

Virtual VAA Airport Consultative Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, March 9, 2021
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM
GoToWebinar

Upcoming Public Meetings:

Annual Public General Meeting
Thursday May 13, 2021 – 1:30 PM
GoToWebinar

Fall Airport Consultative Committee Meeting
Tuesday, October 19, 2021
Time, Venue and Format TBA (pending the status of the pandemic)



Eric Donald
Committee Chair

Representative Members in Attendance:

Organization

Representative

Airlines:

WestJet
Air Canada / Jazz
Air North
Horizon Air
Pacific Coastal Airlines

Kristen Eakens
Serge Corbeil, Robert Colwill
Helen Yang
Regrets
Regrets

Airport Land Tenants

**Annie Wong-Harrison, Michael Wong-Harrison,
Randy Wright, Mike Sudul, Jennifer Mitchell
Reg Barnes, Ken Corbitt, Margarete Rothlisberger,
Hayley Tannhauser, Claudiu Ulinici, Dan Sawchuk,
Reg Barnes**

Air Terminal Building Tenants' Representatives

Association of Canadian Travel Agencies
BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Canada Border Services Agency
Canadian Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
Capital Regional District
City of Victoria
Department of National Defence (443 MH Squadron)
District of Central Saanich
District of North Saanich
District of Saanich
Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce
NAV Canada
North Saanich Residents' Association
Pauquachin First Nation
Saanich Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
Saanich Peninsula Water and Wastewater Commission
Sidney Business Improvement Area Society
Sidney North-Saanich RCMP
Tourism Victoria
Town of Sidney
Transport Canada
Tsartlip First Nation
Tsawout First Nation
Tseycum First Nation

Regrets
Regrets
Regrets
Greg Matte
Regrets
Councillor Ben Isitt
Ryan Sexsmith, Kris Sutton
Councillor Gord Newton
Mayor Geoff Orr
Regrets
John Wilson
Blair Lews
Regrets
Alva Bob, Darlene Henry
Cathy Larsen, Joe Jansen
Regrets
Regrets
Regrets
Paul Nursey
Councillor Chad Rintoul
Linda Germain
Regrets
Regrets
Regrets

Members of the Public in attendance: 50

Airport Consultative Committee Members in attendance: Eric Donald (Committee Chair), Gordon Safarik (Board Chair), Wendy Everson, Allan Haynes, Frank Leonard, Chuck Lovallo, Margaret Lucas and Cathie Ounsted

Other Board Members in attendance: Carol Brown, Paul Gerrard, and Wendy Zink

Management: Geoff Dickson (President and CEO), Lea-Ann Bailey, Randy Bogle, Michelle Cooper, Scott Cunningham, Ken Gallant, Mike Garraway, Rod Hunchak, Jason Knight, Adrian Nyland, Lars Olsson, Dave Parson, and Jill Watt.

VAA Staff in attendance: Tim Albert, Andrea Bailey, Susan Ball, Sherri Brooks, Julie Dobranski, Tyler Gunderson, Amber Haagstrom, Andy Hughes, Anita Kardos, Michael Lane, Matt Logan, Colin Murray, and Sarah Venn.

Meeting Moderator: Adrian Nyland

Recording Secretary: Melinda Orlowski

1. Welcome To Attendees

The meeting moderator welcomed everyone to the Victoria Airport Authority's (VAA's) virtual Airport Consultative Committee (ACC) Meeting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the requirement for social distancing, the meeting was live-streamed via the GoToWebinar platform. The moderator provided an overview of the meeting agenda and guidance around the process for asking questions of the leadership team.

2. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order by Eric Donald, Chair of the Airport Consultative Committee. This was VAA's third virtual public meeting since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee Chair recognized the Committee members, Representative members, dignitaries, business leaders and members of the public who were participating in the virtual meeting.

The Representative members were from a broad spectrum of the community with diverse backgrounds. Although it was more challenging to participate in a virtual format, VAA very much appreciated their input and asked that they continue to share their perspectives, concerns, and suggestions.

4. Motion to Receive the Minutes of the October 20, 2020 Airport Consultative Committee Meeting

The minutes of the October 20, 2020 Airport Consultative Committee meeting were reviewed by the Committee.

MOTION: Acceptance of the October 20, 2020 Airport Consultative Committee meeting minutes as presented.

Moved by: Eric Donald

Seconded by: Gordon Safarik

Motion carried.

