



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 1/25/2022

File #: 22-38

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Aviation

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Request for the Allocation of Four Full-Time Equivalent (4.0 FTE) Limited Duration Airport Service Worker Positions and Supplemental Budget (4/5 Vote Required)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the Supplemental Budget for the Aviation Budget Unit 1100-3530381(4/5 Vote Required); and
2. Approve the allocation of four full-time (4.0 FTE) Limited Duration Airport Service Worker positions (salary range 0364/0384, class 0278) effective immediately.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Aviation Enterprise Fund (3530)
CARES Act Grant

DISCUSSION:

The Humboldt County Airport System, which includes Arcata-Eureka California Redwood Coast-Humboldt County Airport (ACV), Murray Field, Rohnerville Airport, Garberville Airport, Kneeland Airport, and Dinsmore Airport, provides vital services including air carrier service, air cargo, US Coast Guard, air medivac, firefighting, business transportation, government transportation, flight training, search and rescue, and other general aviation related activities.

Currently, the Department of Aviation is allocated eight full-time Airport Service Workers to service and maintain all six airports to ensure aeronautical safety for all users.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requires Commercial Service Part 139 Airports to provide aircraft rescue and firefighting (ARFF) services during air carrier operations. For Humboldt County operating ACV, means that the eight currently allocated Airport Service Workers are working up to 140 hours per week on fire coverage alone. While on fire coverage, they are unable to assist with many of the other duties that are required of Airport Service Workers.

In addition to the ARFF responsibilities at ACV, these positions are responsible for providing fueling services to all airline, and general aviation aircraft, performing FAA and Transportation Security Administration (TSA) regulated safety and security inspections, airfield maintenance including repairing runway and taxiway lights, maintaining signage and markings in accordance with FAA guidelines, inspecting and repairing runways and taxiways, wildlife mitigation efforts, equipment maintenance, and terminal and facilities maintenance at ACV. These additional duties at ACV require an additional 140 hours of staff time for a combined total of 280 staff hours per week. This equates to approximately 88% of available staff time dedicated to meeting the staffing requirements at ACV.

The remaining 12% of available staff time is then allocated to maintenance and upkeep of the five other county airports. This 12% allotment of staff time only provides adequate staff time for mowing, herbicide application and conducting the maintenance and inspections required of the fueling systems located at three of the five outlying airports. Based upon current staffing levels the Aviation Department currently is able to travel to and perform basic maintenance activities at each outlying airport approximately once every five weeks.

Pavement maintenance, repairs to lighting and signage, markings being refreshed, fencing repairs, are examples of responsibilities staff are struggling to perform at a satisfactory level based upon current staffing allocations. Tenants at three of the five outlying airports have expressed dissatisfaction with the service levels provided by the county. In some instances, it can take several weeks or more to make staff available to perform even basic facility repairs.

Currently the Aviation Department is pursuing FAA grant funding for several projects to repair our aging infrastructure. The department anticipates receiving grant funding to perform an extensive runway rehabilitation project at ACV in the fall of 2022. The department is also simultaneously working with a consultant to design and implement an upgrade of the airfield electrical system at ACV and anticipates this work will start shortly after the runway project is complete. The Army Corp of Engineers is also anticipated to be back at ACV this fall to continue their investigative work and the eventual removal and remediation of the Fog, Intensive Dispersal of (FIDO) system abandoned in place many years ago. Additionally, there are numerous other infrastructure projects that the department is pursuing federal funding for in 2023-2025, and beyond.

All of these construction activities will require a significant level of participation from the Airport Service Workers. The majority of these construction activities will occur during a graveyard shift to minimize the impacts upon our tenants, the traveling public, and ensure safety for contractor personnel and the public during these activities. It is anticipated that at a minimum one FTE will be dedicated to construction once this construction activity begins.

With the allocation of four additional Airport Service Workers, the Department of Aviation would then be able to meet the mandatory staffing levels required by the FAA and TSA at ACV and would also be able to regularly service the general aviation airports and conduct regular maintenance in the areas that have been lacking. This increased allocation would also provide the staffing needed to support grant funded construction activities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Total estimated salary and benefit cost for the requested 4.0 FTE Airport Service Worker positions through June 30, 2022, is \$102,474.93. The additional expenses incurred through the end of this fiscal year, and thereafter until June 2024, will be covered by CARES Act Funding. Therefore, there is no impact to the general fund.

The total estimated salary and benefit cost annually for these additional positions is \$333,043.53. In 2024, when CARES Act Funding will no longer cover this cost, the incentive period for the airlines have finished and the Department of Aviation will be collecting significant revenue from landing fees, fuel Flowage, terminal rent, etc. The amount of post-airline incentive revenue, and ancillary revenue the Department of Aviation will be collecting beginning 2023 is estimated to cover the annual \$333,043.53. The positions are classified as limited duration to ensure that if the department does not have enough generated revenue to cover the cost of keeping the positions after CARES Act Funding runs out, these positions can be deallocated.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by providing community-appropriate levels of service.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may decide not to authorize the allocation of 4.0 FTE Airport Service Workers to the Department of Aviation. However, this is not recommended as the Aviation Department is already unable to fulfill all of its regulatory obligations at ACV while also conducting general maintenance at all six county airports to remain in compliance with federal and State requirements and meet tenant expectations. This would also jeopardize the Department of Aviation's ability to ensure we meet the regulatory and safety requirements associated with upcoming construction projects.

The Board may recommend a more comprehensive staffing study be completed to ensure the most effective and efficient staffing model is used. Although the Aviation Department would be supportive of this direction, it would not resolve the current staffing shortages.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Supplemental Budget for Budget Unit 3530381

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A