

UKIAH REGIONAL AIRPORT COMMISSION
September 2, 2008
Minutes

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Dottie Deerwester, Chair
Eric Crane
Don Albright
Jeffrey Sloan
Carl Steinmann

STAFF PRESENT

Greg Owen, Airport Manager
Ken Ronk, Airport Assistant
Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

None

OTHERS PRESENT

Chris Giller
Deborah Pardee
Paul G. Likens
Bernie Huhane
Nick Bishop
Boyd Searer
John Eisenzopf
Bob Devinney
John Jensen

The Airport Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Deerwester at 6:30 p.m., at the Ukiah Regional Airport, Old Flight Service Station, 1403 South State Street, Ukiah, California. Roll Call was taken with the results listed above.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**- Everyone cited the pledge of allegiance.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - July 8, 2008 & July 15, 2008

The Commission deferred approval of the July 8, 2008 minutes to the next regular meeting.

M/S Crane/Albright to approve the July 15, 2008 minutes, as submitted. Motion carried.

4. **AUDIENCE COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

5. **INTRODUCTION OF NEW AIRPORT COMMISSIONERS**

- Jeffrey Sloan
- Carl Steinmann

The Commission welcomed new Commissioners Jeffrey Sloan and Carl Steinmann and everyone introduced themselves.

6. **DISCUSSION/ACTION**

- 6 A. CALSTAR move to DHL Hangar
(Powerpoint Presentation – 60 min. max. discussion time)
CALSTAR Representatives attending:
Chris Giller, Chief Operating Officer
Debbie Pardee, Region Director

Airport Manager Owen gave a Powerpoint presentation showing the proposed new site and commented as follows:

- The current location for CALSTAR includes a 6000 sq. ft. ground lease @ \$452 per month, \$38 monthly fuel truck parking fee, a \$40 monthly land-side vehicle parking and two large modular trailer units and maintenance shed staged on the ramp for a grand total of the \$530 total monthly rent.
- The proposed new location at the former DHL building includes 14,400 sq. ft. of ramp space @ \$432 per month, 3,000 sq. ft. of Hangar space @ \$837 per month, 384 sq. ft. of modular office space @ \$353.28 per month, and 5,760 sq. ft. of land-side parking @ \$172.80 per month for a grand total of \$1,795.08 per month rent.
- Caltrans Aeronautical Division mandated the relocation five years ago because the current location is not feasible for a helicopter emergency rescue operation as it conflicts with general aviation fixed-wing aircraft and the current location lacks a maintenance facility.
- The proposed new location would require that the two grass/dirt areas near the taxi-way would need to be paved.
- The pros for relocating CALSTAR include moving the helicopter portion of the operation away from fixed-wing aircraft, provide for a safer and more secure location for CALSTAR to function, and better meet the need of customers.
- The cons for relocating include the cost of paving of grass/dirt area, increased noise to the FedEx operation and CALSTAR's unwillingness to add more permanent structures.
- Staff concludes the proposed new location is workable with an upgrade from CALSTAR, complies with Caltrans regulations, and would better serve CALSTAR as an emergency rescue operation wherein the helicopter function would no longer conflict with fixed-wing aircraft on the Airport.
- The Commission favors the area south of the Corporation Yard as the permanent site for CALSTAR wherein the DHL site is a temporary solution, since the proposed permanent site lacks the necessary infrastructure for CALSTAR to operate.
- Staff indicated the present location of the helicopters is unsafe and a potential liability.

