

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY Aviation Advisory Committee

2023 Annual Report

Advisory Board Meeting Time/Location: 10:00 am on the 2nd Thursday of every other month at either Buchanan Field or Byron Airport. These meetings have successfully transitioned back to in-person meetings.

Advisory Body Chair: Emily Barnett

Airport Staff: Greg Baer/Beth Lee/Russell Milburn

Activities

- Monthly review of noise statistics, operations report, airport development projects, airfield updates
- Discussions of airport projects and programs to disseminate information and solicit input from members and public
- Discussions of issues facing the airports and airport community
- Input to the Airports Director, Airport Committee, and Board of Supervisors on issues affecting the Contra Costa County Airports and surrounding communities
- Participation in community outreach efforts
- Quarterly review of the Airports' year-to-date and end-of-year forecast financial reports

Accomplishments

Discussed and advised on the following :

Buchanan Airport Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF)/Administration/Terminal Building

- Construction of the new Buchanan Airport ARFF/Admin/Terminal building. The long-awaited construction of the new Buchanan Airport Terminal project continues to progress despite supply chain and construction issues causing delays. Partially funded by the FAA and began construction in September 2021, with first quarter 2024 as the project's expected completion date.

Buchanan Airport Security Fencing Project

- Airport staff's successful re-request for FAA funding in 2022 allowed work to begin in late 2022 and completion by late-2023. There has been noticeable augments to security, and other functionality, including a gate between Sam's Club and the airport.

Hosting Key Discussions on Fuel Prices / Transition to Unleaded Fuel

The AAC hosted detailed discussions in 2022 on rising fuel prices and general aviations' global transition to unleaded fuel projected in the coming years. The hope is to position Contra Costa County Airports as an early adopter when unleaded aviation fuel becomes widely available. Additionally, researching more ways to provide fuel to the aviation community at an affordable rate, including through self-serve fuel tank, was identified as a potential strategy. Future discussions on fuel continued throughout 2023, and a subcommittee on fuel was established to include three (3) AAC members, one (1) AAC advisory member, and the Airport Director and other airport staff.

Hosting Key Discussions on Economic Development in and Around the Airports

The AAC hosted discussions with local aviation-related businesses and airport key stakeholders to understand the needs and the draw the airports provide to the aviation-supportive technology industries. The move to meetings every other month supports this effort. Committee members expressed the desire to have more robust discussions that a more extended, every-other-month meeting will better allow for.

- The Bay Area Test Site (BATS) initiative, started in 2019 by Supervisor Burgis and airport management to attract new aviation technology startups to both airports, has had several successes. The County's airports proximity to Silicon Valley and San Francisco has created a significant opportunity to serve as a preferred engineering, development, and test sites. With the ultimate goal of growing production and operation bases, including the corresponding potential for new jobs in both the Buchanan and Byron area communities. The AAC strongly and enthusiastically continues to support the BATS initiative.
- Commercial Development of Aeronautical and Non-Aeronautical Sites at Buchanan Field and Byron Airports. Increasing development is an important continuing item significant to the Airport Enterprise Fund. Several undeveloped parcels, designated for non-aviation use, are part of the Buchanan Field. These include sites at the corners of Marsh Drive and Solano Way, and Marsh Drive and Sally Ride Drive, as well as other sites not needed for aviation use.

The AAC continues to express strong support for all potential development projects. Each of these projects will contribute to the Enterprise Fund and will provide jobs and other economic benefits to the area surrounding Buchanan Field and Byron Airport.

- Airport noise impact on communities including:
ACC continues to Address various Buchanan and Byron Airports' noise inquiries through phone and in-person meetings between residents and airport staff and/or AAC members. What is key is consistency in reminding pilots of designated training hours according to the airports' noise abatement ordinance. Similar to reminders to pilots, staff communicates with tower management to reinforce the County's noise ordinance.
While there was a small decrease in airport operations in 2023 compared to 2022, overall complaints saw a small increase over the previous year. Similarly, to the previous years, the number of callers remains relatively low, with the same callers making several calls over the year.

Attendance/Representation

- AAC is composed of members representing each of the supervisorial districts, the cities of Concord and Pleasant Hill, the Airport Business Association, community of Pacheco, surrounding communities of Byron Airport (Brentwood, Byron, Knightsen, Discovery Bay), and three at large positions for a total of 13 members.
- In 2022 and 2023, quorums were more difficult to achieve as several vacancies created issues. The ACC, in partnership with Airport Staff and the Board of Supervisors, actively recruited those seats. Only one seat remains vacant, with a strong interest in each seat that has been appointed.
- AAC members continue to be highly engaged despite the return to in-person meetings. Public participation has also increased as individuals have found the continued hybrid in-person/virtual format's ease and safety conducive to participation. Overall, the AAC has welcomed more public comments with the addition to virtual meetings than recent 2020 and 2021 meetings.

- The AAC is a diverse group of aviation professionals, retired/current community leaders, members of the public, consultants, and educators. There is a balanced mix of pilots and non-pilots.
- Several committee members are also involved in other county and city advisory bodies, committees, and commissions.

Current AAC member roster is as follows:

| <u>AAC Members</u> | <u>Representing</u> | <u>Term Expiration Date</u> |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Vincent Salimi | District 1 | 2/28/26 |
| Roger Bass | District 2 | 2/29/24 |
| Jeffrey Geddes | District 3 | 2/29/24 |
| Gareth Ashley | District 4 | 2/28/26 |
| Christopher Baker | District 5 | 2/28/26 |
| Keith McMahon | City of Concord | 2/28/25 |
| Richard Celestre | City of Pleasant Hill | 2/29/24 |
| Shawn Stappen | Member At Large 1 | 2/29/24 |
| Eric Meinbress | Member At Large 2 | 2/28/26 |
| Emily Barnett | Member At Large 3 | 2/28/25 |
| Vacant | Pacheco Neighbor | |
| Dean Hickman-Smith | Byron Neighbor | 2/29/24 |
| Michael Bruno | Airport Business Association | 2/28/25 |

Current AAC Officers:

| <u>AAC Member</u> | <u>Position</u> | <u>Election Status</u> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Emily Barnett | Chair | Elected |
| Roger Bass | Vice-Chair | Elected |
| Eric Meinbress | Secretary | Elected |

Training/Certification

- It is mandatory for all Committee members to complete County training regarding the Ralph M. Brown Act, County's Better Government Ordinance, Implicit Bias for County officials, and complete the County's Ethics Orientation within 90 days of the appointment and every two years thereafter.

Proposed Objectives for 2024

- Completion of the New Terminal at Buchanan Airport
- Airport Fuel Options

- Continue to advise and review the Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP) including promoting progress on EDIP and strategic priority projects
- Continue to support and grow the BATS
- Continue to advise, monitor, and review the Buchanan Field and Byron Airports' construction and maintenance projects
- Continue to advise, monitor, and review activities and incidents impacting airport security
- Continue to grow and develop community and tenant outreach efforts for both airports
- Continue to advise, monitor, and review the Airports' budget, noise statistics, and overall operations
- Continue to work with the surrounding communities regarding noise inquiries and other aviation-related issues
- Continue regular discussions with Airport Staff on various airport developments (current and future), projects and issues, as well as disseminate information and offer recommendations
- Continue to advise Airport Staff on the new Buchanan Airport Terminal
- Continue to provide the general public with an open forum for discussions on aviation-related matters

c: Beth Lee, Assistant Director of Airports-Administration
Russell Milburn, Assistant Director of Airports-Operations
Emily Barnett, AAC Chair
Roger Bass, AAC Vice-Chair
Eric Meinbress, AAC Secretary