Governor DeSantis extends Florida Legislative session to March 20th

On the 60th and final day of the Regular Session, the Florida Legislature adopted a joint resolution to extend the session until Friday, March 20th in order to work on and pass a state budget for the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year. This extension was rumored to happen weeks ago, but the stress of the recent Coronavirus outbreak in Florida and other parts of the U.S. tied the hands of the Legislature during budget negotiating and conferencing. This extension will help appropriate money to assist with the potential impacts the virus outbreak may cause. The Executive Branch is also pushing for some funds to help the state’s citizens as well as the economy, depending on the severity this public health crisis may inflict.

A number of FAC priorities were addressed, including the Aviation Work Program, and the Aviation Fuel Tax, CEI language changes, and more. Below is a summary of FAC priorities and their status as of March 17th.

→ **Aviation Work Program State Funding for Airport Development Grant Program** - FAC supports state funding for airport development that is no less than that which is proposed by FDOT in the Tentative Work Plan for 2020/21. Governor DeSantis’ budget recommendations for 2020/21 include $8.8 billion for the five-year State Transportation Work Program, with $323.9 million for aviation improvements. This includes $43 million for spaceports. The Allocations have been met; House & Senate budget conferencing is over. A budget has been met and is currently in the 72-hour “cooling-off” period. The Legislature plans to vote on it by Thursday, March 19th, then Sine Die/end Session.

→ **PFAS** - The FDEP is performing investigations at a number of federal, state, and local facilities that use or have used PFAS to determine the presence of the chemical compound in soil and groundwater at those facilities. FDEP intends to take action to require further assessment and possible cleanup of these compounds, if found. FAC is seeking an exemption from the costs associated with any investigation or clean-up, as these chemicals are required by FAA for ARFF. All proposed bills failed this session, but it remains on our radar for monitoring over the summer. A stakeholder group including FAC, the FL league of Cities, environmental and industry groups and lobbyists has been formed to educate officials and communities and to monitor and guide legislation that might be considered next session.

→ **Certified Engineering Inspection (CEI) Services** required in addition to design Engineer of Record (EOR) - Airports are seeking an exemption from this provision and we were successful getting language added to several bills. Unfortunately, none passed, and this will remain a priority for the 2021 session.

→ **Turo/Peer-to-peer vehicle transactions** - FAC was working with industry stakeholders to seek legislation that ensures parity for this line of business. Several bills were proposed with our desired language; ultimately the bills failed. This will remain a priority for the 2021 session.
Commercial Service Airports – HB 915/SB 1258 was passed despite strong airport opposition. This legislation, if signed by the Governor, will add financial disclosure requirements for “transparency” purposes and additional layers of bureaucracy to the procurement process by requiring that any commodity or contractual service in excess of $65,000 requires a competitive sealed bid process. The Florida Airports Council considers this threshold to be too low, as certain provisions only apply to Large hub airports as defined by the FAA, provisions under section 3 apply to all large, medium and small hub airports. Click here for the final version of the bill.

Aviation Fuel Taxes - Tax Package (HB 7097) passed the House and Senate floor, both as amended and keeping the Aviation Fuel Tax intact. The bill is on the way to the Governor. We expect the airlines to keep up the pressure to ultimately eliminate the tax. FAC and airports need to remain engaged and in touch with their legislative delegations to oppose this.

Diesel Exhaust Fluid - House and Senate bills requiring airports to certify a DEF safety plan to FDOT failed. This will remain a priority for the 2021 session. FAC is working with GA airports to get in front of this issue during the summer months to guide legislation considered in the 2021 session.

