

Ontario International Airport Authority
League of Women Voters of Mt. Baldy Area
Observer Report by Karen M. Rosenthal
May 23, 2019

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

The 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
Julia Gouw, Retired Business Executive

Executive Staff:

Mark A. Thorpe, CEO
Lori D. Balance, General Counsel,
John M. Schubert, CFO (as of 4/01/19)
Claudia Isbell, Board Clerk

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 12 months (May 2018-2019) nine meetings were held as regularly scheduled, one meeting was adjourned to another day and time, two meetings were canceled, and four special meetings were held. This is a huge improvement over prior years' meeting schedules.

The meeting audiences appear to be staff, vendors, service providers and contractors. Occasionally community members appear to comment about noise and flight patterns.

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. Most of the monthly business is on the consent calendar. There are rarely any discussions or questions.

The average meeting length is 11-17 minutes.

Significant 2018/2019 accomplishments

1. Implementation of agreements with Taiwanese based airlines for direct services from Taipei, including development of a Federal Inspection Services Facility (Customs and Immigration);
2. Completion of the expansion and development of passengers' food, beverage and shopping experiences in both terminals (Wolfgang Puck, Gene Simmons' Rock & Brews, Einstein Bagels) along with two special Lounges with menus developed by Chef Henry of Spaggi's in Upland.
3. Implementation of new logos and a widespread marketing campaign.
4. Expansion of domestic airlines serving ONT including the return of Jet Blue and future increase in non-stop trips to additional airports by currently contracted airlines.
5. Significant increases in volume of passengers and cargo tonnage over prior years.

New logos and advertising by the airport administration have bolstered the airport's image regionally. Jet Blue has returned to OIA and will increase the number of flights after closing some routes from Long Beach.

Last year the number of air travelers at ONT increased by more than 13% over the same 10-month period in 2017 to more than 4.2 million. There were a significant number of international passengers. According to a national aviation newspaper, Ontario is the fastest growing airport in the country.

Ontario has an estimated capacity of 30 million annual passengers. That number definitely shows a need for the Gold Line extension to the airport.

The League of Women Voters Government Position:

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. It appears that OIAA is governed adequately and generally follows The California Brown Act requirements.

Concern: Without any public announcement, discussion or comment that could be found in the record, religious invocations at the beginning of the meetings began in November 2018.