

\*\*\* These draft minutes have not yet been approved and are subject to revision at the next regularly scheduled meeting. \*\*\*



**RENO-TAHOE AIRPORT AUTHORITY  
COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE  
BRIEF OF MINUTES**

January 19, 2017

5:30 pm

River Room in Baggage Claim

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jessica Sferrazza (Chair)  
Jenifer Rose (Co-Chair)  
Glenn Carano  
Sandy Evans Hall  
Patrick Flynn  
Michael Knox  
Rick LaMay  
Jim Nadeau  
Thomas Petersen  
Owen Roberts  
Sharon Spangler  
Jaime Tibaduiza  
Vick Wowo  
Hillary Schieve (Liaison)

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Rick Murdock (Trustee)  
Marilyn Mora (CEO)  
Dean Schultz (COO)  
Brian Kulpin  
Mike Scott  
Rebecca Venis  
Heidi Jared  
Mary Lee Mansfield  
Tim Weber (TSA)  
Cindy Pratte  
Jennifer Baker  
Rick Caldeira  
Burnham Moffat

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT/EXCUSED:**

Daniel Farahi  
Matt Harris  
Karl Hutter  
Marc Johnson  
Don Kornstein  
Art Sperber  
Aaron West  
Charlene Bybee (Liaison)  
Jennifer Cunningham (Liaison)  
Bob Lucey (Liaison)

The Community Outreach Committee (COC) met on Thursday, January 19, 2017.

**1. Call to Order, Roll Call**

Chair Jessica Sferrazza called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

Community Outreach Committee members were welcomed by Chair Jessica Sferrazza. Roll call was taken. Chair Sferrazza noted that there is a legislative reception in town this evening, which is why many of the community liaisons are absent due to their attendance at the legislative gathering.

**2. Public Comment (Limited to 3 Minutes)**

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 21 and from October 20, 2016**

There was a motion made by Trustee Jenifer Rose and a second made by Jaime Tibaduiza, and the minutes of the July 21 and October 20, 2016 meetings were unanimously approved.

**4. New Business: Update on Key Issues Facing the Airport Authority**

a. Introduction of New COC Member

Vick Wowo, Senior Sales Manager of the Whitney Peak Hotel, was introduced as the newest COC member. Mr. Wowo stated that he is a Reno native, passionate about the region and the development that's occurring, and happy to be on the committee.

Due to Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve's prior commitment at the legislative reception, the Chair asked the Committee to amend the agenda to hear Item d. next. A motion to move the item was made by Co-Chair Rose and seconded by Sharon Spangler, with unanimous approval by the Committee.

d. Airport to Host City of Reno's State of the City Address - Brian Kulpin, Vice President of Marketing & Public Affairs, will inform COC members of the City of Reno's plans to hold the State of the City address at Atlantic Aviation on January 26, 2017

Brian Kulpin, Vice President of Marketing & Public Affairs, gave COC members an overview of the upcoming State of the City address which will be held inside Atlantic Aviation's hangar on Reno-Tahoe International Airport property, where the COC members toured last October.

Calling it a true community outreach effort, Mr. Kulpin said that the Airport invites all COC members to attend the State of the City. It will begin at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 26, 2017 and is a chance to showcase Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RNO) and General Aviation on the RNO field. The evening is sponsored by the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitor Bureau (RSCVA), Atlantic Aviation, and Pathways to Aviation, with participation from the Reno High School Choir and the Nevada Air National Guard (NANG). Atlantic will clear out most of their large corporate hangar for this event, but will keep a few beautiful jets in the hangar to maintain that aviation feel and to show-off the aircraft at RNO. At least 400 community members will be in attendance. Parking will be made available at Atlantic and at the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) building.

Mayor Schieve will be the keynote speaker at the event, along with Interim City Manager Bill Thomas and Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority CEO Marily Mora. This will give the Airport CEO a chance to highlight some of the recent air service successes at RNO and the Airport economic development that is helping to boost the economy in the region.

The RSCVA will offer their audio/visual support to provide large projection screens for the audience. Local hotel casino properties are offering up bakery items for a refreshment area for the public.

