

# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY Aviation Advisory Committee

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## 2021 Annual Report

**Advisory Board Meeting Time/Location:** 10:00am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every one (1) month at either Buchanan Field or Byron Airport. Under the County's shelter-in-place order, these meetings have moved to a virtual format via Zoom.

**Advisory Body Chair:** Emily Barnett

**Airport Staff:** Keith Freitas/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
- Annual review of input on the Part 150 Noise Mitigation recommendations

### **Accomplishments**

Discussed and advised on the following:

- Buchanan Field and Byron Airport projects including:
  - Starting construction on the new Buchanan Airport Terminal. This is a long-awaited project that despite supply chain issues causing some delays, was funded by the FAA and began construction in September 2021. Expected completion is Fall 2022.
  - Delay in Security Fencing project enhancements at Buchanan due to lack of FAA funding. This project will be rerequested in 2022 when full funds may be available.

- Byron Field Hangar inspections conducted in September 2021
- Completion of new ARFF/Maintenance Storage Building at Byron Airport
- Airport administration activities to enhance airport economic development including:
  - Progress on updating the Byron General Plan Amendment to bring conformity between the adopted Airport Master Plan and County General Plan relative to allowable uses at both Airports. Including completion of the Plan Amendment, request for public comment, and response to public comment.
  - The Bay Area Aviation Technology Test Site (BAATTS) initiative, starting in 2019 by airport management to attract new aviation technology startups to both airports has had several successes. The airport's proximity to Silicon Valley and San Francisco has created a significant opportunity to serve as preferred engineering, development, and test sites, with the ultimate goal of growing to production and operation bases, with corresponding potential for new jobs on both the Buchanan and Byron communities. Several new BAATTS tenants are now in discussion, including XWing, Volansi, BirdStop, Buoyant, Skycart, and MightyFly to expand their testing operations. The AAC strongly and enthusiastically supports the BAATTS initiative.
  - Commercial Development of Non-Aviation Sites at Buchanan Field. Increasing development is an important continuing item that is significant to the Airport Enterprise Fund. Several undeveloped parcels, which are designated for non-aviation use, are part of the Buchanan Field and Byron Airport properties. 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. Airport staff has requested releases from the FAA to allow for non-aviation development of these sites and has also solicited proposals for commercial or light industrial development of these sites. The AAC continues to express strong support for the 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:
  - Addressing various Buchanan Field & Byron noise complaints through phone and in-person meetings between residents and airport staff and/or AAC members.
  - Reminding pilots training after appropriate hours of the airports' noise stipulations, even if those pilots are coming from other airports.
  - While there was an overall increase in airport operations in 2021 compared to 2020, overall complains decreased over the previous year. The decrease indicates more positive public/airport interactions.

- The AAC supported a partnership with Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) GoMentum facility with the county's Bay Area Test Site (BATS) program. Recently, CCTA reached out to the AAC to support partnership opportunities between the County's BATS program and CCTA's Innovation Program, including the GoMentum facility. The AAC felt this was a natural partnership that would only further the causes of all the agencies efforts to create jobs locally and support economic development.
- Encouraged AAC members and Board of Supervisors, as well as the general public to be more involved with Contra Costa County Airports and aviation communities.

**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.
- Quorums have been achieved with good participation from members for 2021. AAC members continue to be highly engaged despite virtual meetings. Attendance continues to exceed quorum requirements, with 100% attendance in both the July and August meetings. Public participation has also increased as individuals have found the virtual format's ease and safety conducive to participation. Overall the AAC has welcomed more public comments on average with virtual meetings than recent 2019/early 2020 pre-pandemic meetings.
- The AAC is a diverse group of aviation professionals, retired executives, 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>2019 Appointment Status</u>	<u>Term Expiration Date</u>
Vacant	District I	Recruiting	2/29/2020
Vacant	Airport Business Association	Recruiting	2/28/2022
Eric Meinbress	Member at large	Reappointed	2/28/2023
Ronald Reagan	District III	Reappointed	2/29/2024
Richard Celestre	City of Pleasant Hill	Appointed	2/29/2024
Christopher Baker	District V	Appointed	2/28/2023
Keith McMahon	City of Concord	Recruiting	2/28/2022

Roger Bass	District II	Reappointed	2/29/2024
Maurice Gunderson	Member at large	Reappointed	2/29/2024
Tom Weber	District IV	Reappointed	2/28/2023
Emily Barnett	Member at large	Recruiting	2/28/2022
Donna Dietrich	Pacheco Neighbor	Reappointed	2/29/2024
Steven Starratt	Byron Neighbor	Reappointed	2/29/2024

**Current AAC Officers:**

<u>AAC Member</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Election Status</u>
Emily Barnett	Chair	Elected
Maurice Gunderson	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 and the County's Better Government Ordinance, and complete the County's Ethics Orientation within 90 days of the appointment and every two years thereafter.

**Proposed Objectives for 2022**

- Completion of the New Terminal at Buchanan Airport
- Continue to work with the County on the Byron Airport General Plan Amendment to ensure the Plan is completed in order to improve growth, infrastructure and road access at Byron Airport
- 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 and GoMomentum partnerships and projects
- 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 concerns 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 design of the new Buchanan Airport Terminal
- Continue to provide the general public 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  
Maurice Gunderson, AAC Vice-Chair  
Eric Meinbrass, AAC Secretary