Join FDOT’s weekly COVID-19 Conference Call

Every Tuesday, from 1:00 - 2:00 PM (EST)
Number: 888-585-9008 PIN: 723-374-102

Hosted by Secretary of Transportation, Kevin Thibault, P.E. with participation by the Florida Department of Health

The COVID-19 call on Tuesday, March 17th included Dale Mooney, from the FL Department of Health (DOH) and a number of airport concerns were raised:

- Airports noted that some are running low of janitorial supplies/suppliers and questioned if the state can make airport facilities a priority to receive such supplies in the short term and throughout this crisis.
- Provide specific guidance from the FL DOH regarding screening of passengers arriving, setting aside isolation areas to control passengers while screening, and instructions for employees.
- Provide clarification regarding the Governor’s Executive Order 20-68 addressing the closure of bars, pubs, nightclubs and restaurants; clarify the provisions that apply to airports.
- Provide guidance for airports in local jurisdictions that are imposing curfews. Airports will remain open continuously until alternative guidance from FAA/CDC or FL DOH guidance is received.
- Provide relief by exempting certain public-records requests relating to airports and their discussions with their airlines and service providers.

Secretary Thibault and FL DOH representative Dale Mooney responded that they will follow-up with all on the call with responses as soon as possible. FAC will keep this information available to members and provide all responses from the Governor’s office, FDOT, and the DOH, as appropriate.
The Florida Airports Council continues to receive direction from state and federal officials regarding the latest developments, guidelines, and restrictions on public events. As a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the 2020 FAC Education & Training Summit that was scheduled for April 22-24, 2020 is being postponed. We now plan to host that event October 7-9, 2020. If you need to cancel your registration, please click here or call FAC Event Coordinator at (850) 224-7775.

Statement from the Florida Airports Council regarding COVID-19

FAC and its airport members are continually monitoring the COVID-19 coronavirus and are taking the appropriate actions to ensure the safety of the passengers, employees and visitors that utilize Florida Airports. The actions taken are under the guidance and direction of the CDC, Florida Department of Health and local Health Departments. The protocols established by the CDC are to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and each member airport has established emergency procedures and protocols to address this and other emergency situations.

Aviation industry partners are in constant communication each and every day to ensure the safety and efficiency of air traffic across the globe and specifically in the State of Florida. The strength of this partnership allows for quick and decisive responses, particularly as it relates to the ever-changing environment and COVID-19.

We encourage travelers experiencing changes in their travel plans to contact their individual airlines directly, as they are their best resource for information about the status of upcoming flights and questions about making necessary flight changes. Many airlines have already made accommodations for travelers who have already booked flights, including waiving certain fees.

We remind all airline travelers to follow the precautions and guidance issued by federal and state authorities, including the importance of frequent and effective hand-washing and maintaining a safe distance from others, to the greatest extent possible.

Helpful resources for travelers include:
- U.S. Department of State: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/covid-19-information.html

Corporate Member Alert - Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Program

On Monday March 16th, Governor Ron DeSantis activated the Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program, which can assist small businesses impacted by COVID-19. The bridge loan program, managed by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, will provide short-term, interest-free loans to small businesses experiencing economic injury from COVID-19. The application period opens today and runs through May 8, 2020. You may access the application and learn more here. Feel free to contact us if we can assist with this or any other issue.

Small business owners with two to 100 employees located in Florida affected by COVID-19 can apply for short-term loans up to $50,000. These loans are interest-free for up to one year and are designed to bridge the gap to either federal SBA loans or commercially available loans. DEO will work with every borrower to ensure that repayment of the loan isn’t an overwhelming burden. To be eligible, a business must have been established prior to March 9, 2020 and demonstrate economic impacts as a result of COVID-19.
With the full support of Polk County, the City of Lakeland, Lakeland Linder International Airport, and the FAA, at this time we are planning to postpone the 2020 SUN ‘n FUN Aerospace Expo until May 5-10. More updates are pending, please continue to check back here for the latest information or follow us on social media.

**Students soar into the job market at Miami Aviation School** ([www.nbcmiami.com](http://www.nbcmiami.com))

The full name is George T. Baker Aviation Technical College, but don’t let the “college” part fool you. More than a third of the students are high school kids, studying to become aviation maintenance technicians.