Mr. Kulpin said there will be a real aviation presence inside the hangar that evening. He also stated that when the Airport talks about community outreach, the chance to bring 500 people on to Reno-Tahoe International Airport, and talk about where the city and the Airport are rising up together, is a fantastic opportunity. The Airport looks forward to hosting this event and hopes all COC members can attend.

Mayor Schieve added that Ms. Mora, Mr. Kulpin, and RTAA staff have been so supportive of this event. Mayor Schieve had not seen Atlantic Aviation previously, and is very excited to show the community this facility. She plans to bring high energy to this event and really bring an enthusiasm to the city address. She encouraged COC members to invite their friends and family. Mayor Schieve acknowledged the challenges of the city, but said that there are also many successes, and she wants to be transparent in showing the public what the City of Reno has achieved in recent months.

Ms. Mora also stated her enthusiasm for hosting this event and is grateful for the opportunity.

Chair Sferrazza asked for any questions, and there were none. She reiterated the importance of having all COC members at the address to share the good news taking place in this region.

b. Air Service Update – Rebecca Venis, Manager of Air Service Development & Marketing

Rebecca Venis, Manager of Air Service Development & Marketing, gave COC members an update on air service at Reno-Tahoe International Airport.

Ms. Venis began by stating that the update will focus on passenger figures, because cargo numbers are still being tabulated. Starting with the month of December 2016, Reno-Tahoe International Airport served 300,543 passengers, an increase of 5.0% versus December 2015. That equates to nineteen months in a row of year-over-year growth.

In 2016, the annual total at RNO was 3.65 million passengers, which is an increase of 6.4% versus 2015. Ms. Venis explained the reason the Airport is seeing that increase is capacity, because as the Airport increases seat capacity, the Airport sees demand increase, and higher passenger numbers. For example, in 2016, RNO's seat capacity increased 8.1% when compared to 2015, with 4.6 million seats available in and out of the market.

Ms. Venis stated that Reno-Tahoe International Airport just launched new non-stop service to Atlanta on Delta Air Lines and celebrated new non-stop service to Dallas Love Field on Southwest Airlines. In addition, Southwest recently announced new non-stop service to San Jose, starting June 4th. This will complement the current non-stop flight on Alaska Airlines.

Ms. Venis then explained load factor at Reno-Tahoe International Airport and how the Air Service Department analyzes the success or weakness of flights based on that metric. Showing the most recent data available through August of 2016, the Airport can identify the markets that may need help and as a proactive measure, staff contacts the airline and the Regional Air Service Corporation (RASC) to talk about how load factors can be boosted in those specific markets. Fare sales may ensue or additional advertising efforts may be undertaken in that market. Currently, all flights are performing well and are not at particular risk due to load factors. Dallas Love Field was cited as a successful example of growth.

Ms. Venis said that the Airport has experienced a trend of growth in demand when looking at unserved markets as well. In the Washington D.C. area, for example, there is an 11% increase in demand and Boston is a case study for possible new air service in 2018.

In conclusion, Ms. Venis mentioned the RNO Explorer Flyer, which the Air Service Department sends out to COC members, and made sure all members are receiving it.

Chair Sferrazza thanked Glenn Carano for participating in the Dallas launch event as a former Dallas Cowboys player. She gave kudos as well to RTAA Chairman Rick Murdock for being a champion of air service.

Mr. Kulpin said that the Air Service update was at the request of the COC members and he inquired if this is the format in which the members would like to receive future air service updates. The committee decided that if there was new air service news to share, an in-person update would be best. However, if there was not a lot of activity or changes in air service during a particular month, a one-sheet paper update would suffice.

Trustee Murdock stated that the most important thing for the Airport and the COC members to do is to "Get the message out to locals" about the great air service at RNO. "Use it or lose it" is an ongoing air service message which Trustee Murdock reiterated. The Airport is working on an air service advertising campaign and the primary reason is the lack of knowledge within the local community on what flights are offered at RNO.

Mr. Carano asked about any possible leakage of air service to Sacramento, and Ms. Mora stated that leakage to Sacramento is not an area of concern for RNO.

