

SONOMA COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the October 20, 2022 Meeting

This meeting was conducted virtually over Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER:

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

Young welcomed new Commissioner, Dane Jasper.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Hayssen, Internicola, Jasper, McCord, Starrett, Young **Absent:** None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Hayssen moved with support from McCord to approve the August 18, 2022 Aviation Commission Minutes. Abstained: Jasper All Ayes: Motion Carried.

AIRPORT MANAGER REPORT:

A. Complaint Update

Stout reported that in August there were 148 noise complaints compared to 50 in 2021, an increase of 196%. In September there were 96 noise complaints compared to 45 in 2021, an increase of 113%. Year to date as of September there have been 676 complaints compared to 807 in 2021, a decrease of 16%.

In August there were 6 general complaints, compared to 0 in 2021. In September there were 5 general complaints, compared to 7 in 2021. Year to date as of September there have been 35 general complaints compared to 8 in 2021.

Hayssen noted that many of the complaints come from the same locations. The average altitude seems to be well above minimum safe altitudes. One location on Starr Rd, which is located on a final approach, had 35 complaints in August. Hayssen also asked if General Complaints could be moved up in the packet to just after noise complaints. Stout confirmed that this change will be made.

McCord asked how the neighbor meeting went with Supervisor Gore in August. Stout noted that technology did not cooperate, and a follow up meeting will be planned for the future. McCord also commented that complainers were noting that aircraft are not taking the correct flight paths, but they do appear to be on the correct paths. He suggested that providing additional education to complainers regarding flight paths may be beneficial.

B. Tower Report/Update

There were 8,002 operations in July compared to 9,180 in 2021, a decrease of 13%. In August there were 8,147 operations compared to 8,153 in 2021. Year to date as of August there have been 64,238 operations compared to 61,908 in 2021, an increase of 4%.

C. Airline Update

A new passenger record was set in July of just over 61,000. Year to date as of July there have been 342,160 passengers, an increase of 81% from 2021. In July there were 5,421 airline operations compared to 3,449 in 2021, an increase of 57%. In August there were 56,528 passengers compared to 45,086 in 2021, an increase of 25%. Year to date as of August there have been 398,688 passengers, an increase of 71% from 2021, and 6,309 airline operations, an increase of 49% from 2021. In September there were 58,777 passengers compared to 49,951 in 2021, an increase of 18%. As of September there were 457,465 passengers, an increase of 61% from 2021, and 7,290 airline operations, an increase of 43%.

aha! Airlines filed bankruptcy and is no longer in operation. Alaska Airlines added a 737 to their Seattle service. United will no longer operate at STS as of October. Avelo Airlines will begin service to Palm Springs on November 11.

Aaron Markowitz with SP+ commented that parking management has been complicated with the temporary closure of the front of the terminal. Young thanked SP+ for their assistance with parking management at the Girls in Aviation event.

D. Projects Update

- **Terminal Modernization Project:** The baggage claim area and Gate 1 are on track to open to the public on November 16. A Grand Opening ceremony will take place on November 15. The November 1 date that was originally planned was delayed due to procurement delays and logistics for mounting signage.
- **Eucalyptus Tree Removal:** This project should be completed within 3 weeks pending weather.
- **Approach Feasibility Study:** Cignus sent a request for data to kick off the project. The first phase of the project is expected to be completed by April.
- **Taxiway A Overlay:** This is scheduled to go to the Board next Tuesday. The project is expected to begin in April 2023 when the weather has improved.
- **Airline Apron Reconstruction:** This project is out for bid and is expected to go to the Board in early 2023. It is expected to be a CMAR project to help reduce impacts to airline parking spots. The Airport is working with the FAA to begin work next Fall.
- **Master Consultant RFQ:** The task orders are being finalized with 7 consultants before this goes to the Board.
- **Becker Boulevard Chip Seal:** This project is in progress and is expected to be completed within a week.
- **Concession RFP:** Process: The Airport is in negotiations with the selected contractor, who will be announced after it goes to the Board in December.
- **Airport Organizational Review:** The Airport is working with a consultant to conduct a review of Airport staffing levels.
- **Accounts Receivable System:** An account clerk will help the Airport begin to migrate data into this new software to test for suitability in the next few months.
- **Airport Express - Enhanced Service:** This week Airport Express began service to transport passengers to STS from current Airport Express drop off locations.
- **Future Board Items:** The living wage ordinance went to the Board this week, but more information was needed. It will be going back to the Board in December. Currently Airport

tenants are being considered under the ordinance. Other future Board items include the adoption of the 2022 building codes (12/6) and the Airport Area Specific plan (2023).

Young asked for confirmation regarding where Eucalyptus trees would be removed. Stout confirmed that it is trees by Apron F and by the runway approaches. Tenants will be notified if the work will impact the entrance to Apron F.

Hayssen asked if the tree removal would lower the minimum AGL. Stout confirmed that more would be needed to lower the minimum AGL. Cignus will be able to make a recommendation on this as part of the approach study.

Starrett asked if aha! has any unpaid bills with the Airport. Stout confirmed that they do not.

Young commented that the living wage ordinance will likely apply to Airport lessees, but suggested that maybe it could apply only to new leases. Smaller tenants may be less impacted than larger tenants. Stout recommended that a presentation on living wage be done at a future Commission meeting. The ordinance update would be implemented in January 2023. Stout noted that the Airport is unique in that it also needs to comply with FAA regulations, and there are tenants that have sub-tenants that would likely need to comply with the ordinance if passed.

ACTION ITEMS:

A. Aviation Commission Participation at Terminal Grand Opening

Acknowledgement that an open house for the new terminal space will take place on November 15 and Aviation Commissioners will be invited to attend. Commissioners agreed that no official business would take place at the event.

B. November Meeting Cancellation

Starrett moved with support from Hayssen to cancel the November 2022 Aviation Commission meeting. All Ayes: Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

C. Economic Impact Report

Rachel Shulman of Crawford, Murphy & Tilly (CMT) presented on the Economic Impact Report CMT compiled for the Airport. As part of the Economic Impact Study, CMT reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan and annual airport operations. The Capital Improvement Plan is expected to contribute \$231.7 million to Sonoma County over the life of the project, 2020 to 2027. In 2021, STS contributed an estimated \$228 million to the county economy.

Internicola asked how future airline revenue was predicted. Shulman confirmed that projections were based on current load factors and average aircraft seating capacities.

Hayssen asked what percentage of the entire county economy the projected Airport contribution makes up. Shulman noted that she would need to research this further. Stout confirmed that the data would be shared with the county Economic Development Board, who would be able to confirm the percentage.

Jasper asked what the airline forecasts were based on. Stout confirmed that the forecasts were based on what is allowed within the county General Plan.

NEW BUSINESS:

Hayssen has requested an update on the living wage at the December Commission meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Young noted that the EAA hosted a Girls in Aviation event on September 24. Approximately 76 kids were able to take flights and \$4,000 in scholarships were awarded at the event. Airport assistance at the event was appreciated. Young also noted that he traveled through STS recently and felt the signage was adequate, but Alaska could have provided better information during a delay.

Hayssen noted that he has been working with PCAM on the aviation merit badge. He commented that it has been great to see the increased number of girls involved with the program over time, and the success of the Girls in Aviation event.

ADJOURN:

Starrett moved with support from Jasper to adjourn. All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jon Stout, AAE, CAE
Airport Manager