The Commission/staff and CALSTAR representatives discussed the proposed new location as follows:

- The matter of finding an appropriate site for CALSTAR has been an issue for nearly 10 years wherein Caltrans has made it mandatory that CALSTAR be relocated to another area on the Airport for safety and practicality purposes.
- The cost for paving of the grass/dirt area is estimated at \$100,000.
- The duration of the lease has not been negotiated. Staff anticipates the lease will be three to five years.
- **Paul Likens** stated Caltrans initially had expressed concern the helicopter pad was initially placed too close to the hillside and it was relocated further from the hillside for safety purposes.
- **Airport Manager Owen** stated the problem with the current location of the helicopter operation is the conflict with fixed-wing aircraft in close proximity and interferes with the transient parking.
- **Chair Deerwester** noted the CALSTAR operation and corresponding relocation to Westside North is not an allowed use with regard to the Airport Land Use Plan and future development.
- **Airport Manager Owen** stated there are existing aviation-related activities/uses in the vicinity of the DHL building.

- **Chair Deerwester** asked whether FedEx has been consulted about potential impacts relevant to the relocation.
- **Airport Manager Owen** is of the opinion the impact to FedEx would be minimal.
- There was a discussion concerning the cost feasibility of paving the grass/dirt area.
- **Commissioner Albright** supports relocating CALSTAR to the DHL Hangar allowing the area to remain grass and provide for regular irrigation and mowing maintenance as an alternative measure to paving. In the event CALSTAR incurs the cost of paving at the temporary site and eventually at the end of five years is able to relocate to the desired permanent site that CALSTAR be given a 'credit' for the cost of improvements necessary to operate at the temporary site, since amortizing the costs incurred over the five year period of the lease would not economically pencil out.
- **Commissioner Crane** expressed concern relevant to the temporary proposed site and whether this location complies with the Airport Land Use Plan and/or whether the site is an acceptable area for roto-craft to work out of.
- **Christian Giller** stated CALSTAR is not opposed to relocation to the proposed temporary site and is of the opinion the site is a good interim solution. He expressed concern about the high cost of improvements relative to paving to accommodate the roto-craft portion of the operation.
- It was noted the DHL hangar can be used for maintenance purposes in addition to housing of aircraft.
- There was discussion about the feasibility of sharing the paving cost between the Airport and CALSTAR.
- **Commissioner Crane** stated the monthly rent would likely have to increase to offset the cost of paving in the event of a shared agreement.
- There was discussion concerning the cost benefit of allowing the grass to be irrigated and properly mowed to accommodate the roto-craft as an alternative to paving.
- There was also discussion concerning the issue of drainage/excess runoff on the site in conjunction with paving and how grass would be a feasible option.
- **John Eisenzopf** expressed concern about the proposed interim solution concept and stated from an aircraft traffic point of view relocating to the southeast corner of the Airport would be the better solution. It may be that 'five years down the road' the site south of the Corporation Yard may not be available for the CALSTAR operation. With this in mind, the interim location should be considered as the permanent site. The Airport and community will have to live with whatever decision is made. He is of the opinion the best option would be to find a location with the least amount of impact/conflict to other Airport users. He does not support the DHL site for the CALSTAR operation.
- **Commissioner Crane** supports further exploration of the vacant site south of the Corporation Yard as the permanent site for the CALSTAR operation.
- There was discussion concerning impacts/effects generated from the 'roto blast' of a helicopter in connection with other hangars/facilities near the DHL building and associated GA aircraft.
- **Chair Deerwester** commented the Commission in past discussions concerning the relocation of CALSTAR determined the Northwest portion of the Airport north of Feather Lite is not an appropriate location. The CALSTAR operation is also not an allowed/desirable use in this section of the Airport pursuant to the Airport Land Use Plan.
- **Commissioner Albright** cited problems with roto-craft from other helicopter operations in the vicinity of his hangar.
- **Chair Deerwester** commented the Commission has in past discussions concerning potential development of the eastside of the Airport addressed potential developments that

would be appropriate, which could include roto-aircraft operations. She further commented the City of Ukiah presently does not have the funds to make the necessary infrastructure improvements to the site adjacent to the City Corporation Yard to accommodate new developments. It would be beneficial to explore other monies/grant funding that may be available for development purposes/

