



PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT

AIRPORTS DIVISION

<https://edcgov.us/Government/CAO/airports/Pages/airports.aspx>

ADMINISTRATION

2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 621-5355 * (530) 642-0508 FAX

AIRPORTS

3501 Airport Road, Ste. 1, Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 622-0459 * (530) 622-0270 FAX
Email: airportoperations@edcgov.us

COUNTY AIRPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes from the November 12, 2020 Meeting

Location: Virtually, via Zoom

I. CALL TO ORDER: 5:01 p.m. by Russ Sardina, Chair

To comply with protective requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was virtual, using Zoom, and it was recorded. A total of 32 people logged into the Zoom meeting, although not all participated for the entire meeting.

Participating members: Russ Sardina, Sue Bell, Chris Nelson, and Gary Vorderbruggen

Non-participating members: Mike Worth, Ricky Branaugh

Participating staff: Chris Perry, Sherrie Busby, Julianne Melchor, and Jeremy Gutenberger

Guests (not all guests identified themselves): Jim Hogan, Ken Baiocchi, Dave Lugert, Tim Sullivan, Stan Pol, Al Herron, Wanda Nagle, Brandon Braithwaite, Rick Todd, Hal Stephens, Dick Wampach, others.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: The Agenda was adopted without changes.

III. DISPOSITION OF MINUTES: The minutes of the September 25, 2019 meeting were adopted.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT: Wanda Nagle asked when the recording would be available to the public. Staff will determine how and where to post the recording when the minutes have been completed.

V. STAFF REPORTS

a) Organizational and staff changes; introduction of new Assistant Director: The Airports Division is now part of the Planning and Building Department, effective with the beginning of the fiscal year. Creighton Avila left County employment in July and the Airports Division is now under Chris Perry, the newly hired Assistant Director for the Planning and Building Department. Matt Mergen, Airport Operations Supervisor, retired in March, and Julie Hart, Administrative Technician, retired in June. Bud Eyerly, an extra-help Airport Technician was hired part-time in July.

b) WIFI (for security) - Placerville and Georgetown Airports: WIFI has been installed; every hangar is covered and repeaters have been installed at both airports. Service is down currently due to a nationwide AT&T outage. Jeremy Gutenberger has contacted JR Communication about connectivity problems; he is waiting for new routers to be installed. The contract with JR Communication is managed by Risk Management; Gary

Vorderbruggen requested that staff follow-up with Risk Management to request an adjustment of charges for the time period that the system is not in operation. Some users are unable to access the system; some have installed additional equipment to utilize the WIFI.

- c) Taxiway Edge Lights Project - Placerville Airport: Project has been completed. A few lights are not working, but Jeremy is resolving the problems as they happen.
- d) Razor wire - Placerville Airport: Project is completed.
- e) Hangar ground leases: Sherrie Busby provided information on the status of leases: Airports is receiving assistance from a staff person in another unit to process leases. Ten leases have gone to the Board of Supervisors (Board); 4-5 are in the process and will go to the Board soon. Approximately 50-60 leases are pending. Ensuring that lessees are providing appropriate insurance information and that they are meeting the requirements is time consuming. Jim Hogan feels that lease rates are excessive for the square footage that is being leased and asked if the lease process could be simplified. Russ Sardina reminded members that a benchmark study started by Creighton Avila before he left, when completed, will help with establishing whether EDC is consistent with the same process at other airports; the study will provide a basis for negotiating lease requirements and charges. The process is cumbersome and expensive (in staff time). Users can make their voices heard by going directly to the BOS. A question was raised about the new terms of the current boilerplate lease. Due to multiple versions of leases, the requirements in leases are not consistent. Sherrie Busby clarified lease terms; historically the County approved ten-year leases with two ten-year renewal options. A new staff person in County Counsel has been reviewing the boilerplate lease and has recommended some changes. Currently, new leases are for ten years, without an option to renew (Creighton Avila mandated this change), but practically speaking, renewal options are no longer utilized anyway, because at the ten-year renewal, the County processes new leases which include current requirements. A suggestion was made to allow renewals with language indicating that renewed leases would be updated to current requirements. Users are concerned about longevity and consistency factors that are inherent in leases with renewal options, as well as the number of leases that are pending. Sherrie will speak to County Counsel about users' requests for longer term leases such as were processed in the past (ten years initially with two ten-year options to renew). Sherrie also pointed out that even if staff were caught up with leases, there would still be a lag in time between the sale of a hangar and the completion of a lease. County Counsel is reviewing the requirement that the Board approve all leases, as that requirement adds approximately two months to the lead time. Sherrie is working with County Counsel to develop a temporary agreement which would reference the boilerplate lease and would be used for the interim until a final lease is processed. The Board would need to approve the use of the temporary agreement.