5. Report from the Chair of the Board of Directors

With the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation, Board Chair Gordon Safarik provided a report to the Committee regarding the activities of the Board of Directors. This is the Board Chair's third year serving in the position.

The year 2020 was a challenging time for the world, and in particular for the aviation sector. The global pandemic and the resulting health directives advising against non-essential travel severely impacted airports and airlines around the world, many seeing a decline of up to 98 percent of their passenger traffic from the previous year.

Difficult times often bring out the worst -- and the best -- in people. In the airport's case, it was the latter. Once it became clear that travel restrictions would not be relaxed any time soon, the VAA team came together to find solutions that would address the immediate challenges: to keep travellers safe, to preserve cash and ensure fiscal prudence, and to support the airport partners, all while working on a business resumption strategy.

COVID-19 hit everyone hard, but it was known that one day things will eventually return to normal. VAA continues to pull together and support each other while navigating the immediate crisis.

While many companies were forced to take drastic measures - including downsizing their operations, laying off staff or closing altogether, VAA was fortunate. At the onset of the pandemic, VAA was in a strong financial position, having no debt and a healthy balance sheet. VAA's solid financial position and diversified sources of non-aviation revenue were helping the company navigate the downturn in traffic, but it was simply not sustainable for an extended period of time. In an effort to reduce expenses, a number of capital projects were deferred, and discretionary service contracts were scaled back.

VAA continued to invest in enhanced hygiene measures to rebuild confidence in air travel, all while planning for the future. YYJ was one of the first airports in Canada to introduce plexiglass barriers at the security screening checkpoint as part of its ongoing commitment to health and safety.

The Board has been highly engaged in monitoring VAA's financial position and was supportive of Management's efforts. While the full impacts of COVID-19 were yet to be assessed, the Board was confident that traffic will rebound.

Despite all of the negative news, there was much to be celebrated in the past year. YYJ received several customer service and business awards / achievements, which the Board was very grateful for.

The Chair acknowledged three Board members who left the VAA in 2020: Marilyn Loveless, Rod Dewar, and Brenda Nunns Shoemaker. The former Board members were thanked for their many thoughtful contributions over the years, with well wishes for their future endeavours.

VAA was pleased to welcome Margaret Lucas as its newest Board member. Representing the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, Margaret has a strong business acumen from a regional perspective. She has served on numerous civic boards and committees and was a Councillor with the City of Victoria for many years.

Ms. Lucas cares deeply about her community and has pledged to bring those perspectives to the Board discussions.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, VAA's vision is to be the best airport anywhere. The team is committed to achieving the airport's strategic goals. While it may take a bit longer to get there as a result of the pandemic, VAA would do everything it could to achieve them as quickly as possible. The Board was confident that under the leadership of President and CEO Geoff Dickson, VAA would continue to see resiliency. VAA would continue to work hard to make YYJ a great airport that would serve the needs of its customers to bring economic benefit to the region.

The Chair asked the Representative members of the Committee to collaborate with YYJ to ensure the airport thrives. Airports are an economic engine that will play an important role in the recovery of Greater Victoria as we emerge from the pandemic.

The Chair thanked the community for their patience and ongoing support. Once it is safe to do so, YYJ will be ready to welcome travelers back.

6. Report from the Chief Financial Officer

With the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation, Randy Bogle, Chief Financial Officer, provided an overview of the forecasted financial results to December 31, 2020. VAA's auditors were currently concluding their work; the audited financial results will be reported at the Annual Public General Meeting on May 13, 2021.

Initial Response

In mid-March 2020, a pandemic was declared and VAA immediately recognized that it would have a significant impact on the aviation business but were unsure of the duration. Much of the focus in 2020 was spent reviewing and monitoring industry forecasts, adjusting the financial forecasts, reworking financial contracts, and evaluating government announcements and programs. VAA entered a cash-preservation mode, to conserve cash to better weather the impacts of the pandemic.

As a result of the pandemic, VAA took several steps including

- Reviewing and cutting the operating cost base by 27 percent, which amounted to just over \$6 million
- Reducing the capital program by 51 percent, a reduction of \$6 million from the approved program
- Re-negotiating several revenue contracts with a view to reduce costs
- Arranging for an enhanced credit facility with its banker
- Applying for and received the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS).