It’s a Miami-Dade County Public Schools magnet school, attracting students from all parts of the county. They spend half their day at their home schools taking regular courses, and the other half at Baker.

If it has anything at all to do with aircraft, the Baker students are practicing on it, learning how to fix it, taking it apart and putting it back together again, all the latest technology included. “And our students get to work on all that equipment that’s exactly the equipment they’re going to be using, working on, when they go into the field,” principal Ciro Hidalgo says. That includes big commercial jets.

They have a former American Airlines MD-80, with students able to work on its landing gear, engines, and cockpit instrumentation. Here’s the biggest attraction to this magnet program: graduates are snapped up by the industry, making salaries that start at about $70,000.

“We get calls and emails from companies that want to hire 10, 20 mechanics at a time, the growth of aviation has created a tremendous need for mechanics, in fact, a lot of our students are even hired before they finish school,” Hidalgo explained.

There are more mechanic jobs than applicants in the industry right now, and the demand is expected to increase as mechanics retire. The curriculum is the same for the high school kids as it is for the adults at Baker, and the training must be done to exacting standards. That’s why it’s supervised by the Federal Aviation Administration.

“It is critical, it’s critical to do the job right, there’s no room for failure in aviation.”

The high school students graduate with 60 hours of college credit, all of it free. Some of them go on to complete bachelor’s degrees in aviation management or engineering, and since the school is right across the street from Miami International Airport, they are reminded of their destiny, and the school’s history, every day.

“Almost every aircraft that flies from Miami International and through South Florida gets worked on by George Baker former students,” Hidalgo said. These kids will land, Hidalgo says, in a successful career, propelled by their experience at Baker.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>FAA 2020 Southern Regional Airports Conference</td>
<td>Atlanta, GA</td>
<td>August 10-14, 2020</td>
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<td>Click <a href="https://example.com">here</a> for additional information</td>
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<td>2020 Education &amp; Training Summit</td>
<td>Embassy Suites Lake Buena Vista South</td>
<td>October 7-9, 2020</td>
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<td>Click <a href="https://example.com">here</a> for more information and to register</td>
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<td>51st Annual Conference &amp; Exposition</td>
<td>Orlando, FL</td>
<td>July 19-22, 2020</td>
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<td>Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress</td>
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Please email [lisa@floridaairports.org](mailto:lisa@floridaairports.org) with calendar updates.
Building the world’s largest airport-based solar farm doesn’t come without challenges. There were lots of moving parts, an aggressive schedule and unexpected environmental and design complications. But the team developing the new 320-acre, 42-megawatt (MWac) solar farm at Tallahassee International Airport (TLH) prevailed—and also shattered previous records for renewable energy production for airport sited solar farms.

When the new facility became operational in January 2020, it joined TLH’s other solar farm that came online in 2018. Together, the two solar farms span 400 acres and produce 62 MWac per year, vaulting the Florida airport well ahead of other industry standouts: Cochin International Airport in India at 40 MWac and Indianapolis International Airport with 17.5 MWac.

TLH’s latest addition, Tallahassee Solar II, was completed after nearly two years of planning, design and coordination by a team that included the airport, the city of Tallahassee’s electric utility department, Origis Energy, Michael Baker International and dozens of contractors and agencies.

“The city of Tallahassee’s 62-megawatt airport-based solar facility, the largest of its kind, is a testament to our commitment to sustainability,” says Tallahassee Mayor John Dailey. “As the capital city of the Sunshine State, we are dedicated to preserving our community’s natural resources. Utilization of our airport property for the solar farm is part of our innovative approach toward reaching our goal of 100% net clean, renewable energy by 2050.”

Although the team had learned a lot working together to complete Tallahassee Solar I, TLH’s 20-MWac solar farm, several factors made this experience unique—and challenging.