Russ Sardina is concerned with getting appropriate leases in place on a timely basis with terms that make financial sense for users; the option to renew is important. Russ

requested this item be added to the next agenda with an update from staff on progress of discussions with County Counsel and Risk.

A question was raised about why auto insurance is required (the airports are County property so why is it any different than driving on a County road?) and the public can drive on the airport and at other County facilities without a requirement to provide insurance documentation so why are airport tenants required to provide proof of insurance? Sherrie indicated that insurance requirements are set by Risk Management, and this concern has been discussed with Risk multiple times. Russ advised waiting for the results of the benchmark study. Russ and other users requested that this topic be added to the next agenda and requested that a representative from Risk Management be invited to attend.

Brandon Braithwaite asked about the progress of the benchmark study. Creighton Avila told staff that he was waiting for responses from two airports when he left in July. He included 16 airports in the study, and developed the list from recommendations from Caltrans, the County's airport consultant, and discussions with Russ. Chris Perry is aware of the study, but hasn't reviewed it yet; he will be prepared to provide an update by the next meeting. This is a priority. Gary Vorderbruggen requested a date for completion of the study. In its response to the Grand Jury, Chris indicated the Board made a commitment that the study would be done by August 2021; Chris intends to complete the study prior to that date. Gary requested details about the airports used for the study (do these airports have comparable FBO services?). (One user requested the list of airports be included in the meeting minutes.) Russ suggested the results be presented all together, not piecemeal. Rick Todd asked what will happen after the study is done; will the BOS actually reduce rates? Russ indicated results will be reviewed by the committee first, and users should be prepared to attend BOS meetings to demonstrate their concerns. Rick is concerned that the County has the incentive (because rates are so high) to continue the study for years with users paying exorbitant rates in the meantime.

Rick also asked about filling the vacancy on the committee and if all applications were reviewed. Russ referred Rick to the agenda item to vote on a new committee member. Sherrie reminded Russ that he indicated the committee would approve the first applicant, as that applicant probably would have been approved by the committee in January, if that meeting hadn't been cancelled. Rick said he submitted an application, but hasn't received an acknowledgment. Russ indicated he believes appointment to the committee should go by who applies first; but he said he is leaving it to the County to determine how members should be appointed. Rick is concerned about the process, and thinks it isn't "straight-up." Gary said if there were more members then it would be easier to have a quorum and meetings wouldn't be cancelled. Chris Perry suggested tabling the discussion on vacancies until that item is reached on the agenda.

- f) Temporary agreement for hangar ground lease: See previous item for discussion.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Both Airports:

- a) Report from the Airport Advisory Committee on a Mission Statement: Ricky Branaugh is the point person on this item; Russ provided input to Ricky. Since Ricky is absent, Russ will request an update for the next meeting.
- b) Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Airport Economic Development: Russ said the ad hoc committee members met with Creighton, but the last meeting was more than a year ago. There is no economic development plan for either airport. Chris Perry would like to discuss this issue with Russ to come up to speed. One user suggested one or more meetings should be devoted just to this issue. Russ will meet with Chris to discuss reviving the ad hoc committee.
- c) Airport benchmark study: See item V. e for discussion on this issue.
- d) Snow removal: Ricky Branaugh raised this issue, but wasn't present to discuss. Russ asked if anyone else considers snow plowing an issue. Gary indicated it is and suggested using County DOT services to clear the runway, when they are clearing Spanish Dry Diggings Road. Russ reminded members that snow removal operators need to be specially trained to handle snow removal on an airport. Jeremy reiterated that it takes special skills to handle snow removal at the airport, as liability factors are high.
- e) El Dorado County Vegetation Management and Defensible Space Ordinance # 5101: Ricky Branaugh raised this issue, but wasn't present to discuss. Jeremy addressed his efforts to involve other agencies to rework established firebreaks, but this work was delayed due to the pandemic. Jeremy hopes to be able to get this set up as a training project with these agencies next year.

Placerville Airport:

- a) New credit card terminal for fuel island: Project has been completed and users are happy with the new system. Russ congratulated Jeremy on getting this project completed.
- b) Tank cleaning for 100 low lead and Jet A fuel tanks; repair float system on 100 low lead tank: The County received quotes from one company; however, the company has pulled out of the process. Jeremy requested a quote from another vendor; this vendor recommended replacing the drop tube with a device that would set the suction at 12 inches from the bottom. Jeremy is reluctant to initiate this recommendation until the tank is cleaned, but would like to implement it, after discussion with users, as it would provide more exact information for fuel load purchases. Russ mentioned that fuel sales are the primary source of income for the airport; Russ feels this is the most important issue for the Placerville Airport. Another user reiterated that having the system repaired would provide more flexibility for when loads are purchased, which could provide significant savings on purchases. Jeremy indicated cleaning the tank is the first

priority, then replacing the drop tube. Jeremy indicated there are different requirements for cleaning each tank, and Environmental Management strongly recommends that both tanks be cleaned; Jeremy recommended cleaning both at the same time as there would be cost savings.