2020 Budgeted vs. Actual Passengers

Referencing the chart, the monthly budgeted passengers for 2020 was 1.96 million. In January, passengers were right on budget. February was slightly behind budget as the initial effects of the coming pandemic were starting to show. As soon as the pandemic was declared in March, YYJ's passenger numbers plummeted. Normally at that time of year YYJ averages 5,000 – 6,000 passengers per day; however, those numbers were averaging as the monthly numbers.

As the year progressed, passenger numbers could be correlated to the public health advisories. As restrictions were relaxed in the summer of 2020, passenger traffic somewhat increased. However, by November and December, travel advisories were back in place and traffic decreased as a result.

Passenger Traffic Comparison 2020 Budget and Actual

YYJ's budgeted passengers were 1.96 million; however, the year ended with approximately 575,000 passengers. Almost 50 percent of the total travelled in the first two months of 2020 before the pandemic was declared.

Approximately 90 percent of revenue comes from passenger activity in the form of the Airport Improvement Fee (AIF), landing and terminal fees, parking, car rentals, ground transportation, and retail concessions. The decrease in passengers had a significant impact on revenue.

Revenue Comparison 2020 Budget and Actual

On average from April to December 2020, revenue dropped from over \$3 million per month to just over \$1 million per month. The renegotiation of certain contracts also significantly impacted revenue.

VAA's budgeted operating cash revenue for 2020 was \$40 million; however, as a result of the pandemic there was a 58 percent decrease in revenue, total revenue was \$17 million. Of this \$17 million, over 10 percent or \$1.8 million related to the CEWS program implemented by the federal government.

Operating Expense Comparison 2020 Budget and Actual

While revenues are heavily dependent on passengers, unfortunately expenses did not have the same correlation. When the pandemic hit, VAA amended its budgets and cut discretionary expenses.

Operating cash expenses for 2020 were budgeted to be \$22.4 million. Through a number of difficult decisions, VAA was able to reduce this amount by 27 percent to \$16.3 million, a \$6 million decrease.

In summary, VAA saw a 58 percent or \$22 million decrease in revenues while expenses decreased by 27 percent or \$6 million. This resulted in a significant impact to the overall financial position.

Free Flow Cash 2020 Budget and Actual

VAA is a non-share capital corporation, and all profits are reinvested into the airport. Operating an airport is a very capital-intensive undertaking. VAA relies on free cash flow to ultimately fund the capital program.

For 2020, the budgeted free cash was approximately \$17.2 million; however, VAA ended the year with free cash flow of \$800,000, which was a 95 percent decrease.

YYJ was one of a select few airports that ended the year in a positive position on a free cash flow basis. Having a strong balance sheet and no debt played a large part in that, as VAA was not required to dedicate any financial resources to debt servicing.

Net Income (Loss) 2020 Budget and Actual

Net Income for accounting purposes includes non-cash items such as amortization. The pandemic severely impacted the business. The original budgeted net income was \$7.6 million; however, there was a net loss of (\$8.2 million) at the end of the year as a result of COVID-19.

2021 Revenue Scenarios

The pandemic continued to greatly impact business in 2021. When the 2021 budget was approved in fall of 2020, the industry was forecasting a somewhat faster recovery. Accordingly, the budgeted passenger numbers to year end was 40 percent of pre-pandemic levels, which would have resulted in revenues of approximately \$18 million.

Moving forward in 2021, it appeared that those passenger numbers may be difficult to achieve. Based on current industry forecasts, modeling three other passenger scenarios of 20 percent, 25 percent, and 30 percent, would result in revenues between \$11 million to \$16 million. VAA currently felt that the likely scenario was ending with revenues somewhere between \$13 million and \$16 million.

As a result of decrease in revenue, VAA had limited its capital program to only address urgently required projects. All operating expenses were being reviewed for further savings. VAA continued to monitor passenger trends and adjust its forecasts accordingly. Planning for future recovery continued so that when unabated travel resumes, YYJ will be prepared.

VAA continued to access the CEWS and any other sector support programs that were in place. CEWS was scheduled to end in June 2021. If the program was extended to the end of the year, it could result in an additional \$1 million in revenue.

2022 Passenger Scenarios

Despite all of the challenges, the outlook was not all bad. As vaccinations increase, the health restrictions would be relaxed, and people would be able to travel once again. Due to a pent-up demand for travel, more people may be flying.

Current industry long-term forecasts trends indicate that 2022 passengers could range from 50 percent to 85 percent of 2019 levels, which would be a low of 1 million and a high of just over 1.6 million passengers. The worst-case scenario of 50 percent passenger traffic would still leave VAA in a positive cash flow position.