For starters, the terrain of the site was vastly different. Instead of a relatively flat area, they had to contend with hills, two potential sinkholes and wetlands. They also had to tread carefully around protected flora and fauna including the bent golden aster, gopher tortoises and Southeastern American kestrels. The sheer size of the project required the team to add a substation on the property.

Tackling these problems proved to be tricky and time-consuming, but manageable. However, two other massive roadblocks took the team completely by surprise—and had the potential to greatly impact the schedule. One was the five-week partial federal government shutdown in early 2019, which led to significant permitting delays. The second was an unexpected vacancy in the FAA Orlando Airport District Office that occurred when one environmental program specialist retired and the other passed away. Instead of starting the FAA NEPA process in July 2018, they had to wait until the empty post was filled in November 2018. Plans to improve an existing access road for use by heavy construction equipment was one key aspect affected by the delay.

Countless Moving Parts

Despite such setbacks, the new solar farm was completed on time. Project members credit the dedicated, collaborative team and one massive project spreadsheet. It helped that many of the key players had worked together on Tallahassee Solar I, says David Pollard, director of aviation for TLH. “We had the benefit of that experience and the lessons learned during the building of the first solar farm,” he says. “We were able to move ahead at a lot quicker pace than we might have otherwise.”

Mariben Andersen, senior associate and environmental manager at Michael Baker International, was in charge of the vital spreadsheet and many other elements of managing the project, including environmental assessments. When the timing complications came into play, Andersen worked with team members to morph sequential elements into concurrent tasks wherever possible to streamline the schedule and save money.

Keep Reading...
City welcomes new Kissimmee Gateway Airport Director

KISSIMMEE, Fla. – The City of Kissimmee announces Shaun Germolus as the new Kissimmee Gateway Airport Director. “Shaun’s character, qualifications, and experience will serve the City’s Kissimmee Gateway Airport well as we embark on what will be an unprecedented period of growth for our airport and Kissimmee’s economy,” said City Manager, Mike Steigerwald.

Germolus brings vast experience in the aviation field as he was the Executive Director of the Chisholm-Hibbing Airport Authority, managing its two airports for the past 13 years. He has also been in various positions in airport management for over 26 years, including serving in the director role at several airports with commercial passenger service.

In Germolus’s recent leadership role, his airport grew significantly in the area of business and economic development, and he led efforts to attract, coordinate and secure funding for both new construction and expansion of several major tenants, bringing more aviation and non-aviation manufacturing jobs to the airport.

Shaun is active in Minnesota’s Council of Airports, having testified before the state legislature on various projects, was on the board of the three Chambers of Commerce surrounding his airports, and was given the Minnesota Council of Airport’s Award for Outstanding Leadership in Promoting Aviation in 2017. For more information about the City of Kissimmee, visit www.kissimmee.org.

Environmental Committee News

The Environmental Committee has posted several useful documents on their webpage. Be sure to check them out:

⇒ FAA AC 150/5200-33C, Hazardous Wildlife Attractants on or near airports (updated 2/21/2020)
⇒ FDOT brochure, Florida Airport Wildlife Hazard Resources Wildlife

Delta to impose record cutbacks, sideline 300 planes (Source: TheHill.com)

Delta Air Lines is drastically cutting back on flights amid the coronavirus pandemic, sidelining 300 of its planes. In an internal memo to employees, Delta CEO Ed Bastian said that the move was “the largest capacity reduction in Delta’s history” including after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

“Demand for travel is declining at an accelerated pace daily, driving an unprecedented revenue impact. Cancellations are rising dramatically with net bookings now negative for travel over the next four weeks,” Bastian said in the memo. “To put that in perspective, we’re currently seeing more cancellations than new bookings over the next month.”

With multiple countries, including the United States, imposing tight travel restrictions because of the spread of the virus, airline companies have been hit hard.

Notably, Delta will stop all flights to continental Europe for the next 30 days, though it will continue service to London. On Wednesday, President Trump announced a ban on travel from all European countries except for the U.K.