- **Chair Deerwester** stated the Commission/CALSTAR representatives discussed the possibility of relocating the helicopter portion of the CALSTAR operation further south and allowing CALSTAR to continue the administrative portion of the operation to continue in its present location. The Commission/CALSTAR determined this approach would not be a feasible option and it was noted the CALSTAR pilots were uncomfortable operating in close proximity to CalFire. The intent of the Commission/staff is to formulate a short-term 'fix' for now allowing time to work on a long term plan.
- **Paul Likens** stated having roto-craft working in close proximity to each other is a safety hazard wherein sufficient space is of importance.
- **Commissioner Crane** stated it is for this reason, it would not likely be a good idea to co-locate CALSTAR with CalFire. He supports the site south of the Corporation Yard as the most feasible site for CALSTAR.

On a Motion by Commissioner Albright to accept staff's recommendation for CALSTAR to relocate to the DHL Hangar.

The aforementioned motion was seconded by **Commissioner Crane** and amended to include a timeframe be established for relocation to the permanent site south of the Corporation Yard.

Commissioner Albright amended the motion to include a three-year time period.

Commissioner Crane withdrew his second to the motion.

Motion failed for lack of a second.

- **Christian Giller** questioned whether there would be particular studies required for the site south of the Corporation Yard.
- **Commissioner Crane** stated it is not known which studies, if any, would be required.
- There was discussion whether an EIR for the project would be required relevant to providing for a ramp and taxiway and/or potential significant environmental impacts.
- **Paul Likens** supports the proposed interim location at the DHL site as it would be able to accommodate 20 employees and fixed-wing and roto-craft aircraft. He was not supportive of locking CALSTAR into a three-year agreement requiring the facility to relocate south of the Corporation Yard when the lease expires. It may not be possible to relocate in three years, particularly if there is currently no infrastructure in place to support the operation such as a helicopter pad, utilities, appropriate access and other relevant operating facilities.
- **Commissioner Albright** reaffirmed that the grass/dirt area where DHL is located would be conducive for the helicopter operation provided it is irrigated and appropriately maintained so there would be no 'blowing' problem and no debris generated. He supports the relocation to the DHL facility and incorporating a three-year timeframe for CALSTAR to move the site south of the City Corporation Yard. This would allow time to review the site and prepare for the necessary infrastructure.

- **Chair Deerwester** favors having additional information before a recommendation can be made by the Commission regarding the relocation of CALSTAR to allow time to consult with FedEx and the other tenants in the vicinity of DHL and review the Airport Land Use Plan since the use is not allowed in the designated development area. The subcommittee and CALSTAR representatives have not had the opportunity to address particular relocation issues for further discussion by the Commission. She does not support a relocation plan because all the issues have not been effectively addressed and favors the subcommittee formulated by the Commission conduct a meeting with CALSTAR representatives to work out cost/infrastructure issues such as ramp, taxiway/ access areas and/or other operation concerns for further by the Commission.
- The Commission noted the North East section of the Airport would not be a viable location for CALSTAR because of the close proximity of the hotels in the AIP.
- **Deborah Pardee** commented CALSTAR has experienced many incidents of vandalism over the years at the current location. The proposed new location would be a more secure by the nature of the remote location. Having the DHL hangar to house aircraft is also a security precautionary measure.

The Commission recommends the subcommittee meet with CALSTAR representatives relevant to relocation issues and for staff/Commission/CALSTAR to explore economic development funding options that may available, as well as determine whether environmental studies are necessary in order to make a sound decision for a 'short term' fix.

CALSTAR representatives were amenable to the above-referenced recommendation.

B. Helicopter operation/park north of Feather Lite Hangar

Airport Manager Owen proposes utilizing the pad north of Feather Lite for the purpose of parking seasonal/summertime helicopters for daytime use as opposed to having them spread out in many different areas on the Airport.

Nick Bishop stated there have been problems with transient helicopters interfering with his aviation-related operation at the Airport and commented pilots are essentially unaware that where they are landing may be a problem for other Airport users.