Passenger Recovery

The aviation industry will recover; however, it will likely be several years before YYJ returned to its previous passenger levels. Having entered the pandemic in a strong financial position with no debt, VAA was weathering the storm better than many other Canadian airports.

2021 and Beyond

As VAA's cash reserves are exhausted in 2021, the airport will take on some debt to bridge the gap until the recovery. VAA expects to emerge from the pandemic in a strong financial position, ready to move forward to grow YYJ.

Concluding Remarks

Moving forward, VAA would continue to operate a safe and efficient airport and monitor passenger trends while being prudent with its operating budget. Capital investments will only be made where necessary; however, VAA would be ready to bring forward capital projects as its financial situation improves.

6. Report from the President and Chief Executive Officer

With the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation, President and CEO Geoff Dickson provided an update on the airport activities over the past year.

The President and CEO thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the virtual meeting. It had been a year since the onset of the pandemic, and 2021 was not feeling much different than 2020, although there was light on the horizon.

The President and CEO highlighted some very significant accomplishments for Victoria International Airport against a backdrop of very difficult events.

Most Efficient Airport in North America Serving under Five Million Passengers

The Air Transport Research Society (ATRS) associated with the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is a global benchmarking organization that gathers information from airports around the world. Victoria International Airport was very proud to be recognized as the Most Efficient Airport in North America serving under five million passengers. Zurich, Schiphol, Atlanta, and Hong Kong were among the many airports analyzed.

Despite the catastrophic decline in revenue VAA was reasonably well positioned because they had a clear focus and kept costs low and watched productivity and efficiency closely.

Efficiency is particularly of vital importance now as airports embark on their journey of recovery from the dramatic downturn inflicted by COVID- 19.

BC Top Employers - 2021

The President and CEO showed gratitude to the Board, who was focused on a balanced approach for the business, not just financial performance, but also with customers, the environment, and employees. Considering the considerable challenges VAA faced adapting to a new work environment, it was a meaningful recognition for VAA to be selected as one of BC's Top 100 Employers for 2021 for a second consecutive year in a row.

Rick Hansen Foundation – Gold Standard Certification

People with visible and invisible disabilities experience barriers in the building environment every day and Victoria Airport was no exception. VAA wanted to do better and partnered with The Rick Hansen Foundation to ensure that YYJ was fully accessible. VAA was pleased to be recognized as the fourth airport in Canada to achieve Gold Certification from the Rick Hansen Foundation. The program is a national rating system that measures the accessibility of building and sites and promotes increased access through the adoption of Universal Design principles.

YYJ has many accessible features that resulted in this achievement including the following:

- Accessible parking in close proximity to accessible entrances
- Clear width, and firm, stable, and slip resistant exterior pathways
- Clear directional signage including international pictograms
- An abundance of accessible washrooms equipped with automated doors and emergency call systems, a dedicated adult changing washroom and pet relief areas inside and outside the Air Terminal Building (ATB)
- Tactile markings on signage
- Accessible self-serve kiosks with priority access
- Versatile seating options
- Assisted listening technology
- Pet relief stations for those people needing to travel with pets

The President and CEO was grateful to Rick Hansen and his team for raising the barrier for everyone in the country.

Best Airport in North America Under Two Million Passengers

Over 400 airports globally participate in the Airport Service Quality (ASQ) studies done by Airports Council International (ACI). For the third time, Victoria Airport Authority had won Best Airport in North America Under Two Million Passengers. The award was attributed not to just VAA, but to all the airport partners that help to make a positive experience for our passengers.

Best Hygiene Measures in North America

ACI also awarded VAA with a new award for Best Hygiene Measures in North America. VAA has been focused on biosecurity to reduce risk and create a healthy, clean environment with YYJ's TravelSafe program. To help determine the elements required, VAA found direction from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) through their Council Aviation Recovery Taskforce (CART) program. The new Best Hygiene Measures award was particularly special for the VAA team as it directly reflected the extraordinary efforts that went into the implementation of the TravelSafe YYJ program.

Lower Departures Lounge Expansion

VAA completed the single largest capital project in their history in the midst of a pandemic. The President and CEO was pleased with the 1900 square meter addition that would serve the airport for many years to come. The expansion also included exterior airside landscaping which left a lasting first and last impression for passengers for our airport and the region.

The President and CEO discussed the importance of VAA's continued focus on local business and helping them to build. Fresh Cup, The Fickle Fig Farm Market, and Victoria Distillers were all local businesses at YYJ.

