

**AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
FOR JULY 8, 2021  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

1. Marco Barros
2. Vaughn Caudill
3. Charnelle Chin
4. Mark Fessler, Chairman
5. Marsha Hendler, Secretary
6. Earl Jackson, Jr., Vice Chairman
7. Maureen McCann

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

1. Frank Cruz
2. John Grisell
3. Deborah Omowale Jamon
4. Ed Onwe
5. Valerie Peak
6. Aurelina Prado
7. Diane Rath

**CITY STAFF**

- Jesus H. Saenz, Jr. IAP, Director of Airports
- Jeff Coyle, Assistant City Manager
- Nicole Fowles, Sr. Special Projects Manager/Board Liaison
- Brian Pratte, Chief Air Service Officer
- Thomas Bartlett, Deputy Director
- Katinka Howell, City Attorney

Chairman Mark Fessler called the special meeting to order at 1:37 p.m. Roll call was taken on the videoconference. A quorum was not established but as no items were considered for voting, the meeting continued. Mr. Fessler asked the Board Liaison if there were any Public Comments to share with the Commission. It was noted that no comments were received.

Mr. Fessler asked Aviation Director Jesus Saenz to introduce Assistant City Manager Jeff Coyle. Earlier this year, City Manager announced the promotion of Mr. Coyle to Assistant City Manager and subsequently over the Aviation Department. Mr. Coyle thanked Mr. Saenz and Mr. Fessler for inviting him to the meeting and thanked the members for serving on the Commission.

Mr. Saenz introduced Chief Air Service Officer Brian Pratte and noted the two recent announcements of jetBlue and Breeze Airways. Mr. Pratte thanked the Commission members for inviting him to the meeting. Mr. Pratte began his presentation with a snapshot of pre-COVID air service number which included 12 commercial airlines and more than 6.3 million department passengers. He then went over the passenger numbers throughout the COVID pandemic. Mr. Pratte said the data was showing the average flight was 90% full, a strong indicator of our recovery. He said he did not expect this number to expand as airlines were having trouble returning their pilot and crew levels to pre-COVID levels and the need for more aircraft. Mr. Pratte noted that several routes/markets were returning to San Antonio International, including:

- New York-JFK on August 17 (American) and October 1 (Delta)
- New Orleans on September 7 (Southwest)
- Albuquerque on November 20 (Southwest)

- New York -Newark on September 8 (United)
- San Francisco on September 9 (United)
- Los Angeles on October 5 (United Way)

He also noted the new markets:

- Oklahoma City, Tulsa and NW Arkansas on July 15 (Breeze)
- Boston and New York – JFK in October on date unknown (jetBlue)
- Colorado Springs for holidays on November 20 (Southwest)

He concluded the presentation by sharing the markets whose capacity was above 2019 levels including two Mexican destinations (Monterrey and Mexico City), two Florida destinations (Miami and Tampa) and two Texas destinations (Houston and Dallas) as well as Nashville, Charlotte, Salt Lake City, Phoenix and Detroit. Air service to Mexican destinations continues to be strong as the border continues to be closed.

Mr. Pratte shared with the Commission his experience at the recent Routes Americas conference, the largest air service industry focused on North, Central and South America. Mr. Pratte said he met with 25 airlines.

Commission members offered the following comments or questions:

- Of the 25 airline meetings, how many airlines asked to meet with Brian and his team?
  - Eight or nine were airlines that were not on our request list.
- How can the commission help support the efforts to retain and land new markets?
  - Market research is extremely important – what’s driving market demand is information we can share with the airlines. For example, we will take the announcement of the new German auto manufacture which is opening its facility in 2024 when we meet with European air carriers.
- Has Austin come back as strong?
  - Air service is coming back strong; we don’t have any other airport’s specific passenger numbers through.
- Can you share anything on the aircraft issues you mentioned would be difficult for airlines?
  - Airlines did not anticipate the level of demand that was returning and did not prepare the aircraft that had been “shuttered” during the pandemic to meet that demand. Aircraft that has been not been in service requires maintenance and testing before it can return to service. Additionally, they need pilots and crew members which has been difficult as many retired during COVID and the industry already had a pilot issue prior to the pandemic.

Mr. Fessler announced there would not be a meeting in July.

This meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m.