

GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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Ramona Garrett
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Solano Superior Court
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, California 94533

Re: County Responses to 2007-2008 Grand Jury Report entitled "Nut Tree Airport"

Dear Honorable Presiding Judge Garrett:

The General Services Department has received the 2007-2008 Jury Report entitled "Nut Tree Airport". Listed below are the Grand Jury's Findings and recommendations for the Nut Tree Airport, along with the Department's responses.

Finding 1 - The focus of general aviation is changing from recreation to business aviation.

Response to Finding 1 – The General Services Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 1 – The management of the Nut Tree Airport needs to respond to the trends of the future to ensure the survival of the Airport. This includes developing better communications between management, pilots and the public.

Response to Recommendation 1 – The recommendation has been implemented. The management of the Nut Tree Airport constantly strives to respond to the trends of the future to ensure the survival of the Airport. The Airport apron was recently rebuilt to provide wider taxi-lanes and tie-downs for large business aircraft. Management also works to develop better communications with the pilots and the public through newsletters, commission meetings, and community meetings

Finding 2 – The Nut Tree Airport Master Plan is not completed.

Response to Finding 2 – The General Services Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 2 - Efforts to fund and prepare the Nut Tree Airport Master Plan should continue. The plan should include a strategic business plan and an airport marketing plan.

Response to Recommendation 2 – The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. Efforts to fund and prepare the Nut Tree Airport Master Plan continue. On June 4, 2008 the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved a grant of \$350,000 for the Airport Master Plan Project. On June 23, 2008, the County received and accepted the grant from the FAA. Preparation of the Master Plan will begin in FY08/09. The project will include a strategic business plan and an airport marketing plan. Staff anticipates awarding the contract for development of the Master Plan late this calendar year. The timeline for completion of the Master Plan is expected to be approximately 18 to 24 months after awarding a contract.

Finding 3 – A formal connection between the Nut Tree Airport and the redeveloped Nut Tree does not exist.

Response to Finding 3 - The General Services Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 3 – The Nut Tree Airport could attract more aircraft if those landing could easily access dining and shopping facilities. For this reason, efforts should be made to provide better access or transportation to the redeveloped Nut Tree.

Response to Recommendation 3 – The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented as part of the next security fencing project. The timeline for this is unknown at this time. Pedestrian access gates will be included in the next security fencing project. This will allow the flying public to exit the airport onto the adjacent redeveloped Nut Tree area once the neighboring property owner connects their property to the Airport via a bridge and walkway. The Airport understands the importance of better access to dining and shopping and continues to work on easier access with the developer and the City of Vacaville.

Finding 4 – The Solano County Aviation Advisory Committee is now taking a more active role though there is still confusion about its relationship with the Board of Supervisors.

Response to Finding 4 – The General Services Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 4 – The Solano County Aviation Advisory Committee should take a more proactive role with the Board of Supervisors and consistently provide agendas, meeting minutes and reports.

Response to Recommendation 4 – The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the next 60 days. General Services has requested that County Counsel review the roles and responsibilities of the Nut Tree Airport Advisory Committee at the next regular meeting of the Committee which is tentatively scheduled for July 17, 2008. Additionally, the Airport Manager will begin forwarding agendas, meeting minutes and reports of the Commission meetings to the Board of Supervisors.

Finding 5 – The Fixed Base Operator is a voting member of the Nut Tree Airport Advisory Committee.

Response to Finding 5 – The General Services Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 5 - The Nut Tree Advisory Committee should be an independent body free of influence by those who could benefit financially from decisions of the committee. For this reason, the Fixed Based Operator should be an advisor and not a voting member of the Advisory Committee.

Response to Recommendation 5 – The recommendation has not been implemented, but may be implemented at a later date if approved by the Board of Supervisors. At the January 24, 2008 Nut Tree Airport Advisory Committee meeting, restructuring of the membership was a topic on the agenda. The topic was discussed and the Committee recommended the removal of the Fixed Based Operator as a voting member of its membership. The General Services Department will be preparing a Board Agenda item on this topic for the Board of Supervisor's consideration. If the Board agrees that the Fixed Based Operator should be removed, then the Committee's Bylaws will be revised to reflect the change in membership.

Finding 6 – The Solano County Aviation Advisory Committee meets quarterly.

Response to Finding 6 – The General Services Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 6 – The Solano County Aviation Advisory Committee should have more frequent regular meetings.

Response to Recommendation 6 – This recommendation requires further analysis. The General Services Department will request to have this recommendation on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Nut Tree Airport Advisory Committee for discussion. The next regular meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 17, 2008. If the Commission recommends that they meet more frequently than quarterly, the General Services Department will request approval from the Board of Supervisors at the next available Board meeting to amend the Bylaws to reflect the change in the frequency of meetings.

Sincerely,

Spencer C. Bole
General Services Director

cc: Grand Jury
Michael D. Johnson, County Administrator
Pamela L. Ogle, Assistant General Services Director
Andrew Swanson, Nut Tree Airport Manager
Nut Tree Airport Advisory Committee Members