Financial Position

The President and showed an image of an empty parking lot at YYJ to demonstrate the stark reality of the airport. Once containing up to 2,000 vehicles parked on a daily basis, only a handful now remained. VAA's revenue is based on flight and passenger activity as

its business model. Prior to COVID-19, YYJ had 100 scheduled flights per day which went down to just eight and 6,000 passengers per day went down to 100 or 200 passengers. A lot of revenue was lost from landing fees, terminal fees, and airport improvement fees along with revenue derived from restaurants, retail, parking, rental car agencies, etc. which declined 98 percent almost overnight. Revenues went from \$40 million to \$17 million and operating costs were cut 27 percent.

VAA has already invested heavily in safety programs on the airfield including runway overlays, apron expansions and improvements, and condition of assets. Because of these investments, they were fortunate to not be faced with a capital program that required a large investment in safety, infrastructure repair, or life extension initiatives. The larger component of the capital program was around growth, which provided VAA with flexibility to adjust the capital program as passenger volume increased.

CEWS was very appreciated for the \$1.8 million dollars received. The rent relief which has been rolled over into 2021 was also appreciated, although was based on revenue and volume and was a benefit of approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000. Both forms of funding were appreciated, but there was a large gap to the \$17 million to \$18 million dollar revenue loss VAA experienced.

Financial relief from the federal government was limited in comparison to other jurisdictions such as the US. Approximately \$20 billion was funded to US airports providing them with a better ability to bounce back and approximately \$200 billion was invested globally in WestJet and Air Canada's airline competitors.

It was important for the government to understand the unique nature of the aeronautical industry, and at the very least invest in our airlines so they can rise the revenue bases of the airports and show progress.

Forecasting

Traffic was incredibly challenging and VAA looked at various avenues to get an understanding of airport estimates in Canada, the United States, and globally. VAA also

was trying to assess how the provincial restrictions would ease province to province with the rollout of vaccines.

Originally VAA thought passenger volume would be approximately 20 percent of 2019 numbers in the first quarter of 2021, as traffic was already at 25 percent in October 2020. With the second wave of the pandemic and stricter restrictions, November and December numbers immediately dropped down to 10 to 15 percent. VAA was still experiencing the same numbers during the first few months of 2021 and was doing their best to get a clear sense of the numbers moving forward. The rollout of vaccines was providing optimism for air travel.

The President and CEO provided an example of Australia passenger numbers showing an increase in December which demonstrated a high degree of pent-up demand for travel. Through research, VAA was seeing that people were willing and ready to travel once they were told it was safe.

VAA is managing as best they could by cutting costs significantly and turning to other forms of revenue such as development with several land initiatives. VAA continued to diversify and looked to other revenue streams for the long-term health of the organization.

Moving Forward

It was the hope of the President and CEO that federal government, provincial government, and everyone had learned from this pandemic. If there was a reoccurrence, to find an optimum strategy that didn't shut down an economy for over a year waiting for a vaccination to develop. We can find ways to be more targeted with lockdowns while evaluating risk.

The world of aviation has a high degree of risk that is mitigated with various steps taken. The traveling public perceived air travel as a vector for transmission which was not necessarily the case. Studies showed the number of COVID-19 incidents linked to air travel were a capture rate of 1 percent to 1.5 percent. The Canadian population transmission rate is over 3 percent, which indicated air travel is a lower risk.

The President and CEO informed that the US Military, Harvard Medical, and aircraft manufacturers have all declared air travel to be safe in terms of probability of transmitting COVID-19. This was due to hepa filters and air circulation in aircraft. Dr. Tam, the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada also concluded there is a minimal risk of transmission in flight. Other layers of mitigation were required to reduce risk such as masks, distancing, barriers, and hygiene. Although these measures could not eliminate risk 100 percent, it was not sure if even the vaccine could eliminate the risk 100 percent.

COVID-19 testing was being evaluated as another form of risk mitigation and the aeronautical industry looked to find ways as we move forward to create more certainty in ensuring the virus isn't being transmitted from community to community.

As we try to get the aviation industry ready for the summer, the President and CEO hoped that those making balanced decisions for the safety and health of the country also considered the financial health of the entire tourism industry, as the summer was only a four-month window. He believed if travel was managed in a safe way, there was an opportunity to keep flattening the curve and still allow travel during the summer.