Airport Assistant Ronk agrees there are problems with transient helicopters parking on the eastside of Airport in that the pilots often cross the runway to come to the Airport Administration Building. He understands the need to provide for facilities on that portion of the Airport.

Chair Deerwester commented the matter of problems associated with helicopters parking in various unmarked areas on the Airport should be addressed by staff/Commission and in conjunction with the Airport Layout Plan.

The Commission supports marking the pad to identify the purpose, such as with a "H."

M/S Albright/Sloan to recommend staff relocate the transient helicopter operations north of Feather Lite Hangar with the appropriate field markings.

Commissioner Steinmann does not support the recommendation. If CALSTAR cannot relocate to this area for safety reasons, the summer use of helicopters parked in the same area should also not be allowed.

The above-referenced motion did not carry with the following roll call vote:

AYES: Commissioners Albright and Sloan

NOES: Commissioners Steinmann and Crane, Chair Deerwester

Commissioner Crane supports further discussion on this matter and in conjunction with effective long term planning relative to the Airport Land Use Plan.

There was brief discussion concerning the location and coordinating a schedule for the painting of the Compass Rose wherein the 99's Club has volunteered their efforts October 11, 2008.

Commissioner Crane volunteered to pay for the cost of the paint.

Airport Manager Owen stated the painting of the Compass Rose could proceed even if it has not been surveyed by the City Public Works Department.

7. REPORTS

A. CALFIRE Update

Airport Manager Owen reported former Airport Manager Richey requested CalFire craft a letter of intent regarding the proposed relocation of the CalFire operation stating the reason CalFire is unable to move forward with project is due to lack of funds to build a new Air Attack Base and that when funding is available they do intend to develop the site.

There has been no response from CalFire in this regard.

The Commissioners support staff craft a letter advising CalFire the Airport will continue to pursue other development options where CalFire is to relocate. There was also discussion under which circumstances CalFire should be offered First Right of Refusal in the event interest has been expressed other than CalFire for the development of the site.

B. Old Redwood Hangar

Airport Manager Owen reported on the exterior improvements to the building. Improvement to the roof will likely occur next fiscal year.

C. Airport Internship

Airport Manager Owen reported the internship is progressing and noted the program to be beneficial.

Airport Assistant Ronk commented it may be that more Airport users could become participants for additional aviation-related 'hands-on' training.

D. Adopted 2008/09 Budget

Airport Manager Owen welcomed comments from the Commissioners regarding the adopted 2008/09 Airport Budget.

Chair Deerwester inquired if fuel sales were impacted when one of fuel trucks had to be repaired.

Airport Manager Owen commented the vehicle has been repaired and in terms of impacts, the vehicle was inoperable for approximately five days.

The Commission commented the fiscal year objectives and accomplishments were highly relevant and informative.

The Commission discussed Budget Expenditure Line Item 291, General Government Services and requested further information about the breakdown of departmental costs that total \$60,575.

There was a brief discussion concerning the feasibility of implementing solar panels at the Airport.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Chair Deerwester supports the concept of presenting retiring Commissioners Beard, Winter, and Fowler with a 'plaque' in the form of an airplane as a token of appreciation for serving on the Commission.

Commissioner Sloan inquired regarding the EIR prepared for the CalFire proposed new Air Attach Base and if there is a timeframe concerning its effectiveness and whether supplements/amendments were acceptable.

9. STAFF COMMENTS

Thanked the Commission, Airport Assistant Ronk, CALSTAR representative, and other public members for their valuable input during the meeting and for assisting with his transition in the Airport Manager position.

10. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING

1. Update on the Compass Rose
2. Fiscal Year Budget 2008/09/General Government Services (Line item 291)
3. Update on CALSTAR from subcommittee
4. Commission review of the Northwest portion/tour of the Airport regarding relocation of seasonal/temporary helicopters

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Dottie Deerwester, Chair

Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary