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Public Comment Topic	Joseph State - Mulino State - Aurora State Airports

Public Comment

"ODAV enables and advocates for a safe and efficient aviation system that connects communities and drives economic growth."

This is the Mission for the Oregon Dept of Aviation. This should be the North Star for the agency and its Board. I'd like to suggest that "connecting communities" also include the human connection between the Board and its constituents, and request that the Board spend time reflecting on that responsibility.

Yes, members of the general aviation community are aware of the projected shortfall for ODAV for the 2027-2029 budget period. We understand that agency pencils must be sharpened and programs and services pared back or cut, but local communities are not invited to provide any input for how they can be of assistance; for how they can protect and support their local State airport.

If a State airport will be impacted by agency funding cuts, why shouldn't the local community be welcomed as a partner and allowed to step up and provide the services for the interim or into the future? In all but a few rare cases, they are not invited to help out by providing volunteers. They are not encouraged when they offer to seek cash and inkind donations to offset agency costs at this uncertain time. Instead, their calls and emails are repeatedly ignored or they are told how things will be. Stating prohibitive rules and regulations, which at times aren't accurate, is the protocol of ODAV staff. There is no agency culture for exploring creative solutions with the pilots, aviation businesses, and communities that rely on the State airports for safety, economic growth and transportation.

The voices of airport stakeholders consistently are only heard when we are persistent, and often relentless, with our emails and calls to ODAV staff. Stakeholder input, issues, needs and concerns are presented to the ODAV Board, if at all, through the filters of staff. The Board thus doesn't have an opportunity to hear and discuss facts presented by others outside the agency, and to make an informed decision based on the other side to the story. Yes, aviation advocates do have the ability to provide statements through the ODAV Board Public Comment module of the ODAV website, but there is no vehicle for direct, and respectful communication with the Board. This is a flawed process. It does not build relationships and trust with aviation industry constituents.

State airport Stakeholders know the issues and needs for their local airports. They are the best and strongest advocates for general aviation to their local governmental leaders. ODAV should actively seek input and include local airport users in important discussions. Staff should listen with the intent to hear, and not

use that precious time to formulate their next proclamation. ODAV should honor and reward the State airport communities that offer human and financial resources to maintain and improve their airports. Inflicting pain on State airport communities isn't a wise strategy as ODAV seeks to increase its budget through aviation fuel tax increases.

My requests of the ODAV Board at this time:

Joseph
* Reinstate av gas at JSY immediately! Work with local pilots and aviation businesses for short term and long term solutions for consistent and reliable fuel service.
* Pursue Public/Private Partnerships! Develop an MOU with a NE Oregon aviation nonprofit organization to formalize a legal relationship between ODAV and local airport volunteers. The MOU between ODAV and Friends of Pacific City State airport could be used as a template for the legal agreement. The MOU will outline roles and responsibilities for the agency and the nonprofit organization, to include fundraising, maintenance and volunteer efforts.
* Work with locals for seasonal maintenance! Pilots know what is needed seasonally to maintain the airport. Their input and concerns are not being acknowledged. Work with local aviation leaders to define the maintenance tasks and determine how the work can be done. If the current system doesn't work, change it in a fair and open manner.
* Don't hire a consultant to lead volunteer training! Volunteers have organized and safely put on the Joseph Airport Fly-in for years. These volunteers know how to use heavy equipment and aviation radios at the airport. Allowing these volunteers to do seasonal maintenance work makes sense. If ODAV has a concern with volunteer liability, provide release forms and clear expectations for airport volunteer training materials but don't micro manage how the training is conducted. At a recent meeting with JSY Stakeholders, ODAV staff shared an intent to hire a consultant to create and lead volunteer training. It doesn't make sense for ODAV to spend limited funds to hire a consultant to lead a volunteer training when other aviation groups have the skills and resources and will do the training for FREE. RAF and Friends of Pacific City State Airport can share their years of expertise for maintaining and improving airports with volunteer assistance.

Mulino
* Don't make federal funding the priority! While the airport Master Plan is said to be "aspirational", please listen to the Stakeholders for what they need and want. Don't force them to tear down valued structures and add equipment that they don't want or need, just because there is federal funding available. Whose

airport is it?
* Pursue Public/Private Partnerships! Support airport Stakeholders as they form a Friends of Mulino State Airport, working with them to establish an MOU to define roles and responsibilities. The ODAV MOU with Friends of Pacific City State Airport could be used as a template for airport maintenance, fundraising and volunteers. Welcome any community's efforts to actively support their local airport!

Aurora
* After spending millions of dollars and hundreds of hours working on a Master Plan and its revision, ODAV continues to disregard critical concerns expressed by aviators and aviation businesses based out of Aurora State. Is development of an expensive, lofty, aspirational Master Plan an efficient use of ODAV resources? Is it realistic to believe that the agency can secure the hundreds of millions of dollars for the proposed improvements? It's time to decide if alienating and harming the local aviation community with unpopular road, structure and surface removal as a way to qualify for federal funding achieves the agency's mission while respecting the wishes of the local community. Whose airport is it?

I appreciate the opportunity to communicate via ODAV's Public Comment website module. I hope to some day meet each and every board member and to participate in a meaningful conversation with you about Oregon's State airports.

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