- c) Replace fuel dispensers: Displays are difficult to read; the whole unit may need to be replaced.
- d) Oil containment/fuel truck cover: Jeremy discussed the previous plan for the oil containment issue with Environmental Management; EMD recommended installing raised curbs instead of excavating for installation of a concrete pad with nine-inch curb; raised curbs would be sufficient to contain even large spills, and at less cost than excavating to create a lower containment area. Jeremy also recommends installing a covered metal structure with a roof and open sides. This would be within the containment area near the fuel tanks.
- e) PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs: Despite promises from PGE, the airport (and other County-provided emergency services) has not been excepted from inclusion in PSPS events. Without power, the airport is unsecure because gates are unlocked and runway/taxiway lights do not function, and fuel cannot be dispensed. Staff will request funds for a generator in the next budget, again, and hopefully it will not be deleted. There may be some possibility to request grant funds for solar power. Ken Baiocchi offered to meet with Jeremy to discuss methods for back-up power; 20 KW would probably be sufficient.
- f) Beacon: Russ believes the beacon needs to be updated more quickly than is currently projected on the ACIP. A pavement project is ahead of the beacon. Jeremy indicated the pavement project would be a higher priority because he is confident he can keep the beacon functioning for some time yet. One user commented that the FAA may be able to access additional funds from other projects (other airports) if the beacon should become a higher priority.
- g) AWOS: The AWOS has been working fine but the technology is getting very old. Jeremy has made improvements that have solved some of the problems experienced recently.
- h) Tree removal: Not discussed.

Georgetown Airport:

- a) Rehabilitation of restrooms, including Americans with Disabilities Act compliance: Jeremy has not been able to complete the project due to other priorities. One restroom is about 90% complete.
- b) Replace/upgrade obstruction lights: All obstruction lights (except one) were replaced with stand-alone LED solar-powered lights; the one light couldn't be reached with the man lift. Jeremy suggested replacing the one obstruction light with a wind sock (coming in over 17, to the right). Gary agrees with Jeremy's assessment. The PAPI is off and needs adjustment; Jeremy has this on his list.

- c) Upgrade ramp lights: All have been replaced with the same metal halide lights; replacing with LEDs was too expensive. Jeremy is working with a PG&E third-party distributor to replace the lights with LEDs; the cost would appear on our monthly bill until the cost of the installation has been eliminated.
- d) Trees in overrun area: Jeremy will attempt to remove some small trees and brush from the overrun area next year, with the assistance of Growlersburg, hopefully. Scott sent Gary some 20-year-old photos that show a stark increase in the growth of trees. Jeremy thanked the pilots and users who have been teaching him about airport-related issues. Caltrans doesn't identify the area as an overrun area, so only trees in the 7:1 slope have been a concern when the airport has been inspected. Rick Todd indicated that this is a safety-of-flight issue and needs to be a priority; survivability is a key issue if the area needs to be used in an emergency landing or takeoff. Rick indicated the problem trees are on County property.
- e) Security gate: Jeremy has a gate which could be modified to be used at the location, instead of the current gate, which is difficult to operate. This would be a temporary repair, until money can be found to replace the gate. Gary suggested some changes to how the locks are used to make it easier for users to open/close the gate. Rick suggested relocating the electric gate to Aerodrome Way instead of where it is currently located. Jeremy indicated he would look at that option. Rick encouraged Jeremy to take advantage of local vendors to do this work. Jeremy indicated that there could be some possibility to use volunteers to do this work.
- f) Three-phase power: PG&E is not going to install 3-phase power, and Scott Herring is not going to consider it either. He received an estimate of \$780,000 to do the work.

