

Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
Airport Committee

Monday, February 2, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
550 Sally Ride Drive
Director of Airports Office

Final Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Supervisor Bonilla.

Supervisor Mary Piepho, Chair and Supervisor Susan Bonilla, Vice Chair were introduced. County Staff present: Tomi Van de Brooke, Supervisor Piepho's Office; Keith Freitas, Airport; Beth Lee, Airport and Natalie Olesen, Airport.

2. Public Comment:

None

3. Airport Committee Expectations and Goals for 2009

Keith Freitas reported that Airport staff is looking for the goals and expectations of the Airport Committee (Committee). Keith then gave a brief history of how in the past the Airports Division of Public Works would take items that were legally required to and/or were of significant interest to the Board of Supervisors (Board) for consideration. Over the last 10 years, those sensitive items were generally taken to the Airport AdHoc Subcommittee first. The Aviation Advisory Committee (AAC), which has been in existence for about 30 years, would usually review all items of interest. Airport staff is looking for the Committee's direction on what items should be brought before them.

Supervisor Bonilla stated that the Committee is interested in knowing more about the Airport budget with regular updates.

Keith Freitas responded that the Airport is currently working on the budget for fiscal year (F/Y) 2009/2010 which could be discussed at the March meeting. Also, the 50 percent, F/Y 2008/2009 budget could be reviewed. These will also be reviewed with the AAC in February. The Airport budget could be added to the agenda as a standing item.

Supervisor Piepho suggested adding the item as Budget Development rather than just Budget to more fully describe; Supervisor Bonilla agreed.

Supervisor Piepho then suggested Budget Development and Recommendation as a possible title. Supervisor Bonilla agreed that this wording would allow for a presentation of what is being cut as every single department is being asked to make budget cuts.

Supervisor Piepho stated that anything going before the full Board for approval should be put before the Committee in advance of going to the full Board. The Supervisor then asked about the public outreach process for Airport events and asked if all supervisors were invited.

Keith Freitas responded that it is the practice to include all five Supervisors for Airport invites.

Supervisor Bonilla needed clarification on the previous meeting's minutes as to whether the Open House was to be presented to the AAC.

Keith Freitas reported that an open house presentation had been made to the AAC at their January 20 meeting.

Supervisor Piepho asked that Minutes Adoption be added to the next agenda.

Keith Freitas responded that an agenda format has been requested from Julie Enea at the County Administrator's Office so that future agendas would be consistent with all other Committees.

Tomi Van de Brooke questioned how postings for meetings were made, how broadly they go out and then how in depth discussions should be on items brought before the Board, Committee and AAC. Supervisor Piepho then asked about the posting locations for the Committee meetings.

Keith Freitas responded that the agendas are posted at the Airport office, are sent to the Clerk of the Board for posting and are also emailed to an interested parties list.

Supervisor Piepho requested the Committee agenda, proposed meeting schedule, and minutes also be posted to the Airport website.

Supervisor Bonilla stated that the other committees have referral items. Airport staff was then directed to develop a list of items to be accomplished in the next year including standards, policies and development processes. The Supervisor would also like to have an AAC Chair update report added as a standing item to the agenda.

Supervisor Piepho agreed this would be a good idea to help keep information flowing and would give the public another chance to be updated on issues.

4. Role of the Aviation Advisory Committee

Geoff Logan, AAC Chair, stated that the AAC Officers have had discussions and are struggling with the AAC's role now that the Airport Committee has been established as a standing committee. Geoff further reported that Tom Weber, AAC Secretary, had reformatted the requested input matrix/organization chart. The AAC is working to be more proactive and less reactive.

Tom Weber stated the role of the AAC is evolving and the AAC would like to step up from being just an advisory committee to more of an oversight committee when it comes to items like the Airport budget. Tom then reported that over the next three (3) months the AAC will be looking deeper into some very specific Airport budget issues that some individuals had expressed concerns over. The AAC is also planning to provide input on the Part 150 Study recommendations.

Supervisor Piepho questioned how this was a change from the existing structure/operation?

Geoff Logan stated this is the question that the AAC has been trying to answer. Some of the members felt the AAC should be considered a commission in order to change the mandate of its role as an advisory committee.

Tom Weber stated he reviewed the AAC charter and everything he had described is consistent with that charter. The focus is on reinvigorating the AAC and its involvement.

Supervisor Piepho commented that at a previous meeting there had been a request to rename the AAC. The Supervisor then asked the AAC to evaluate their title to see if it still fits or if another title would better describe what the AAC does.

Supervisor Bonilla stated that keeping advisory as part of the title keeps it consistent with other committees throughout the County and that changing the name may have other unintended implications.

Pat Howlett, AAC member, commented that the AAC is finally becoming more effective, functional and of benefit to the Supervisors.