Chair Sferrazza cited the air service team's recent efforts at Southwest Airlines Headquarters in Dallas and Ms. Mora asked Ms. Venis to provide a summary of "The Deck Party".

Ms. Venis explained that every Monday at Southwest Airlines Headquarters, the company on boards their new employees. Southwest has 18,000 employees network-wide. Following the Monday training, the new employees are invited to attend a deck party to welcome them to the team along with the rest of the staff. Typically, a different Southwest department hosts the party each week and it is a competition, with the department voted "best deck party" winning a \$2,500 award for cultural activities. This past November, the Southwest Planning team invited the Reno-Tahoe International Airport to co-host the deck party. This is a very rare opportunity for an airport to be a part of the company event.

In partnership with Trustee Murdock and the RSCVA, the Airport hosted this event and it turned out to be the largest deck party Southwest has ever held, with over 750 people in attendance compared to the average 300-400 attendees. The RNO party was unanimously voted the best deck party and the Southwest Planning team won the award for future Southwest cultural activities. Many departments at Southwest came forward and shared how excited they were to hear what is new in Reno and how the Reno-Tahoe region is growing. The Southwest Deck Party gave the RTAA Board Chair and Air Service team an opportunity to feature the beauty and nightlife offered in this region. The evening featured local wine and beer, a sampling of the food and nightlife Reno-Tahoe offers, and it was a huge hit.

Next, Ms. Mora gave an update about a "holiday gift" from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) that came in the form of an announcement made in December 2016 that CBP will soon offer a mechanism for the Airport to reimburse the CBP for additional Customs Officers. She said this will potentially decrease the wait time for international arriving passengers and possibly increase the amount of international flights at RNO. Ms. Mora stressed that this announcement from CBP would not be possible without the united efforts of the entire Nevada Legislative Delegation. With strong support from Senator Harry Reid, Senator Dean Heller, Congressman Mark Amodei, who presented this new bill in Washington D.C. and fought to get it passed, allowing all small airports with international CBP Offices, to apply for the opportunity to reimburse the CBP for up to five additional officers. Ms. Mora stated that while having to pay for additional CBP staff isn't the optimal solution, without this bill, there was no other mechanism to add CBP staff and reduce the wait time in Customs. This was something the Airport and the Nevada Legislative Delegation has worked on for more than two years. RNO will apply in February and hopes to have one additional CBP officer on board by 2018. Ms. Mora shared that customs processing time for arriving passengers is currently at 90 minutes, when it started at more than two hours in late 2014.

Trustee Murdock reminded the COC members about Thomas Cooke Airlines and how the CBP denied landing rights for the non-stop London flight. He also indicated that even if the Airport is successful in working with an airline to bring international service to RNO, CBP can always deny landing rights if they so choose, which puts the Airport in a tough position. Getting an additional officer, if approved, would be a huge boost toward increased international service, but at the end of the day, it is up to the CBP to deny or approve any international air service.

Mr. Kulpin commended Ms. Mora and Dean Schultz, Executive Vice President/COO, for their efforts to continue to fight for improvements within the CBP. "They never took no for an answer," Kulpin stated. They went in person to Washington D.C., to San Francisco, and were also constantly on the phone with the CBP, and never gave up. Mr. Kulpin asserted that unfortunately, the CBP wants airports to give up, but the Reno-Tahoe International Airport CEO and COO were "pit bulls" in this fight for the community. It was very personal for many at the Airport to see what was happening at our Airport and in our community. Mr. Kulpin called for a round of applause.

- c. Transportation Security Administration Briefing (TSA) - COC members will hear from the Transportation Security Administration in an informative security briefing from the TSA's local head of aviation security.

Tim Weber, Field Intelligence Officer for the TSA, gave COC members a security briefing on global aviation threats.

Mr. Weber explained that his job at the TSA is to look at the threat, analyze it and perform outreach in the community to inform the public of the potential threats. He said the threat is always evolving and the threat to international civil aviation is at a high level, and that the threat to domestic civil aviation is at a medium level. Mr. Weber cited examples through the years of how successful threats to aviation worldwide have led to the TSA security measures currently in place.

