

ONTARIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY (OIAA)

League of Women Voters of the Claremont Area

Observer Report

by Karen M Rosenthal

May 20, 2018

The City of Ontario and San Bernardino County formed the OIAA in August 2012 by enacting a Joint Powers Agreement. The OIAA provides overall direction for the management, operations, development and marketing of Ontario International Airport (ONT) for the benefit of the Southern California economy and the residents of the airport's four-county catchment area.

The OIAA was formed following the return to local control of this regional airport from LAWA (Los Angeles World Airports).

Commissioners:

Ontario City Mayor Pro Tem Alan D. Wapner (President)
Retired Riverside Mayor Ronald O. Loveridge (Vice President)
Ontario Council Member Jim W. Bowman
San Bernardino County Supervisor Curt Hagman
Retired Business Executive Julia Gouw (appointed 9/28/17)

Executive Staff:

Mark A. Thorpe, CEO (as of 10/2017)
Lori D. Balance, General Counsel
Jeff P. Reynolds, Treasurer
Claudia Y. Isbell, Clerk to the Board

Regular meetings of the Ontario International Airport Authority are scheduled at 3 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the OIAA Administration Building at 1923 E. Avion Avenue, Ontario, California 91761 (south side of the airport).

In the past 17 months (2017-2018) nine meetings were held as regularly scheduled, two meetings were adjourned to another day and time, six meetings were canceled, and eight special meetings were held. The adjournments or cancellations were due to lack of a quorum. I attended three meetings in the past six months. The average meeting time for those three meetings was 17 minutes. Approximately 40 people are in the audience, the majority being staff or potential vendors, service providers or contractors. In the 12 sets of minutes I reviewed

only one audience member requested to speak. A resident of Lake Arrowhead was protesting the recent FAA decision to change flight path approaches to ONT. Water, coffee, and cookies are available for attendees.

The agendas are clearly written and accessible with some backup material on a well-designed website. The Consent Calendar is the main focus of the regularly scheduled meetings with up to 12 items of business listed. These items generally authorize the CEO to negotiate and execute contracts with contractors, vendors, service providers and consultants as necessary. There is rarely any discussion. In the past year a number of Airport Improvement Projects have been initiated which required agreements negotiated by the CEO. A grant-in-aid of up to \$8.5 million from the FAA was accepted by the Commission for these projects.

The Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 is funded through income derived from the airlines, site tenants and other economic enterprises. For example, the GSA (General Services Administration), working on behalf of the TSA (Transportation Security Administration) pays OIAA for lease of the space used for security lanes and other affiliated uses in the terminals. Revenues and grant funds received by the Authority from airport activities and operations are required to remain “on the airport” and used for airport purposes.

Significant 2017/2018 accomplishments

1. New agreements for Transportation Network Companies (Uber, Lyft, taxis and limousine operators) to operate at the airport;
2. Expansion of the Guardian Jet Center (a private terminal) on the south side of the airport;
3. Development of agreements with Taiwanese- and China-based airlines for direct services from Taipei, including development of a Federal Inspection Services Facility (Customs and Immigration) in Taipei;
4. New contracts allowing for expansion and development of passengers' food, beverage and shopping experiences in both terminals (Wolfgang Puck, Gene Simmons' Rock & Brews, Einstein Bagels, among others);
5. Constructing a modular building to house the Ontario Police Department officers who work the airport security patrol. (The cost was offset by the recovered value of lost officer time spent traveling between the Archibald Ave sub-station and the airport.)
6. Developing agreements with a Real Estate Broker for possible future commercial/industrial development on designated under-utilized airport land.
7. Completing the transfer of LAWA staff back to LAWA and utilizing an Airport Management Group who assumed the LAWA staff duties.
8. Developing and approving a Marketing Company, new logos and a marketing campaign.
9. Expansion of domestic airlines serving ONT including the return of Jet Blue.

10. Significant increase in volume of passengers and cargo tonnage over prior years.

League of Women Voters: Local, State and National Transportation and Government Positions (combined)

Support a transportation system to move people and goods that includes a variety of transportation modes, based on actual need with priority given to environmental, health, social, and safety factors. It should include mass transit and be safe and secure. Support energy conservation, air pollution control measures and encouragement of alternatives to the automobile. Support for a balanced and coordinated network of public transportation agencies to provide mobility for all residents.

The League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well-defined channels for citizen input and review.

Pending issues and assessment

The irregularly scheduled and very short length of the meetings and lack of discussion of the consent calendar agenda items means not much business is done in the public eye. It is difficult to determine how or if the commission members are prepared because very few items are discussed.

An area of League interest is the number of additional stipend requests by an individual granted at each meeting without documentation or explanation in the agenda packet. More than 8 stipends per month for Authority-related business functions require approval by the full Commission and are granted routinely. In the interest of transparency public documentation and a discussion of whether the expenses helped achieve the OIAA mission would be appropriate.

Clearly OIAA staff is guided by what the Strategic Business Plan (adopted in January 2013) has as its mission and goals:

To operate and grow Ontario International Airport (ONT) as one of the most competitive, efficient, innovative and customer-friendly passenger, cargo and business airports in the United States as a key economic asset serving the Inland Empire and the entire Southern California region, by reducing airline costs, developing airport-related businesses, expanding air service and providing customer friendly facilities and services.