

MINUTES OF AIRPORT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY – AUGUST 22, 2023
FORT SMITH REGIONAL AIRPORT CONFERENCE ROOM

The regular meeting of the Fort Smith Airport Commission was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Hawkins, presiding. Commissioners Cooper, Grimes, Kelly, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris were present. Also present were Michael Griffin, airport director, Lindsay Conley, finance director, and Tiffany Farmer, operations director.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On motion by Commissioner Pendergrass and second by Commissioner Voris, the Commission approved the minutes of the regular meeting of July 25, 2023. Voting aye: Cooper, Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

TREASURERS' REPORT

Commissioner Treasurer Ridgley reported that the finances were tracking as planned with the budget. He noted that the revenues on investments were much higher than expected due to increased interest rates. Director Griffin presented an overview of the July Financial Statements, stating the airport generated net income for the month, even if grant funds were excluded. Department 700 receipts and expenses are below budget due to delayed project start-dates, as well as the Fire Station and Taxiway E projects being changed to design-only projects. General Aviation revenue is down due to the fuel pump being inoperable for several months this year.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Fire Station Expansion Construction Manager – Six submittals were received and independently scored for the Fire Station Expansion Construction Manager RFQ. Nabholz and Beshears Construction scored highest, and were invited to interview before the selection committee on Friday, August 18th. Based on the committee's recommendation and the scoring, Director Griffin recommended selecting Beshears Construction.

A motion to approve Beshears Construction as Construction Manager for the Fire Station project was made by Commissioner Pendergrass and seconded by Commissioner Ridgley. There was no further discussion. Voting aye: Cooper, Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

2. Budget Committee – Staff has begun the budget process for 2024, and requested the Chairman appoint two commissioners to work with staff as the Budget Committee. The process will be meet with the Budget Committee prior to the October commission meeting; present a draft budget to the full commission in October for review; receive comments and make final changes; and present the proposed budget for acceptance at the November commission meeting.

Commissioner Treasurer Ridgley and Commissioner Cooper were appointed to serve on the Budget Committee for the 2024 budget. No motion was required.

3. Director's Report

- A. The Runway Extension Project is behind schedule. Vegetation surrounding the runway isn't growing properly, and has led to a delay in opening the full-length runway. Two F35s are scheduled to fly in to the Air National Guard base on September 7. The construction crew's target date to open the full length of the runway is September 6 to allow the F35s to land. The FAA installers have also been delayed, so the NAVAIDS

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and ILS system may not be operational until the end of September, but this won't affect the opening of the runway.

- B. The Aircraft Arresting System Project completion is due August 1, 2024. The engineers and airport must submit a 35%, 65%, and 100% plan to the Air Force; the 35% plan is complete and will be submitted prior to September 1. Construction will begin early December 2023. Mayor McGill created an Oversight Committee for the project to keep communication lines open. Only one qualified submittal was received in response to the Aircraft System Construction Manager RFQ. Mayor McGill requested the airport to re-open the RFQ to attempt to receive additional submittals. Even with the delay in choosing the construction manager, the project is still on track with the construction timeline.
- C. Director Griffin met with American Airlines at an air service conference in August, and they expressed satisfaction with FSM's enplanement numbers. Although they decreased the number of flights per day at FSM earlier this year, they upgraded the regional jets from a 50-seat capacity to a 76-seat capacity per flight. American said they will not consider adding an additional route until the FSM load factor reaches at least 80%; it is currently in the mid-to-upper 70s. The load factor is the percentage of available seating capacity that has been filled with passengers.
- D. The airport part-time office assistant position came open in August, and has been filled. Staff continues work to fill the additional full-time maintenance position.
- E. The planned Hilton hotel project has been canceled; the owner group decided not to proceed with construction and let the Hilton franchise rights expire.

NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

The date of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Fort Smith Airport Commission will be Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Commissioner Grimes and second by Commissioner Kelly, the meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m. Voting aye: Cooper, Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting Nay: None. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Griffin, A.A.E.
Airport Director