Rethinking Airport Goals

My Boardmates:

I think we need to rethink the ways in which we define our goals. The goals we currently define are broadly scoped, difficult to measure and, in some cases, virtually impossible to attain, especially within the scope of a calendar year.

We will not solve GHG emissions.

We will not solve aircraft noise and annoyance.

We will not solve the region's workforce housing crisis.

We, as a district, will never solve these concerns; but these concerns are strong *guiding principles* for everything we decide and everything we do. Under these principles, we could craft goals that are measurable and realistic within a given year.

Guiding principles help define *culture*—the things that matter to us. I feel like this is something we lack. Who and for whom are we? Currently, we lose identity and efficacy in trying to be all things to all comers.

We have seen in the Allocation Study that this approach has not been financially lucrative. In fact, if it were not for our property tax revenue, we would be forced to rethink who we are and what we offer. I suggest that we rethink this anyway, so that we can establish a culture that is clear, understandable and can survive elections.

Our revised mission statement was a good start. From this, I think we can derive some guiding principles that could, in term, inform our goals each year.

The Truckee Tahoe Airport aims to provide safe, high-quality services and facilities, reduce impact on airport neighbors and the environment, and invest in opportunities that increase community safety and provide sustained benefit to the entire Truckee Tahoe region.

From this, we can derive some guiding principles:

- Safe, high-quality services and facilities
- Reduced impact on neighbors and the environment
- Investments for sustained community benefit

These guiding principles (or others we might define or prefer) provide us with a framework under which we can consider specific goals.

Here are some examples for what we could consider:

Safe, high-quality services and facilities
- What is our short-term and long-term strategy for hangars?
- What services should we provide and which should we add or drop?
- Do we need to make any investments in safety concerns, with our recent Safety Gap analysis in mind?
- Do we anticipate any changes in these needs in the next decade?

Reduced impact on neighbors and the environment
- What do we do about runway 16/34?
- What do we do to encourage (safe) noise compliance with aviators?
- How do we discourage unnecessary operations that contribute to GHGs?
- What plans and goals do we have for our own GHG reductions?
- How do we keep the new procedures process moving along?
- Do we build a solar farm to reduce the region's reliance on piped-in power?

Investments for sustained community benefit

- Where does it make sense to invest the property taxes?
- What limitations do we place on ourselves about how tax monies can be used?
- Do we tackle PI 311 or not?
- Should we be trying to have even more money to invest in the community?
- Is it okay to pay for one-time events that do not offer clear "sustained" community benefit?

Again, these are examples. I'm sure we can consider a number of considerations that we could categorize under those headings. We can't possibly address it all within the course of a year, but we can pick what we want to prioritize.

For example, on the topic of hangars:

- Do we need new ones?
- Do we want to tear down and rebuild more modern hangars?
- How much should they cost to rent?
- Should we consider shade hangers that include solar panels for charging electric aircraft, or the cars that wait for aircraft to return?
- Should we restrict what can be stored in hangars?
- Should we define clear policy about what constitutes "priority" need for access after a snow event?
- Do we need to make changes to waitlist policies?
- Should an exec hangar be restricted to a single aircraft's wingspan, or the combined wingspans of all aircraft within?

We have so many considerations that are related to just this one topic. We randomly speak of these things, but we have no cohesive strategy and timeline for addressing them all. Now, multiply that by all the things we need to consider—and all the things we hope future boards will consider—and it seems insurmountable.

But, in looking at that hangar list, it's not difficult to imagine some specific goals that are measurable and attainable within a year. (I won't provide specific examples there because that should be a Brown Act-compliant Board discussion.)

GM Goals should not be District Guiding Principles

As I was doing Kevin's evaluation—the first such eval for him that I have done—I was struck by feeling conflicted between honestly considering the questions posed and feeling appreciation for Kevin's actual performance. I answered the questions honestly, and my lukewarm score reflected those answers. But I don't believe the evaluation reflected Kevin's actual performance, as an employee.

I'm a believer in the performance of an employee being connected to the direction of a manager. We have conducted an evaluation of Kevin, but I would like us to consider some self-evaluation, too: Are we providing direction that is cohesive, specific, attainable and measurable?

Is it realistic to assume that Kevin, as one person, is going to reduce GHGs across our region?

Build by July 1, ten new shade hangars that have solar panels on top that can power the region for 3 days, in the event of a power failure.

This goal, however absurd, is the type of thing that can be measured. If Kevin were to agree to this goal, and then he couldn't achieve it, that would be on him. Goals should be negotiated and accepted by both parties. Not thrown into the conversation out of context.

The goals we are considering now lack long-term strategy and short-term context. I ask that we consider this concept of *principles that define categories that inform goals*, and rethink how we approach this.

David Diamond