The County of Moore invites applications for
Airport Manager
Moore County Airport (SOP)
Carthage, North Carolina
The Airport

Welcome to the Moore County Airport, the aviation gateway to the Cradle of American Golf.

Moore County Airport is searching for a new Airport Manager who can build and enhance the success of the current Manager who is retiring after years of service. The airport is a modern, well-equipped and financially strong operation which serves as the aviation gateway to the Golf Capital of America, Pinehurst and the Sandhills of North Carolina. The following pages will introduce the successful candidate to the airport, the community it serves, and goals to be achieved.

In the most global terms, the Sandhills are a special part of the planet. It’s a unique nexus of great weather, astounding natural beauty, surprising people and fascinating history. The legendary hospitality of the Deep South is alive and well in the Sandhills. The welcome you will receive is enthusiastic and genuine: we truly are glad to see you.

From the airport, the entire region is available easily, quickly, inexpensively and conveniently. Distances are short. Prices are reasonable. Traffic jams simply don’t exist. There are more fine restaurants in the Sandhills than in many far-bigger cities. To many from the crowded North, this seems like a tiny bit of Heaven. We locals are inclined to agree.
Moore County Airport was established in 1929 when the Tufts family, famous for their Pinehurst Resort, opened a dirt runway and named it “Knollwood Airport.” In 1935 the county acquired the facility. During World War II, the airport was leased to the Army Air Corps as Knollwood Army Auxiliary Airfield. Large-scale military exercises were conducted at the field, practicing techniques later used on D-Day and elsewhere.

The original airport hangar still is on the field just west of the rotating beacon. The terminal building features a photo of Amelia Earhart and her airplane in front of this historic building.

Today the airport offers a 6,500-foot runway equipped with state-of-the-art instrument approaches and lighting. There is a flight school and about 90 hangars with eighteen more in development. About 6,000 planes land or depart from the airport annually. The airport is on stable footing economically and is the only County-owned facility which is operationally self-sustaining.

The mission of the airport is to serve the people of Moore County as an engine of economic growth and opportunity. As such, the airport strongly supports Young Eagles program, a flight school and STEM programs featuring aviation-related themes. A recent economic analysis conducted by North Carolina State University concluded the airport contributed 305 local jobs and $17 million in goods purchased and services consumed. Airport customers and businesses paid $1.3 million in local taxes. In total, the combined direct and indirect benefits of the airport’s operations added $71 million to the County’s economic pulse in 2017.
The Community

The Pinehurst area — locally known as the “Sandhills” — is in south-central North Carolina, in an area generally known as the Piedmont. Moore County is in the heart of the Sandhills region. By car, it is one hour south of Raleigh and about two hours east of Charlotte. It is almost exactly mid-way between New York and Miami, which makes it a favorite stop-over for airplane-equipped snowbirds. It’s the best of all possible worlds: big city amenities with a small-town feel.

The Sandhills are the home to an enormous collection of dazzling golf resorts; certainly the best in America and maybe in the world. There also are large equestrian facilities which attract visitors from across the globe, plus a vast agricultural heartland and a strong, much-admired military presence.

It’s all about the sand. The Sandhills region is a strip of ancient dunes formed during the Miocene Epoch, about 20 million years ago. Because they are porous and generally rock-free, the sandy soils quickly drain away moisture. This makes the area perfect for golf, horses, peaches and training soldiers.

Prior to the arrival of golf in the late 1800s, most of the Sandhills were forested with the unique longleaf and loblolly pines, which have unusual root systems that allow them to dig deep for water. These forests provided most of the pine-tar used on sailing ships around the world; hence the “Tarheels” designation for the teams of the University of North Carolina. Today, huge pines still line our fairways and are a charming reminder of our unusual ecosystem.
The Sandhills Today

With a population of about 90,000 people, Moore County is mostly rural and features only four substantial towns. The Moore County community actively supports the school system as evidenced by a recent $103 million bond issue. The population is bolstered by retirees who bring their sophistication and affluence but do not burden the school system. The cost of living is lower than most areas. An average home sells for a highly affordable $220,000. Official crime statistics indicate Moore County is one of the safest locales on the East Coast.

For families, Moore County has an excellent school system with three high schools supported by a large network of elementary and middle schools. A new public school is opened just about every other year. The district’s four-year high school graduation rate is 91%, well above the state average. In 2019, 81% of graduates received at least one acceptance to a college or university. Students following a vocational career path attained more than 3,900 industry-recognized certifications or credentials.