Future of Air Travel

In the absence of any financial assistance, the President and CEO showed concern for the ability of airlines to recover quickly. Many issues were to be considered by the airlines and the impacts they would have on the economy. The future of business travel was unknown with conflicting opinions and the onset of a virtual environment.

The President and CEO advised that when the UK announced easing of international travel restrictions by May 17, 2021, EasyJet's vacation bookings went up 600 percent overnight. This was another global indicator of the public's desire for travel.

Air travel is vital to the Canadian economy and as the aeronautical industry recovers, coordination will be required to validate vaccinated travellers. Mitigation efforts will need to be in place such as bio screening, rapid antigen testing, and touchless technologies. It is a time of change and VAA was working with airline partners to identify their investment priorities.

Closing Remarks

The President and CEO reflected on a quote from the former CEO at Intel. “Bad companies are destroyed in a crisis, good companies survive, and great companies get better.” VAA planned to keep getting better and looked forward to the day that families and friends, vacationers, and Canadian businesses could begin flying again safely, calmly, and confidently and be there to welcome them.

7. Call for New Business

There was no new business.

8. Questions / Comments from the Members of the Committee and the Public

The meeting moderator read out the questions and comments submitted through the platform.

➤ **Please provide an update on the Taxiway Echo Extension Project.**

In 2019, 1200 ft in length was added to the Taxiway Echo east as a request from Nav Canada to improve operations. At the time, a new Tower was being planned to be built on the west side of the airfield. As a temporary solution to view the runway from the current tower, a camera was required which had created a disagreement with VAA and Nav Canada. Discussions were taking place that were considering the investment to be made and understanding timing of the new Tower. The system would improve efficiency during busy times on the runways.

➤ **Could we please get an update on what is happening with the old RCAF Hangar? When do you think the Airport Authority would be taking it over?**

The President and CEO had thought that VAA would be taking it over in 2015 or 2016, but the military wanted to keep it longer. DND was working on an environmental remediation plan on the property. VAA has asked them to also explore demolition. The property was expected to be coming back to VAA by the end of the year.

➤ **Do you feel that VAA would have any use for the RCAF building in the future?**

VAA has taken a lot of potential investors through, but more often than not they see the type of remediation that the building needs to make it workable. The CEO didn't see it being suitable for YYJ and felt positive there will be a user out there eventually as it was a prime location with access to the airfield.

➤ **Mike McNaney, President of the National Aviation Council of Canada has energetically supported the idea of a change in the user fee business model of both airports and air traffic service to both address the exorbitant fees paid by passengers in Canada and futureproof the industry from future global stressors, similar to how the United States currently operates their infrastructure. Given this vulnerability of Canada's aviation infrastructure to global stressors, what is VAA's position on this issue and how is it being addressed?**

The US has Passenger Facility Charge of \$4.50. Canada's comparable Airport Improvement Fee (AIF) generally ranges from \$15 to \$40 for departing passengers across the country. It was a user pay model that Canadian airports were set up with and it didn't work as well when there were no users to pay. In the US, airlines invest a lot of capital into the airports. In Canada, airlines don't invest capital in airports.

YYJ has its AIF at \$15 and plans to keep it low recognizing it as an incentive to air carriers. VAA won an award for being one of the most efficient airports in Canada and this is tied to that low cost and not having the mindset to continually charge/tax users. VAA places itself in the position of the carriers to evaluate and how they are viewing their costs.

➤ **Comment: Congratulations to Geoff and the board and the whole VAA team for guiding our airport so well through a very difficult year.**

➤ **Comment: Thank you for all your work to the staff and the Board.**

➤ **Are there any updates on any US carriers looking at YYJ post COVID-19?**

Alaska was ready to resume operations. Other carriers would be dependent on when the US border opened. The President and CEO saw potential for United Airlines and the Denver market. He also saw an opportunity with the San Francisco route.

There were no further questions or comments. VAA invited anyone to had additional questions to contact the VAA after the meeting.

9. **Announcements**

Victoria Airport Authority's upcoming public meetings:

Virtual Annual Public General Meeting

Thursday, May 13, 2021

Fall Airport Consultative Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 19, 2021

It was unknown if the meetings will be held virtually or in person. The format will be decided based on guidance from the health authorities at that time.

All meetings will be advertised in the local print media, on YYJ's website, social media platforms and through YYJ Airmail. All members of the public are welcome to attend.

10. **Adjournment**

The Committee Chair thanked everyone for participating and adjourned the meeting.