VII. ACTION ITEMS:

- a) Discussion and vote on recommending Board of Supervisors appointment of Airports Advisory Committee member to fill one current vacancy: Jason Brand submitted an application on January 2nd for the vacant committee position. Russ made a motion to recommend Jason's appointment to the Board of Supervisors; Gary seconded the motion. The committee approved the motion unanimously.
- b) Discussion and vote on meeting time for future meetings: Gary recommended adjusting the start time to 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. to accommodate people who work and solicit public comment as part of the committee meetings. Guests and members requested a broader notice for committee meetings and indicated that lack of effort on the part of the County leads to the perception that people are being discouraged from participating, and requested that all airport users be notified via email. The current meeting notification process excludes Georgetown citizens. Rick Todd offered to post notices in Georgetown. Sherrie will follow-up on expanding the email list for notification. Using text for notifications was suggested. The committee has met regularly on a quarterly basis until this year. Chris Perry suggested polling members to solicit suggestions for a regular meeting date. A guest suggested a user database that can be accessed by those who are interested. Jeremy asked for people to stop by the

office to update their email addresses and suggested that those attending this meeting spread the word.

Gary made a motion and Russ seconded that meeting times going forward will start at 7:00 p.m. The committee approved the motion unanimously. The members all agreed that the next meeting will be scheduled for January 20, 2021.

VIII. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS (guests also commented and engaged in discussion during this agenda item; their comments are included with committee member comments):

- a) Gary Vorderbruggen: The card gate does not function as designed in a power outage; the gate is supposed to open and stay open the first time a user uses it. He noticed that someone unbolted the gate to get out a couple of months ago. The Fire Department and EMS could have problems with entering or exiting. The old battery back-ups are the problem. Jeremy has a plan to fix the gate.

Gary asked about signs for the Georgetown Airport. Jeremy had signs made for both airports, but stopped posting them when Risk Management raised a question about the spacing of the signs. He finished posting at the Placerville Airport but has not finished at Georgetown. He will make it a priority to get it done next week.

The ground clamp on the fuel island needs to be repaired; it doesn't grip the exhaust manifold.

Gary requested that the email list be developed and used for the next advisory committee meeting to notify all airport users. Chris indicated that staff would work on this effort for the next meeting.

Gary welcomed Chris and offered to give him a tour of the Georgetown Airport (by land and by air – Dick offered to give him a tour of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) museum at the Placerville Airport). Gary asked Chris what he thinks he can accomplish in the next six months. Chris indicated he will accept Gary's offer of a tour and that his goal is to support the staff team and make sure that the committee's goals and the Board's goals align; his role is to help everyone get to that point. This means issues will need to be worked through; Chris wants to help everyone navigate through the issues. Staff and the Board value the opinions and input of the committee and the public; the need is to ensure that as staff execute policies and ideas, everyone is well-supported to get to the end point of these policies and ideas.

Gary requested that minutes be sent out within two weeks. Gary also requested that Chris contact Lori Parlin to discuss AirFilm leaving. Gary stated that staff should be an advocate for businesses in the County.

Gary encouraged committee members and users to support Russ by attendance at any Board meetings scheduled to discuss rates and other issues.

Gary requested that Chris Perry and Russ review Rick Todd's application for membership on the committee, and suggested that another member be added to make it more likely

that a quorum could be achieved. Russ reminded committee members that the by-laws include the appointment of alternate members, to sit in as voting members when regular members are absent. Russ will discuss this with Chris.

- b) Scott Herring: AirFilm may move, but if the business stays, he plans to purchase and install a large generator. He offered to share the use of the generator to keep other airport functions operating. Scott complimented Jeremy on getting items completed. Scott has been told that the Board is looking for a recommendation from the committee on rate adjustments. He asked why the committee needs to wait for the results of the benchmark study to make a recommendation to the Board; he feels that all agree that rates are too high, and they don't need to wait for this to be confirmed by the study. He stated that Georgetown is an unhealthy airport, primarily due to rates that are too high.
 - c) Dick Wampach: The EAA bulletin board is available for posting of meeting notices and he would be happy to include notices or other information in the EAA's monthly newsletter.
 - d) Russ Sardina: Russ reiterated that meeting notifications should be sent to all airport users via an updated email list and regular meetings need to be scheduled going forward. The airports are an asset and need to be treated as a business and an asset. County leadership has not developed a plan for using the assets (airports) to their fullest extent to attract and keep businesses.
 - e) Wanda Nagle: Requested that the audio recording of the meeting be posted. Julianne Melchor indicated that we need to do some research on how to post audio recordings; we agree that it is probably possible to do so, but we need to figure out how to do it. If it is possible to post the audio recording, it will be posted.
 - f) Rick Todd: Rick requested that Chris get involved with critical discussion related to keeping AirFilm from leaving the Georgetown Airport. Russ requested that Chris call Scott as soon as possible.
- IX. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA: Hangar ground leases, insurance requirements, requesting County Counsel and Risk Management attend to discuss these issues, benchmark study, follow-up on tank cleaning and float issue at Placerville, fuel dispensers, beacon and AWOS projects, lease rates, airport access at Georgetown, trees at Georgetown.
- X. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m. The next planned meeting is January 20, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.