

Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
Airport Committee

Monday, November 1, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
550 Sally Ride Drive
Director of Airports Office

Final Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. by Supervisor Bonilla.

Supervisor Susan Bonilla, Vice Chair, was introduced. County Staff present: Julie Bueren, Public Works Director; Luis Quinonez, Chief of Staff for Supervisor Bonilla; Keith Freitas, Airport; Beth Lee, Airport; and Natalie Olesen, Airport.

2. Approval of Minutes

September 1, 2009 minutes were approved.

3. Public Comment:

None

4. Report by Aviation Advisory Committee

Tom Weber, Aviation Advisory Committee (AAC) Chair, reported the AAC held its annual Tenant Recognition Award Event at the October meeting. A plaque was given to Bob Johnson of Concord Jet for his dedication to Buchanan Field Airport and facilitating new Airport development. A second plaque was given to Bill and Tillie Larkin; Bill is an aviation historian and avid aviation enthusiast and Tillie was the Airports' first secretary. Both have supported the Airport for more than 50 years.

Tom Weber stated that the AAC had reviewed the fiscal year (F/Y) 2008/2009 budget and would be reviewing the first quarter F/Y 2009/2010 budget numbers at an upcoming meeting. The Power Plant proposal near the Byron Airport was discussed and will continue to be researched so that the AAC can make a recommendation to the Airport Committee. Tom further stated the AAC plans on recognizing the Eagle Scout, Stephen Cuff, for his contribution of the kiosk in the observation area at the AAC's next meeting. The AAC will also review the final draft of the open house and airshow policies.

5. Airport Development

Beth Lee reported Wings at Buchanan terminated their lease and a general solicitation went out for that parcel. Three parties responded to the solicitation, however, only one party (Aviation Development Group) responded to the subsequent request for information. A board order is scheduled to go before the Board of Supervisors (Board) on November 3, 2009, for authorization to start lease negotiations. The new project aesthetics were shown at a public meeting and the community responded favorably.

Airport staff is working with Byron Jet Center and Silver Pacific Aviation on lease modifications due to the current economy. Keith Freitas commented that Silver Pacific Aviation asked for some changes and Airport staff is working through those issues. Supervisor Bonilla stated that the County needs to be flexible during these hard economic times in order to address lending issues.

6. Peak Power Plan Adjacent to Byron Airport

Keith Freitas stated Diamond Generating Corporation approached Airport staff about building a power power plant 2.66 miles southeast of the Byron Airport. The California Energy Commission (CEC) held

its first public meeting on October 1, 2009, to discuss the power plant. The Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) held a subsequent meeting to further discuss the issue of the power plant location. Airport staff has drafted a letter, requested by Supervisor Piepho, which would come from the full Board, which identifies concerns and issues that have arisen from other power plants throughout California. The issues range from analysis that was completed by the FAA and from information received during the CEC hearings on the Hayward Airport and generally from pilots that have had issues/incidents/accidents that they believe are associated with a power plant near an airport. A peaker power plant was recently denied near the Hayward Airport. Most issue is with the plumes or exhaust from the plants and how that will affect flight. The letter highlights the information found during Airport staff's research and asks for scientific research to be conducted before approval by the CEC and if not, if a conclusive determination cannot be reached, that the Board not support the power plant being built that close to the Byron Airport. Byron Airport has many unique types of aviation uses like sailplanes, gliders, ultra-lights, skydivers, parachute jumpers and need to be considered in the analysis. The CEC has been made aware of these issues.

Bo Buchynsky of Diamond Generating Corporation, the power plant developer, stated that his company has had ongoing discussions with Airport staff. Bo stated the FAA's safety risk analysis results stated, "as a result of this assessment the risk associated with plumes is deemed acceptable without restriction, limitation or further mitigation". Further, the analysis stated, "however, to further lower the acceptable risk associated with the exhaust vertical plumes it recommends the continuance of training and awareness programs as have been successful with similar hazards of acceptable risk value." Bo further stated that he has talked to Airport staff about working with them about training, information and awareness programs that would need to be implemented. The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan was reviewed and the power plant was designed so that the elevations of the plant and power poles would be less than 100 feet tall in order to stay below the limits that were established.

Geoff Logan reported that AAC members attended the presentation as well as members of the ALUC. The peaker power plant is being built in Alameda County and their own ALUC has considered amending their compatibility plan to preclude power plant development within a five mile radius of their airports. The plume analysis does not take into consideration the different types of aircraft flying in and out of Byron Airport. The applicant's own consultant is an Australian company and they are not done with their analysis. The CEC gave the ALUC until November 25, 2009 to forward a response. The ALUC feels it is premature to have such a short deadline for responses as there has not been enough time for additional research; however, the ALUC will have a meeting to draft a letter. Tom Weber commented that unlike cars that have certain on-ramps and off-ramps on freeways, aircraft like ultra-lights can fly anywhere they want unless it is restricted airspace. Just because there is a typical flight path coming in on an instrument landing doesn't mean that those paths will always be followed precisely. Flying is more like taking a vehicle off road as opposed to on a freeway. A huge investment was made in the Byron Airport and it should be protected.

Keith Freitas stated that the CEC is trying to have all the issues brought to them as early as possible so that they can do the analysis to resolve those issues and prevent additional issues from coming forward a year down the road.

Supervisor Bonilla questioned whether or not an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was completed. Bo Buchynsky said a preliminary EIR was submitted and then he gave an overview of the process the CEC will go through; the process usually takes 12 months to complete.

Supervisor Bonilla asked for changes to the draft letter; include how Alameda County is planning on amending their compatibility plan, include clarification of ultra-lights and how they don't follow a specific path and how training may not work for them. Also asked that "appropriate" scientific analysis should be changed to specifically state what Airport staff requires. Geoff Logan suggested using "power power plant" instead of "appropriate". Supervisor Bonilla then asked to have Airport staff contact other jurisdictions and ask for them to submit letters with any issues they have regarding the power plant to include with the Board letter.

Supervisor Bonilla questioned whether there was communication and coordination between the jurisdictions regarding the power plant. Keith Freitas stated that the CEC has the final decision and the local jurisdictions may not have much say on this issue.

Draft letter approved, with the requested changes, to be scheduled before the full Board for consideration.

7. Fiscal Year (F/Y) 2008/2009 Final Budget

Keith Freitas reported the final F/Y 2008/2009 budget exceeded the Airports target with \$239,000 added to the operating cash reserve. Supervisor Bonilla questioned how renegotiations with tenants will affect the budget. Keith commented that Airport staff will continue to review the budget quarterly including Airport revenues and will make adjustments in order to ensure a cushion. Supervisor Bonilla stated that a bigger cushion needs to be established as the current economic hardships are expected to last longer than expected.

8. Future Agenda Items

- Airport Reserve Policy
- Open House and Air Show Policies
- Foreign Trade Zone

Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.