TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Title: Approve Professional Service Agreement for Airport Management Support Services at Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Meeting Date: April 20, 2022

Prepared by: Sierra Shultz, Deputy Airport Manager

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that Town Council approve the professional service agreement for Aviation Insights, LLC to provide Airport Management Support Services to Mammoth Yosemite Airport and authorize the Town Manager to execute the agreement.

BACKGROUND:

Mammoth Yosemite Airport (MMH) has experienced multiple changes over the last few years, including staffing changes, air service changes, update of the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) and Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP). In March of 2020, United Airlines stopped flying to Mammoth Yosemite Airport due to COVID. Since then, no commercial service has returned to MMH. In November 2021, Advanced Airlines, started providing scheduled charter service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

In addition to local changes, there have been changes at the federal level and there are once-in-a-generation funding opportunities available. Mammoth Yosemite Airport was allocated $1,011,184 for FY 2022 and another $1,011,184 for FY 2023 under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These specific funds are commonly referred to as Airport Infrastructure Grant (AIG) Allocated funds and may be used on any project that is typically eligible under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). Airports will also receive AIG Allocated funds in years 2024-2026, however those amounts are yet to be determined. Over the next 5 years, there will also be opportunities for funding of terminals under the AIG Competitive program.

Given all the recent changes, it is recommended that staff receive additional management support services from a qualified consulting firm that has experience in all aspects of airport development and management and are well versed in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) processes and regulations.

In December 2021, staff advertised and distributed a Request for Qualifications for Airport Management Support Services. A pre-conference was held on January 24, 2022, including a presentation by Rob Patterson (Admin. Services & Finance Director), Sierra Shultz (Deputy Airport Manager), Vince Maniaci (Airport Operations and maintenance Manager), and Pat Foster (Hot Creek Aviation/Mammoth Lakes Tourism). Once proposals

were received, staff evaluated the five proposals and selected a shortlist of consultants to interview. Three consultants were interviewed on February 28, 2022, and Aviation Insights ranked the highest and was selected.

ANALYSIS:

Aviation Insights put together a highly qualified team which also includes QED Airport & Aviation Consultants and Flightpath Economics. Aviation Insights provides professional consulting services to airports and aviation-related entities such as airport policy, planning, operations, compliance, certification, capital development, and community engagement. QED provides experience in managing airports, providing planning and management training services, and evaluating the feasibility of instrument approaches at airports. Flightpath Economics specializes in aviation economics, airport finance, and airline business restructuring. As is mentioned in the attached resumes, Dennis Roberts, from Aviation Insights, used to work at the Federal Aviation Administration. They are also familiar with the Town of Mammoth Lakes and Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

Work assignments will be given on an as needed basis and task orders will be given for specific tasks. The agreement is structured as a time and materials contract and includes a schedule of charges. The scope of work will generally consist of the following services.

1. Project Scoping
    a. In person site visit to meet with Airport Core Management Team (ACMT), assess general airfield and facility conditions, review ACIP, identify key actives, project priorities, and milestones
    b. Virtual meeting with ACMT and QED to review finances
    c. Reach out to the FAA District and Regional Airports Division Staff
    d. Introduction to the Air Services Working Group
2. Staff Development and Evaluate Current Administrative Processes
    a. Evaluate processes, procedures, documents, timelines, and deadlines
    b. Provide guidance and recommendations to each member of the ACMT
3. Evaluate ALP and ACIP
    a. Weigh MMH ACIP against state and federal funding priorities
    b. Provide recommendations to enhance probability of grant funding success
    c. Identify missing projects that may enhance the utility of the airport and flight safety
    d. Innovative recommendations to reach 10,000 enplanements annually
4. Strategic Planning
    a. Strategy to enhance value to the community
    b. Develop strategy and implementation plan for visioning for the Airport
5. Provide Advocacy for Financial Assistance
    a. Financial viability and maximizing profitability

    b. Identify financial eligibility and possible resources and provide strategy
6. Advise on FAA Requirements and Timelines
    a. Option of an on-site, Joint Planning Conference with the FAA and State aviation offices
7. Enhance Relationships with Federal, State, and Regional Agencies
    a. Provide guidance when needed during the Regional Aviation System Plan
8. Assist with Air Service Working Group Meetings
    a. When requested, participate in and provide guidance to ACMT regarding Air Service Working Group
9. Special Projects/Services as needed

Mammoth Yosemite Airport is a great asset to the Town and community, and this is a key point in time when the assistance of a well-qualified airport consultant can greatly benefit the success of the airport.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Payment to the consultant will be based on a time and materials basis or an agreed upon price under the task orders given. The term of the contract will be for three years. Compensation shall not exceed $150,000 for the first year, $150,000 for the second year, and $75,000 for the third year, for a total of $375,000. These amounts will be a part of the annual Airport operational budget, funded by Airport revenues, General Fund contributions and CARES Act grant funding.