



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION
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**Humboldt County Aviation Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, January 25, 2022
6:00PM
ZOOM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Committee reserves the right to bring presentations by invited guests forward as a courtesy to those individuals.

Committee Attendees: Chris Nelson, Alex Stillman, Lt. Ryan O'Neill, Caleb Leshner, Kyle Gabel, Justin Zabel, David Marshall, John McBeth, Ben McWhorter

Staff: Cody Roggatz – Director of Aviation, Cathy Canepa – Senior Administrative Analyst, Curt Eikerman – Airport Operations Manager, Dianna Rios – Economic Development Coordinator

Others: Bill Wickman, Erik Hakenen, Dr. Selinger, Gene Ratkowski, Tim Lorenzo, Lee Rector, Cathie Childs, Dave Dietz, Andrew B., Rose Hanan, Tyler Watkins, Steve Pritchard, Doug Holtsclaw, Curtis Weekly, Rose Hanan, Steve Pritchard

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Committee on matters *not* on the agenda and under the jurisdiction of this Committee (Presentations limited to three minutes.)

There was public comment regarding governance over Humboldt County Airports.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. September 28, 2021 – Standing as approved.
- B. December 7, 2021 – Standing as approved.

4. DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION REPORT

A. Airline Updates

CY2021, with airline growth starting at end of May, saw the highest number of passengers since 2009. We anticipate that 2022 will far exceed previous records at ACV, as long COVID conditions do not worsen.

B. Recruitment Efforts

The Aviation department has continued, and will continue to, have conversations with additional airlines for a North-bound route. Gregg Foster and Cody Roggatz will be attending an airline conference in San Antonio mid-February to continue in these efforts.

C. Staffing

In December, the Department of Aviation filled all operational vacancies to give a total of 8 filled, full-time positions. We had been critically limited on staff available to address the needs out outlying airports. In filling these vacancies, staff have already begun maintenance efforts throughout our airport system. The Board of Supervisors approved 4 additional Airport Service Worker positions (50% increase from current staffing level) on the 01/25/2022 agenda. Curt Eikerman has begun scheduling interviews for these vacancies. Once filled, our Operational team will consist of 12 full-time Airport Service Workers.

D. RFP

Dianna Rios, Humboldt County Economic Development Coordinator, has been working in conjunction with Cathie Childs, Humboldt County, Deputy County Counsel to address many of our current needs, including the RFP for Café space in the ACV Terminal. The RFP was sent to County Counsel this morning and is now awaiting final approval. After approval, the RFP will be routed, proposals will be requested and accepted, the County will work with the selected vendor to execute a lease, and the lease will be brought before the Board of Supervisors for execution.

E. PAPI Upgrade at EKA

The County is still working closely with the FAA on the possibility of transferring the ownership of the PAPI to the FAA.

F. Trees at EKA

The County is still waiting on final determination from CalTrans for the trees located on the 101 right-of-way. The County will continue efforts on the tree located at the SE end of the field.

G. Transportation

a. Holiday Parking

The Department of Aviation Management Team played a heavier role than normal in working with REEF Parking around Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Holiday parking totaled upwards of 600 cars at one time. There is dedicated parking in the general parking lot for 350 cars. The Aviation Department came up with the following solutions: used additional overflow lots, worked with the rental car agency for use of part of their lot, temporarily changed employee parking locations, and used Microgrid fence-line for temporary parking stalls.

b. Uber and Lift

Dianna Rios is continuing to assist with the Department of Aviation through project SOAR on lifting the Geofencing and drafting agreements for Uber and Lyft. This will become the next focus after the café space RFP is finalized.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS 4A-G

There was discussion regarding whether the increased staffing would be enough and whether retention issues have changed. The department reported that along with additional staff members, they would be acquiring new equipment, which would increase efficiencies (mowers, weed eaters, chainsaws, paint machines, potentially crack seal equipment) and that staffing will be evaluated as we move forward. The department also reported that there have been recent adjustments in the Airport Service Worker salary range schedule, one adjustment initiated by the department, and another county-wide adjustment agreed upon by the Board of Supervisors and Union. Prior to the adjustments, 7 out of 7 hires had found other employment opportunities within weeks of starting. After the salary adjustments, we have retained 4 of 4 new hires.

There was further discussion regarding the centerline lights at ACV and updates on when those might be restored. The department reported that there are extensive pavement and lighting projects being worked on at the moment that will have design completion in 2022. This was discussed later in the agenda (4-I).

H. FBO

Airport Appraisals were conducted as a result of receiving an FAA compliance letter from 2018. Those appraisals identified a rent increase in the spaces that Northern Air occupied. After discussion with the Northern Air owner, he indicated he wanted to continue offering maintenance service, but that he would likely be giving up the other leased spaces.

There has been continued dialogue regarding the services of an FBO being lost (maintenance, lobbies, aircraft storage, fuel, etc). The Aviation Department has been having initial conversations with another local entity interested in offering those services, and more, and engaging to execute a long-term agreement to do so at one of the County-Owned airports.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 4H

There was discussion regarding the availability of the FAA inspection letter. The Department of Aviation indicated it would be attached to the meeting minutes and distributed to anyone who requests a copy. The letter had been reviewed at multiple HCAAC meetings previously.

There was discussion regarding the FAA inspection letter and suggestions that the County should instead be subsidizing FBO rent at Murray Field rather than increasing it.

There was discussion regarding where the rates came from that were proposed for Northern Air (and others) and why sustainability of the business is not considered as part of the criteria when appraising the value to the community. The Department of Aviation indicated that the rates and appraisals were conducted through an FAA approved methodology by an aviation management consulting firm who has conducted hundreds of airport appraisals across the country, many of which are comparable to the Humboldt-County owned airports.

I. Project Updates:

1. Ecogreen Lighting Project: The County has signed an OBF agreement with PGE and Service Agreement with Ecogreen solutions to upgrade ACV parking lot, GA, and ramp lighting to LED fixtures. ETA for install is March 2022.
2. Runway 14/32 & Electrical Upgrade: Mead & Hunt produced a preliminary concept study for Runway 14/32 & Electrical Upgrade, and Armstrong Consultants has been working on final design for the project. We expect design to be complete 2022 and beginning of construction in 2022/2023.
3. System Wide Study: Armstrong has been steadily moving forward on this project.

J. Rental Cars:

There are two additional car rental companies who are hoping to start up again out of ACV. Both are working with the Department of Aviation to determine their rental car footprint, counter locations, etc.

K. FAA Compliance Update

Last week notice went out that due to the diligent work and the completion of almost all items from the 2018 compliance letter, the lawsuit against the County was being dropped.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. GA Bathrooms:

This topic will be discussed further as we engage with a local entity interested in beginning FBO service for Humboldt County. We look forward to having much-improved facilities as we move forward.

B. Landscaping:

This is being addressed as a part of the terminal planning efforts. There is a specific chapter dedicated to terminal and landscaping that goes with, as well as parking lots and the landscaping around those.

C. Microgrid Project

a. EV Install:

There are 4 charging stations that will have the capacity to charge vehicles in short-term parking. This is projected for 1st or 2nd quarter 2022.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. FAA's VASI is not working at EKA.

B. Weather cams are needing attention.

7. IDEAS FOR NEXT MEETING

8. NEXT MEETING DATE – Tuesday, February 22, 2022

9. ADJOURNMENT