

SONOMA COUNTY
AVIATION COMMISSION
Minutes of the March 18, 2021 Meeting

This meeting was conducted virtually over Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER:

Young called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Young, Delaney, Duste, Hayssen, and Starrett.

Absent: McCord.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Delaney moved with support from Starrett to approve the January 21, 2021 Aviation Commission Minutes.

All Ayes: Motion Carried.

AIRPORT MANAGER REPORT:

A. Complaint Update

Stout reported there were 34 aircraft related complaints in January from 17 individual complainants, an increase of 21% from 28 complaints received in January 2020. There was one non-aircraft related complaint in January from an airline passenger regarding wait time on the aircraft before departure.

There were 42 aircraft related complaints in February from 18 individual complainants, a decrease of 28% from 58 complaints received in February 2020. There were no non-aircraft related complaints in December.

Hayssen reported a low-flying helicopter near his home which was identified on FlightRadar24 by the make and model but not by the aircraft number. Young said operators can choose to hide the aircraft number from identification by apps.

Stout said that currently complaints regarding helicopters make up a significant percentage of those received. Complaints regarding airline operations have gone down with the decrease in operations.

B. Tower Report/Update

There were 5,767 operations in December 2020, an increase of 21% from 4,768 in December 2019. In 2020, there were 66,566 operations, a decrease of 21% from 83,734 in 2019.

There were 4,851 operations in January 2021, a decrease of 22% from 6,244 in January 2020

Craig Lucas, Tower Manager, reported that one supervisor is retiring. He also noted that he received around a dozen calls in January and February from a constituent in the Silk Road area requesting that aircraft be rerouted over the east side of the Airport. The constituent was accommodated when possible.

C. Airline Update

There were 6,050 passengers in January 2021, a decrease of 84% from 36,812 in January 2020.

There were 6,644 passengers in February 2021, a decrease of 82% from 37,228 in February 2020. Year-to-date, through February the Airport had seen 12,694 passengers, a decrease of 83% from 74,040 in 2020.

Stout reported that there are currently five airline flights per day; at the end of March there will be seven per day. American Airlines will resume flights to Dallas on April 3. Passenger loads have improved and there are more cars in the parking lot. Schedules for June indicate that the airlines are planning to ramp up departures to around 16 flights per day provided the country's COVID numbers continue to improve and restrictions are lifted.

The Airport is in negotiations with another potential airline carrier under a non-disclosure agreement. The new airline will start service toward the end of April with two allocations and will start with one flight per day within California.

D. Projects Update

- **Gate 2/ TSA Check Point Move:** Punch list is complete and closeout is in progress.
- **Terminal Improvement:** Dug out and poured footings for new bag makeup room and plan to pour slab tomorrow, weather permitting. Starting to plan phasing of vestibule work. Construction, including beam repair, will begin in two weeks, starting with the north half of the entrance, then moving to the south half after the north half is completed in order to maintain the current entrance location. Hope to enlist the help of landscaping student(s) from Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) to design landscaping for the front of the terminal. In three to four months, the Airport will be asking a volunteer from the Commission to sit on an art advisory committee. There is an allowance for art in the terminal project and a selection committee will need to review and assist in selecting submissions.
- **Solar Panel Installation:** Airspace Review is still with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The Airport expects to receive a determination with conditions. Designs are in for permitting and the plan is to start construction by fall.
- **Generator:** Per new environmental regulations, a Tier 4 compliant engine is now required and will replace the model previously selected. Cost increase by about \$300,000. Working to mitigate costs in other ways.
- **Airport Management Software:** After ongoing issues with project launch, the Airport agreed to a reset with our provider and we have started from the beginning again. The reset should address concerns regarding the consistency and integration of the software modules.
- **Replacement Fire Trucks:** Bids were received and sent to the FAA; waiting for release of funds.
- **Replacement Runway Sweeper:** Bids were received and sent to the FAA; waiting for release of funds.
- **Car Wash Facility Upgrade:** The Airport expects that over next three months the additional bay will be in place.
- **Airport Operations Center:** Monitors ordered, radio and security equipment in purchasing.
- **FIDS:** Agreement with provider expired. A replacement provider has been identified and the change is in progress.
- **Staff:** Three recruitments currently underway: (1) Operations Specialist, (2) Administrative Office Front Desk Senior Office Assistant, (3) Administrative Office Administrative Aide.