Supervisor Bonilla commented on the draft matrix that the title of AdHoc needed to be changed.

Keith Freitas asked for clarification regarding Supervisor Piepho's request to have all items going to the full Board to go before the AAC and Committee first. There is a concern that there needs to be some flexibility for example; hangar rental agreements. Having hangar rental agreements go through the AAC and Committee prior to Board consideration would mean that empty hangars would not be able to be filled for an extended period of time. This requirement should be refined to apply those items that are of interest to the stakeholders and could be controversial.

Supervisor Piepho stated that those items that are legally required and sensitive to the stakeholders should be brought to the Committee.

Dianne Cole expressed her approval of what the AAC is doing. Diane further commented that during the time when there were discussions of closing the Airport it became evident that certain individuals wanted to diminish the ability of the Airport Manager to do his job. The concern is that in this environment, in particular when the economy is fragile, it is important that the Airport Manager be able to conduct business and not have impediments that unreasonably stall activities. The Airport Manager's role should not be diminished into a secondary role to the AAC because that is not the AAC's purpose. Previously, the full Board made a resolution to facilitate Airport activities by having the Airport Manager report directly to the County Administrator, streamline the development process and streamline County process by not having to go through the Department of Public Works to get things on the Board agenda, etc. For things to slide back to that previous time would not be good for the Airport; the Airport has already lost out on many things because the Airport Manager has not been allowed to react to business demand.

Supervisor Bonilla requested a copy of that Board order. The Supervisor stated this is not the intent of what the Committee is trying to accomplish. The intent is more about establishing procedures and practices for the stakeholders so that their decision making is well informed, thoroughly transparent and as collaborative as possible. The intent is not to delay or to diminish the role of the Airport Manager but rather the exact opposite. The Board agreed to make a standing Airport Committee to bring the importance of the Airport to the forefront.

Dianne Cole stated the AAC's involvement is welcome as they are a filter for issues brought to the Airport. The concern expressed is for this process not to evolve into a situation where it becomes harder to run the Airport.

Supervisor Piepho reiterated the Committee was not intended to make things more difficult but that it is a way to make things more transparent and to have a better flow of information in order to ensure a more effective decision making process. This process will also ensure the public has opportunity to participate throughout.

Geoff Logan stated that this collaborative process will strengthen the Airport. Other AACs have been studied and compared and this AAC is right in line with what others are doing. A collaborative approach to handling the County assets is the right thing to do.

Keith Freitas stated that the AAC and now the Airport Committee helps give the airports the attention they deserve by elevating the understanding of their role as an economic engine.

Supervisor Piepho commented that this process will also lend more support to the Director by lessening the burden of the information contact, process, and public input.

Supervisor Piepho stated the matrix developed still needs more work; an arrow linking the Airport Committee and the Board needs to be added. The Supervisor further stated that the tasks and duties are still missing that show the kinds of items are handled by each; the Airport, AAC, Committee and Board.

Tomi Van de Brooke explained that the matrix needs to be more of a flowchart to give clarity as to how issues are handled as more of a policy and procedures process.

Supervisor Piepho then stated that the flowchart should show the process so that if someone new comes in with an issue they can look at the flowchart and know how their issue will be resolved through the process.

Tom Weber stated this should be done as a second document showing different issues and how they go through the process.

Supervisor Bonilla stated that the matrix and flowchart need to be public documents posted to the webpage. The most frequently asked questions should be shown with how they are resolved through the process.

5. Airport Open House

Keith Freitas gave a brief history of open houses and air shows held at Buchanan Field. Keith stated that the Airport was approach by Dianne Cole, representing the Ninety-Nines, about sponsoring an airport open house on June 21, 2009. The Airport sees this as a positive outreach to the community. Dianne made a presentation to the AAC on January 20, 2009, to discuss the details and address any concerns by the AAC.

Tom Weber stated when Dianne presented to the AAC, the biggest concern was timing. After discussions with Airport staff and Dianne the AAC recommended moving forward with the Airport open house.

Supervisor Piepho would like more clarity of Committee actions related to stated topics on further agendas. The Committee indicated their full support and recommendation to the full Board on the Buchanan open house proposal.

Supervisor Piepho questioned when the foreign trade zone would be returning to the Committee and asked that the item should go before the AAC first.

Geoff Logan stated the foreign trade zone would be put on the next AAC agenda.

Rich Spatz questioned if Silver Pacific is moving forward with the 10.3 acre parcel.

Keith responded that Silver Pacific was unable to attend the Committee meeting but should present at the March meeting. They are currently working on the site plan and elevation drawings.

Ross Fay of Calstar stated that this week, in Washington, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is holding a three (3) day public hearing having to do with safety in the air medical business. It was being brought to the attention of the airport public because the topic could become a circus. Should there be any questions Calstar would be a resource of information.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:56 a.m.