

Meeting agenda reflects changes at airport

DK McDONALD, The Mohave Daily News

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BULLHEAD CITY — Plenty of changes were on the agenda for Tuesday's regularly scheduled Mohave County Airport Authority Board of Directors meeting.

Airport Director Jeremy Keating reported the U.S. Department of Transportation Small Community Air Service Development Grant that guaranteed a minimum revenue to American Airlines likely will be depleted by the final billing from the airline after daily service ends Feb. 14. "We're probably going to run through every last penny of the grant," Keating told the directors. "We won't know for certain until the end of service but it's looking like there's not going to be anything left." Current grant rules do not allow the airport to apply for another grant for the same service area, Keating explained. American Airlines announced in November that, due to underuse, the airline would cancel daily service between Phoenix and Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport on Feb. 14. Keating reiterated the need for area residents to continue to use the service through the final day. "The data we get is going to be huge when we get service back," he said.

Board members presented retiring director and past board President Lisa McCabe with a plaque to honor her 18 years of service to the organization. "The Airport Authority has meant a lot to me," McCabe said. "Congratulations to the airport staff — our airport is something to be very proud of."

Directors voted to amend the bylaws to decrease the number of directors from 9 to 7, and elected a nomination committee for three spots on the board by Feb. 28 for April director elections. Terms for two board members — Jim Zaborsky and Jena Morga — expire in April; the board was left with a vacancy with the death of Lloyd Allen Shires in September and has an additional vacancy with McCabe's resignation.

Board members also voted to approve new member John Pynakker, Bullhead Area Chamber of Commerce executive director. Keating announced the hiring of Rebecca Saling as office manager for the airport.

In other business, Director Jim Zaborsky reported that real estate committee members met with ParkWest Development last week and there has been some interest in new business coming to the Airport Center that he hopes to be able to report on over the next few meetings. Zaborsky noted some incentives may be needed to offset the drawback of businesses not being able to purchase land on the site.

Zaborsky also reported the committee applied to Arizona Department of Environmental Quality for a risk-based closure certificate on the last well on airport land, an approximately 10-year-old environmental cleanup project. "We have applied for that," Zaborsky said. "According to our director we have about a 50/50 chance of getting the risk-based closure." The committee hopes to hear on the application within 30 to 60 days.

Director Brad Belhouse offered an update on FAA Project AIP 48, apron rehabilitation/reconstruction of general aviation, commercial and RON aprons, which began Dec. 11 and are expected to be completed before the end of this year. The AIP 48 Drainage Master Plan is also in progress.

Additionally, the airport's Arizona state land purchase application has been submitted and Mohave County recommends that an amendment to the master lease that clarifies any land purchased would be a part of Mohave County, a procedural item, be completed, Belhouse said. The project supports future terminal expansion.

An air traffic control tower radio and communications equipment replacement project should be advertised within the next couple of weeks, Belhouse said.

The directors voted to delegate authority to the airport director to negotiate a contract with Mead & Hunt for taxiway and connectors sealcoat project.

Board directors also heard a short presentation on the fiscal year 2017 audit report and voted to accept an audit contract with Gene Newman for fiscal year 2018.

The board's next regular meeting begins at 9 a.m. April 10 at the Bullhead Area Chamber of Commerce, 1251 Highway 95, with the annual general membership meeting to follow.