similar scenarios for travelers with special needs.

Jasper asked if there have been any updates on patrol security complaints. Stout mentioned that a Uniformed Security Bid is currently in progress and a new vendor will be chosen soon. SP+ did not bid.

Young suggested that it may be helpful to have a sheet with information to provide passengers when they have a complaint against a particular vendor. Stout confirmed that this exists and that Trinity has their own complaint system as well. Resolutions are the hardest part to get.

Stout commented that the FAA has responded to questions from the District 4 neighbor group, and their responses have been forwarded to Supervisor Gore's office.

B. Tower Report/Update

There were 5,637 operations in January compared to 7,809 in 2022, a decrease of 28%. In February there were 5,637 operations compared to 7,410 in 2022, a decrease of 24%. As of February there were 11,274 operations compared to 15,219 in 2022, a decrease of 26%.

McCord asked if the approach lights are on all night at full blast. Sheber noted that there have been issues with them due to flooding.

C. Airline Update

In January there were 37,129 passengers compared to 31,643 in 2022, an increase of 17%. Operations were down 18% for January, which is partially due to Alaska utilizing larger planes on some routes. In February there were 40,136 passengers compared to 36,550, an increase of 10%. Airline operations in February were down 10%. In March there were 49,632 complaints compared to 50,231 in 2022, a decrease of 1%. Airline operations in March were down 14% from 2022. As of March, airline operations were down 12% year to date to 1,758 from 1,996 in 2022. Passenger numbers as of March were up 7% from 118,424 in 2022 to 126,897.

Stout attended the JumpStart Air Service Development conference in Chicago a few weeks ago. He met with a number of airlines including Southwest, Sun Country, and our current partners. American Airlines may be interested in Austin. Avelo is primarily focused on their East Coast operations. Sun Country may be interested in returning for Minneapolis service.

Stout asked if Commissioners have insights into pilot shortages. Hayssen and McCord both noted that flight instruction is expensive.

D. Projects Update

- **Terminal Modernization Project:** There have been delays due to rain, but July 15 is the current completion estimate. The incorrect carpet was installed in the bag claim area. Rather than removing the carpet, new carpet will be put in Concourse B. Concourse B will also be getting a tree at no cost.
- **Approach Study:** The consultant has submitted a draft review of the analysis of the current procedures.
- **Taxiway A Overlay:** This project will begin April 24 and will take place in 6 phases to minimize impacts. The project should be completed in early June.
- **Airline Apron Reconstruction:** Interviews will take place on Monday with contractors. Four bids were received. The goal is to start work this Fall.
- **Airport Organizational Review:** HR is reviewing the report from ADK to suggest County positions that may fit the recommended needs. The consultant recommended up to 9 new positions over the next 3-5 years.
- **Accounts Receivable System:** Staff are recommending Veoci, a firm that specializes in airports. This will allow online payments once integrated.
- **Consolidated Rental Car Facility:** Due to increased interest rates, the financing is more expensive. Conrac solutions is considering more cost-effective options.

- **Wildlife Exclusion Fence:** The Airport has been working on the environmental for this for four years and will be going to the Board June 6 for approval of the environmental document. The project is out for bid and bids are due May 9.
- **Runway 02/20 Alternate Surface:** A draft MOU has been provided to the Tower and County Counsel for their review. It would only be open seasonally and only when the Tower is open. Users must inspect the surface and sign a waiver before use. The goal is to open this in May.
- **Security Services Contract:** Interviews have been conducted. Three companies bid on the project. The goal is a July Board date.
- **Vending RFP:** This will be coming out soon for potential vending machines in the terminal.
- **Rental Car RFP:** This is a required RFP.
- **Pending FY22/23 FAA Grants:** Several grants are possible for this FY including for the fence project and the Apron C project.
- **Future Board Items:** The living wage discussion is scheduled for June 12. Budget hearings are scheduled for June and the Project Labor Agreement is scheduled for July 18. The Airport Advertising Policy will be going to the Board May 9. It was updated to include digital advertising.
- **SMART Shuttle:** The Airport is working with SMART to begin service on a shuttle sometime in June.
- **Job Fair:** Will be taking place at Vine Jet on April 26. Currently 28 employers are registered.
- **Staffing:** Senior Airport Operations Specialist will be leaving in May. The second round of Assistant Airport Manager interviews will be next week.
- **Awards:** The Airport received the North Coast Chapter 2023 Infrastructure Public Owner Champion of the Year Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) for the terminal modernization project.

Jasper asked if there are updates on the restaurant. Stout noted that they are still working through plans for making improvements. The Airport is still waiting to receive street pricing, which should have been received within 90 days of the contract start date.

Hayssen asked if the Approach Study includes visual approaches. Stout confirmed that it is reviewing all existing approaches, and visual procedures are part of the final procedures.

McCord asked if the Taxiway A overlay will create a bump between the old and new pavement areas. Stout confirmed that the areas would be made flush and that there would be no bumps.

Young asked if there are any updates on the Assistant Airport Manager position. Stout noted that in the initial recruitment there were no qualified candidates as they were missing ARFF certification.

Stout commented that there is a gas station amendment to ban new stations that may impact the rental car facility as it would prohibit new fueling stations in Sonoma County. Rental car operators from the Airport submitted a letter to the Board after that meeting saying that they would not support a new facility if there could be no gas station added. Hayssen asked if there are many electrical vehicle rental cars. Stout noted that there are not, due to low demand.

Regarding the fence project, Hayssen asked what would happen to the wildlife that is already inside the fence. Stout noted that this will be considered as part of the project. Wildlife inspections currently take 8 hours a day because they need to take place before and after every commercial flight.

Jasper asked how a transient pilot would use the alternate surface if an inspection is required. Stout noted that they would likely need to visit ahead of time for the inspection before use.

ACTION ITEMS:

A. Meeting Schedule 2023/24

Adopting fiscal year 2023-2024 meeting schedule. Aviation Commission meetings will take place on the third Thursday of every month as follows:

- July 20, 2023
- August 17, 2023
- September 21, 2023
- October 19, 2023
- November 16, 2023
- December 21, 2023
- January 18, 2024
- February 15, 2024
- March 21, 2024
- April 18, 2024
- May 16, 2024
- June 20, 2024

Hayssen moved with support from Starrett to approve the FY23-24 calendar as written. All Ayes:
Motion carried.

B. FY 2023/24 Commission Chair and Vice Chair

McCord moved with support from Jasper to recommend that Young continue as Chair with Hayssen as Vice Chair for FY23-24. All Ayes: Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Fiscal Overview FY23-24

This has been moved to the May meeting agenda.

B. Oakland Center Traffic Management

Dave Sheber provided an overview of Oakland Center traffic management. Patterns have changed as traffic at the Airport has increased. Oakland also restructured the airspace into other Bay Area airports, most of which approach from the area to the east of STS. Due to the pattern changes into other airports and increased traffic, aircraft travelling to STS were directed to approach from the West side of the Airport. Decisions made by the FAA are based on safety.

Hayssen commented that he was sent out toward Sebastopol before approaching STS. Sheber noted that Oakland Center also directs pilots to avoid mountains. It is possible to request a direct route, but it may not be granted.

The Runway Safety Action Team will be meeting May 24 and invitations should be going out soon.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

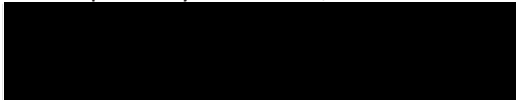
COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

None.

ADJOURN:

McCord moved with support from Jasper to adjourn. All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jon Stout, AAE, CAE
Airport Manager