Mr. Weber stated that Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula represents the greatest external threat to the U.S. homeland, and the U.S. is the most targeted country in the world. With that said, the TSA is still most concerned with homegrown violent extremists and lone wolf actions.

Mr. Weber gave an overview of the evolution of aviation threats and how the TSA has responded and instituted new security measures with each new attack, updated the watch lists, and developed new technology to discover the hidden threats.

He said that recent attacks have included small arms against soft targets and active shooters. To protect ourselves from this, Mr. Weber stressed that one of the best ways is stated in the TSA motto "If you see something, say something". He encouraged the public to speak up if they see any unusual behavior at the airport. Be concerned, ask questions, talk to the police, Weber said. He reassured the

COC members that behavior detection is one of the most important skills the TSA teaches their security officers.

Mr. Weber showed the committee a local threat on the no-fly list and explained how the TSA works with local law enforcement to maintain a close watch on people who might pose significant threat.

Mr. Kulpin informed the Committee that in the last year, Reno-Tahoe International has held three training sessions in Baggage Claim for active assailant response and that every three years, the Airport holds a full-scale disaster drill, which in 2017 will include an act of terrorism onboard an arriving aircraft. These drills are led by Mike Scott, Vice President of Operations and Public Safety for the RTAA.

Chair Sferrazza stated that the Board of Trustees has seen a similar update from the TSA and wanted the COC members to hear the same.

Owen Roberts inquired about the recent attack at Fort Lauderdale International Airport and how this may change TSA security measures at commercial airports. Mr. Weber replied that there are no additional measures that the traveling public will notice as a result, because it is really a balance between security and freedom, and additional security that could prevent something like what we saw at Fort Lauderdale would be unbearable for U.S. travelers.

Mr. Carano asked about requiring travelers to ship guns and ammunition in advance. Mr. Schultz reminded everyone that a weapon can be introduced from a bag or from a car, and that shipping weapons would not totally prevent them from being inside the public areas of the airport.

Jim Nadeau gave praise for the TSA Pre-Check and said how efficient that makes travel, especially for travelers with metal in them due to surgeries.

Thomas Pederson asked about small airports and how TSA training and threats vary from that of larger commercial airports. Mr. Weber explained that, in fact, at smaller airports, not only is the TSA officer training abundant, but the human factor comes in to play – meaning that often the TSA officers are very familiar with the frequent local travelers, since it is a smaller community. Therefore, any potential threat is very visible and a suspicious traveler does not go unnoticed.

Mr. Scott explained that there are multiple layers of security at RNO, with security employees and canine teams, from the front curb to the gate, as well as airport police, CCTV camera systems, and controlled doors. He said that with each attack on aviation, the Operations and Public Safety team discusses lessons learned and additional training options, in addition to varying their routine.

Owen Roberts told the committee that it is a real pleasure to travel through Reno-Tahoe International Airport compared to a multitude of other domestic and international airports where he flies.

Mr. Kulpin added that the quarterly customer service surveys taken at RNO show that passengers at Reno-Tahoe International Airport feel safe and secure to fly; passengers rate RNO #1 in terms of safety and security with a 6.5 out of 7 rating.

Co-Chair Rose thanked Mr. Weber for the informative presentation, following which she excused Chair Sferrazza who had to leave the meeting at 6:45 p.m. to catch a flight.

**5. General Committee Comments, Questions & Items for Future Committee Meetings**

Co-Chair Rose promoted the fare deals included in the RNO Flyer sent out by Ms. Venis. She asked the COC members to push that flyer out to their employees and business associates, and help share the great flight deals that are out there. Mr. Tibaduiza thanked the Airport for doing the research to identify the flight deals.

**6. Update from Public Officials**

City of Reno Liaison Mayor Schieve gave an update of her comments to be provided during the State of the City presentation. There were no other Community Liaisons present to provide an update.

**7. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**8. Adjournment**

The COC meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

JS/hj/cj

\*\*\* These draft minutes have not yet been approved and are subject to revision at the next regularly scheduled meeting. \*\*\*