

# MINUTES



# County of Inyo Board of Supervisors

**August 28, 2018**

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Inyo, State of California, met in a special joint session with the Mammoth Lakes Town Council at the hour of 5:34 p.m., on August 28, 2018, in the Mammoth Lakes Town Council Chambers, Suite Z, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Minaret Mall, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, with the following Town Council members and Inyo County Supervisors present: Inyo County Supervisors Dan Totheroh, Chairperson, Rick Pucci, Jeff Griffiths, Mark Tillemans, and Matt Kingsley; and Mayor Cleland Hoff, presiding, and Kirk Stapp, Lynda Salcido, and John Wentworth. (Mayor Pro-tem Bill Sauser arrived at 6:01 p.m.)

*Pledge of Allegiance* Inyo County Chairperson Totheroh led the Pledge of Allegiance.

*Roll Call* Jamie Gray, Town Clerk, conducted Roll Call.

*Public Comment* Mayor Cleland Hoff asked for public comment.

Sharon Clark welcomed the Inyo County Board of Supervisors, noting this meeting was possibly the first of its kind and encouraged the two governing bodies to hold more joint sessions to work together on important issues.

*Workshop – Regional Airport Development* Members of the Inyo County Board of Supervisors and Mammoth Lakes Town Council engaged in a workshop to discuss regional airport development issues, including existing and future facilities at Mammoth Yosemite Airport and Bishop Airport. The workshop included presentations from Mammoth Public Works Director Grady Dutton and Acting Inyo County CAO Clint Quilter, who discussed projects at their respective airports, with Quilter providing a timeline for Inyo County's goal of welcoming commercial flights; a status update from Hot Creek Aviation Manager Pat Foster, who discussed space limitations at the Mammoth facility; an update from Mammoth Lakes Tourism Executive Director John Urdi on Mammoth Airport's commercial flight outlook this winter; and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area COO Eric Clark, who reiterated the company's position that it is committed to creating a world-class resort and key to that will be providing safe, consistent, reliable air service. Board and Council members made comments during the presentations and updates and asked questions of the speakers.

Mayor Hoff solicited additional public comment and the following individuals spoke:

- Stephen Kalish of Swall Meadows suggested the pricing of flights in and out of Mammoth Airport should be looked at, as a cost comparison of nearly identical flights out of Reno showed the former to be three times as expensive.
- Yvonne Katzenstein of Bishop asked whether the public will have access to the NEPA documents resulting from the Bishop Airport environmental review, noting her concerns about air quality impacts.
- Barbara Schneider of Paradise questioned the absence of any Mono County Supervisors to represent residents living outside of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and said she worried about volunteer fire departments' capacity to handle auto or airplane crashes as highway and air travel increases.

Supervisor Griffiths noted that Inyo County has been and will continue to explore ways to support its volunteer fire departments. He said the air service issue has been a regional discussion at the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments level for the past four years. He said officials are looking for ways to improve the local quality of life, bring in stable jobs, and attract professionals to the area – and reliable air travel and high-speed Internet access are essential to achieving that.

Councilmember Sauser said he doesn't particularly see Bishop Airport as the full solution to regional air service issues.

Mayor Hoff noted that no decisions are being made tonight. Supervisor Griffiths said that, for Inyo County, a lot of decisions have already been made in that it is proceeding with the projects necessary to become a certified commercial airport with forecasts for two flights a week. He said a regional discussion is separate from that.

Councilmember Salcido asked whether the need and reason for regional discussions have been sufficiently communicated to the public. Supervisor Griffiths noted multiple stories in the media and the ongoing public meetings at the ESCOG level, where officials determined reliable, regional air service would benefit all involved, regardless of where the main hub is located. Councilmember Salcido suggested it might be helpful to be able to point to a document when asked by constituents about the issue. Councilmember Wentworth concurred that it is clear the motivation for collaboration is the reliability factor. Supervisor Kingsley said the governing bodies have different constituencies and it is their individual responsibility to inform their own constituents. He said it is best not to overcomplicate matters and the bottom line is Inyo County is working toward a commercial airport that might be able to help improve regional air service. Supervisor Griffiths added that it has taken four years to arrive at the common vision Inyo County and Mammoth now share, and while there are still a lot of issues to work out, the upcoming NEPA process at Bishop Airport should daylight some of those.

Stacey Powells of the Mammoth Times asked whether the July 4 fireworks show would continue at Bishop Airport after the upcoming projects are complete.

Dan McConnell asked what changed in the big picture to prompt today's discussion. Supervisor Griffiths explained that Inyo County obtained an in-perpetuity easement from the LADWP for the airport property about six years ago, which has aided the County in obtaining FAA grant funding.

Supervisor Pucci said he would like to see two great local airports to meet regional needs. Chairperson Totheroh stressed that officials are looking to recognize the best uses and capabilities of both facilities. Supervisor Tillemans said Inyo County and Mammoth have put aside legacy issues and egos to arrive at a common goal, and commended staff for their professionalism in pursuing that goal. Councilmember Sauser said he thought utilizing both airports is a good idea.

Don Barrett, owner of Lake Mary Marina and resident of Wilkerson, said he was excited about the activity going on at Bishop Airport and said he believed commercial flights into Bishop will help in every respect, including improving safety on the highway and air quality by reducing the number of cars on the road.

*Adjournment*

Mayor Hoff adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

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Chairperson, Inyo County Board of Supervisors

*Attest: CLINT G. QUILTER  
Acting Clerk of the Board*

by: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Darcy Ellis, Assistant*