Welcome New FAC Members!!

Lumacurve Airfield Signs
Keith Piper, Account Manager
9115 Freeway Drive
Macedonia, OH 44056
(330) 467-2030
keith@lumacurve.com

Julian Parrish
Student, Lynn University
5479 Baytowne Place
Oviedo, FL 32765
(407) 486-0744
hparrish456@gmail.com

The Environmental Committee has posted several useful documents on their webpage. Be sure to check them out:

⇒ FAA AC 150/5200-33C, Hazardous Wildlife Attractants on or near airports (updated 2/21/2020)
⇒ FDOT brochure, Florida Airport Wildlife Hazard Resources Wildlife
American Airlines will suspend flights to Australia and cut all services to Asia except three weekly Tokyo flights as part of a 75 percent year-over-year reduction in international capacity. The US giant also expects to reduce domestic capacity by 20 percent in April compared to last year and 30 percent in May. American said Sunday the international cuts will go through May 6. More on this story...

Airline aid focus of discussions in White House, Congress

The White House is pressing for ways to assist U.S. airlines staggering under the weight of the coronavirus outbreak as House Republicans explore tax relief, loans and grants for the industry.

Airline aid is a key area under discussion, President Donald Trump’s economic adviser Larry Kudlow told Fox Business. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin have been holding talks on airline assistance, Kudlow said Monday. Trump officials are “talking with everybody,” Kudlow told reporters outside the West Wing. When asked if the White House had gotten calls from airlines, Kudlow replied, “Lots of them.” He declined to specify what actions were being discussed. “We’re in touch about their balance sheets and their cash flows.”

The discussions are among several in Washington as the travel industry reels from a massive loss of revenue due to flight cancellations and bans into some regions of the world. Some airlines are negotiating with their unions for voluntary leaves of absence and other measures.

“The incredibly dramatic drop in future bookings, combined with overwhelming cancellations, has far exceeded anything United or the rest of the industry has seen before, including after the attacks of 9/11,” Todd Insler, head of the Air Line Pilots Association at United Airlines Holdings Inc., told members. “The company asked for labor’s help” during a meeting with union leaders Saturday.

GOP leaders of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee are considering a federal loan program to help airlines buy jet fuel and are discussing unspecified “tax relief” for the industry, according to an emailed summary of proposals being discussed.

Under the GOP proposal, an existing stream of grants, the Airport Improvement Program, could be used to funnel money to the nation’s airports for operational costs including sanitation and janitorial work. Under AIP, the Federal Aviation Administration awarded $3.2 billion to airports in 2019, according to the agency.

The proposals are still being finalized and it isn’t clear yet whether they will be attached to stand-alone legislation or another bill, according to the summary.

Keep reading...

REAL ID deadline now less than seven months away

Beginning Oct. 1, 2020, if you plan to use your state-issued ID or license to fly within the U.S., make sure it is REAL ID compliant. If you are not sure if your ID complies with REAL ID, check with your state department of motor vehicles.

Additional information and resources for airports can be found on the TSA REAL ID website.
Lee County Port Authority (hereafter referred to as “Authority”) invites the submission of Letters of Qualifications (LOQ) from interested corporations, partnerships and other legal entities authorized to do business in the state of Florida to provide the services as specified in this Request for Letters of Qualifications.

A copy of the Request for Letters of Qualifications and instructions for submittal may be obtained online at www.publicpurchase.com.

A MANDATORY PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETING is scheduled for 10:00 a.m., local time, March 24, 2020, at Southwest Florida International Airport, Wright Brothers Conference Room, 3rd floor, 11000 Terminal Access Road, Fort Myers, Fla. 33913-8899. LOQs submitted by firms not attending this mandatory meeting will not be considered.

Receiving and opening of the Letters of Qualifications is scheduled for 2:00 p.m., local time, April 9, 2020, in the Wright Brothers Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Southwest Florida International Airport Terminal, located at 11000 Terminal Access Road, Suite 8671, Fort Myers, Florida, 33913-8899.