Sandhills Community College, located adjacent to the Airport, has approximately 4,000 students enrolled in college-credit curriculum courses and over 11,000 students who take continuing education courses annually. The college has a strong emphasis on job-related training (mechanical skills, computers, medical training and agriculture). The region also is home to a marvelous local hospital which matches major urban facilities both in quality and technology. All of these services are provided and yet taxes remain very low when compared to states like Connecticut or California.

For a community based on outdoor activities the weather has to be just right, and in Moore County it is. The region averages 217 sunny days each year and only two inches of snow annually. While the summers can be warmish, Spring and Autumn feature magical weather with mild temperature and the famous “Carolina blue” skies. To some, it reminds them of Camelot.

Cultural activities abound in the Sandhills. The Carolina Philharmonic Orchestra offers performances on a regular schedule and numerous guest performers appear at the Community College with its large, well-equipped theater. On the other extreme, “The Roosters Wife” is a tiny venue featuring an enormous variety of grassroots music. The Sunrise Theatre shows vintage movies and stages live performances. Kids love the Safari Zoo in Carthage which is more of an animal sanctuary and rescue center than a zoo. The completely unique Ederville museum features more amazing steam-driven machines than one can imagine.
The Sandhills Today (continued...)

In terms of day-to-day living, there are casual dining spots, brew pubs, wine shops, gourmet restaurants and many specialty stores; Southern Pines is particularly well-known for boutiques and unique stores. There are more churches than bars, but both are abundant. There are street festivals like the Autumn Festival, sporting events like the “Tour Du Moore” bike race, and the hugely popular, family friendly “First Friday” parties which run in downtown Southern Pines from Spring until the chills of Autumn extinguish outdoor activities. Even the Airport gets into the fun with the “Festival d’Avion” every Spring, several Young Eagles events, and a Halloween “Trunk or Treat” on the ramp with 800 kids or more. There’s lots to do in Moore County.

It’s All About Golf

The main reason so many retirees, executives and professionals move to Moore County is for the golf. The Pinehurst Resort features nine world-class courses. The famous “North-South Amateur” is the longest continually operating tournament in North America and it is always played on the Pinehurst courses. The US Open Championship returned to the famed Pinehurst Number Two in 1999 and was won by Payne Stewart. It was here again in 2005, and then in 2014 Pinehurst hosted both the Men’s and the Women’s Opens. The Men’s Open will return to Pinehurst in 2024, while Pine Needles hosted the Women’s Senior Championship for the second time in 2019.

Moore County also is home to U.S. Kids Golf. This tournament annually brings 4,000 pint-sized golfers, ages seven to seventeen, to battle on some of the most challenging tracks in the world. They move the tees forward, but don’t bet against them: these kids are good!

Golf is the economic engine of the region, and the airport is critical to the success of that industry.

Special Warning

We know a guy who came down with his non-golfing wife for a golf vacation a couple years ago. On the first day he golfed, she went horseback riding. On the second day, she went shopping. On the third day, she bought a house. They never left, nearly twenty years ago. Be prepared to be delighted.
The Position

The Airport Manager is a highly demanding executive position with numerous constituencies to serve. This person will be responsible for planning, implementing and coordinating the day-to-day operations of the Airport in accordance with the goals of the Airport Authority. The Manager also needs to be responsive to the demands of high-profile visitors, the commercial needs of the resorts of the area, any applicable County policies, State mandates and, of course, Federal procedures and regulations.

The incumbent will provide comprehensive leadership and management of Moore County Airport and will maintain and develop the Airport with a culture that delivers continuous improvement in safety, capacity and capability, customer satisfaction, constituent satisfaction and financial strength. The Airport Manager is responsible for delivering competitive results and high customer approval ratings and responsible for management of all employee matters. This position will recommend and implement the policies of the Airport Authority. All General Duties are in concert with the oversight of the Airport Authority.

For a complete job description, click here.

Position Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have a bachelor’s degree preferably in aviation management, transportation, business administration or related field and ten (10) years (or equivalent) of experience in airport operations or administration (or equivalent), five (5) years of which are in a supervisory / management position. The candidate should have experience in supervising engineering and construction contractors to ensure contract and FAA regulatory construction compliance and knowledge of Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) compliance. Preferred qualifications include accreditation from the American Association of Airport Executives and a valid FAA pilot certification.

Salary & Compensation

The salary range for the Airport Manager is $65,000 - $100,000 commensurate with experience. An attractive range of benefits is included.

How to Apply

To apply online, click here.

The deadline for applications is Sunday, November 24, 2019

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