E. Hangar Electrical Cleanup

Daaboul reported that the Airport is working with a contractor to address electrical deficiencies identified in hangars. Once Daaboul receives the estimate the Airport will begin scheduling the repairs, starting with the most critical. Tenants will be notified. Repairs will include standardization of electrical panels, installation of LED lighting, and installation of automatic timers. The contractor will also be performing preventative maintenance to avert further critical issues.

Stout said some hangars contain additional electrical that has not been approved by the Airport and/or is not up to code. That electrical will be removed as part of the cleanup effort.

F. Runway Safety Action Team (RSAT) Update

Stout reported that the Airport has submitted the completed modifications to standard requests to the FAA and a response is pending.

Hayssen asked if a date has been set for the 2021 RSAT meeting. Craig Lucas, Tower Manager, has not received notification of new RSAT date.

G. Sheriff's Garden/Jail Facilities

This item remains on the agenda pending an update.

H. COVID-19 Update

Airports were included in the aid package Congress passed at the end of December. The Airport has not yet received the grant at this time (just over \$2 million), which contains funds for assistance to commercial tenants in the terminal. Commercial tenants are eager for receipt. The new aid package passed in March contains another \$8 billion for airports. Stout reported that he has not seen any allocations yet but expects to see additional funds later in the spring.

ACTION ITEMS:

A. Airport Rates and Charges FY21-22

Stout reported that the Airport is requesting increases and additional fees related to parking only for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. No rates have been increased or new fees implemented since 2019.

Duste mentioned the error in the FY19-20 Rates and Fees listing landing fees for non-commercial aircraft weighing under 12,500 lbs. Stout confirmed that no landing fees were charged for non-commercial aircraft under 12,500 lbs. Carr confirmed that this error was corrected in the proposed FY21-22 Master Fee Schedule.

Hayssen moved with support from Duste to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Airport Fee Schedule. All Ayes: Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Noise Abatement Update

Stout reported that the Noise Abatement Workgroup continues to make progress on the update to the Noise Abatement Guide. The workgroup hopes to present a draft guide to the Commission at the next meeting.

Hayssen shared the proposed updates to the recommended patterns. Hayssen and Young indicated that the highlights to certain areas designated as noise sensitive would be removed and replaced

with a notice that the Airport is located in a noise sensitive area. The new recommendations are more realistic and take aircraft further from the Airport in a pattern that avoids the Silk Road area. Stout said that the new recommendations have taken into consideration how pilots are actually flying. Hayssen said the workgroup is also considering adding a page addressing helicopter training specifically, and shared a draft. More research is to be done on that subject. The notes portion of the guide will also be revised and links added.

Stout said that the new guide would be in a similar format, but will be available on the Airport's website. Printed copies will be sent to flight schools and to neighboring airports.

B. Neighbor Guide/Community Information

The Neighbor Guide will be revised once the updated Noise Abatement Guide has been finalized. The Airport continues to work on revisions to its website, including the implementation of a stand-alone STS Good Neighbor site.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Borovkoff asked if any of the Commissioners knew what aircraft the propeller installed in front of the Airport terminal was from. Commissioners did not know but suggested others that Borovkoff could ask. Hayssen suggested posting a photo of the propeller on social media to see if anyone could identify it.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Hayssen commented that he appeared on the Zoom panelist list twice because he had initially logged into the meeting using his iPad which had become frozen, so he had also joined from his PC.

ADJOURN:

Starrett moved with support from Delaney to adjourn. All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jon Stout, AAE, CAE
Airport Manager