The Lee County Port Authority, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT NOTICE: The Lee County Port Authority will not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Any person needing special accommodations for attendance at the public opening should contact Terri L. Bortz, Purchasing Agent, Lee County Port Authority, Purchasing Office, tlbortz@flylcpa.com; telephone (239) 590-4554; fax (239) 590-4539 at least even (7) days before the scheduled meeting.

Any questions concerning the Request for Proposals shall be addressed to Terri L. Bortz, Purchasing Agent, Telephone (239) 590-4554, Fax (239) 590-4539 or email: tlbortz@flylcpa.com.

Lee County Port Authority
Southwest Florida International Airport
11000 Terminal Access Road, Suite 8671
Fort Myers, FL 33913-8899
www.flylcpa.com

Position: Operations Officer
Starting Salary Range: $41,992-$48,290
Salary Grade Range: $41,992 - $62,989
Closing Date: Open Until Filled

JOB SUMMARY

Under general supervision, coordinates and enforces operational policies in a variety of applications on Airport property.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor’s Degree in Aviation Management or related field.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS: Experience working at an Airport, preferred.

LICENSES & CERTIFICATIONS: Valid State of Florida Driver’s License or must obtain within (30) days of assuming position and good driving record.

This posting may be viewed in its entirety by clicking here.

Applicants desiring to be considered for this position should apply directly with the Sarasota-Manatee Airport Authority by visiting our website at www.srq-airport.com; or, calling 941-359-2770 ext. 4212.

Return your completed SMAA application to the address shown on the signature page of the application form; OR fax it to 941-359-5024; OR email it to application@srq-airport.com. Only Sarasota Manatee Airport Authority (SMAA) application forms will be accepted.
Position: Electrician - Journeyman  
Starting Salary Range: $18.00 - $28.00 Hourly

SCOPE:
Perform duties to maintain the electrical systems in the Air Operations Area (AOA) and SAA properties, where only general methods are available in the making of broad decisions requiring considerable initiative and ingenuity.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES:

→ Work from work orders, manuals, diagrams, sketches, blueprints, and schematics to maintain the electrical systems throughout the airport properties. Maintain and inspect all electrical on the airfield for proper functionality. Repair runway lights, taxiway lights, signage regulators and airfield computers. Access systems through the electric vault.

→ Create and file reports regarding airfield repair, replacement, and maintenance activities.

→ Maintain roadway street lighting and industrial lighting.

→ Respond to needs for repairs electrical issues on SAA properties. Replace electrical panels, breakers, outlets, light switches, lights, and disconnect. Replace and repair bad wiring. Check and replace exit signage as needed.

→ Provide assistance to the HVAC Technician as needed.

To view this posting in its entirety and/or to apply for the position, click here.

Position: Airport Operations Agent  
Starting Salary Range: $19.04 - $31.29 Hourly  
Closing Date: April 12, 2020

Major Functions:
Responsible work of overseeing daily airport operations and activities on a shift basis in compliance with Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Parts 139, 77, and all appropriate Transportation Security Administration (TSA) requirements. Duties include airfield and terminal inspections, wildlife mitigation, field condition reporting, emergency response, special program management, and public relations.

Illustrative Duties:

(NOTE: These are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work performed. The omission of specific duties does not exclude them from the position.)

→ Maintains and updates information in the Airport’s Certification Manual, Airport Emergency Plan, Airport Wildlife Hazard Management Plan and other similar manuals as applicable.

→ Reviews Advisory Circulars, Cert-Alerts, and FAA Joint Orders for changes, updates, and amendments to revise and update the appropriate manuals as applicable.

→ Performs random and scheduled inspections or security checks of Airport tenants and fuel handling agents for compliance with Airport Safety Management Systems, Federal, State, and local regulations.

To view this posting in its entirety, click here.