

**MINUTES OF AIRPORT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**  
**TUESDAY – APRIL 25, 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 Grimes, presiding. Commissioners Hawkins, Kelly, McGhee, Pendergrass, and Voris were present. Commissioner Ridgley was absent. Also present were Michael Griffin, airport director, Lindsay Conley, finance director, Kathey Boze, administration director, and Tiffaney Farmer, operations director.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On motion by Commissioner Voris and second by Commissioner McGhee, the Commission approved the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 28, 2023. Voting aye: Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, McGhee, Pendergrass, and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

**TREASURERS' REPORT**

Commissioner Treasurer Pendergrass gave a brief overview of finances, stating staff had completed three check runs throughout the month, and all documentation appeared to be in order. Director Griffin also gave a financial overview, reporting that if CARES grant reimbursements were deducted from the financials, there would be a YTD Net Loss of \$5,698. A repair to the ARFF fire truck earlier this year totaling \$39,800 caused maintenance & repair expense to be over budget. Otherwise, the financials were tracking as expected. The self-serve fuel pump continues to be out of service, with replacement equipment on backorder. Staff received an invoice but no shipment information, and is following up with the vendor to see when shipment will be made.

**ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

1. Air National Guard Lease Amendment – Staff has been working with the Air Force regarding needed changes to the lease between the Department of the Air Force and the Fort Smith Airport Commission. The lease amendment includes identifying areas of the airfield to be used for military purposes; this must be specified in the lease to allow the Air Force to provide funds for installation and maintenance. These areas include: east and west arm/de-arm areas, location of future aircraft arresting systems, and the airport fire station. The other main item of the amendment involves the Air Force's ability to sublease in their leasehold. The amendment will allow the Air Force to lease to parties for aviation and aviation support purposes regarding the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program. The lease amendment was reviewed by counsel and staff recommended approval. Commissioner Voris questioned whether the proposed amendments could allow the ANG to exercise rights to close their leased areas to the public, in turn causing closure of the airport runway, to which Director Griffin responded no.

A motion to approve amendments to the US Department of the Air Force lease was made by Commissioner Pendergrass and seconded by Commissioner Hawkins. There was no further discussion. Voting aye: Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, McGhee, Pendergrass, and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

2. Runway Arresting System Project – Director Griffin reported that the airport has been requested to purchase and install new Runway Arresting Systems, which will be reimbursed by the Air Force. This project will be funded by an Intergovernmental Support Agreement (IGSA). The



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IGSA is currently in draft format and is expected to be received in the coming days. This project will need to be completed prior to the first military aircraft arriving in fall of 2024. Staff has been coordinating with the only manufacturer of the system, Curtiss Wright. The procurement of the equipment has a longer lead time than onsite construction and installation, therefore it is pertinent that the order be placed as soon as possible. This project will be designed by Halff Associates, in coordination with the Air Force and their product requirements and specifications. Due to the time constraints of the project, staff requested the Commission authorize the Airport Director to execute the IGSA after it is received. Staff also requested the Commission authorize the Airport Director to execute an agreement with Halff Associates to execute construction of the system.

A motion to authorize the Airport Director to execute the IGSA Agreement upon receipt, as well as to execute an agreement with Halff Associates to execute construction of the Runway Arresting System was made by Commissioner McGhee and seconded by Commissioner Kelly. There was no further discussion. Voting aye: Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, McGhee, Pendergrass, and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

3. FSA Commission Policy Updates – Staff proposed updates to the Airport’s current Rules & Regulations and Purchasing Policy. The proposed changes would allow for electronic payments with dual approval, as well as increase Airport Director payment and contract approval threshold to \$50,000. Airport checks and balances would continue to be in place, with dual approval required for all payments. The Commission Treasurer would continue reviewing all check/payment registers with copies of invoices paid. Staff felt the \$50,000 approval limit for airport payments and contracts reasonable given that most items in that range are ordinary budgeted operations expenses such as payments for boiler repairs, fence repairs, fuel tank replenishment, annual elevator contracts, annual weed/lawn care contract, etc. Commissioner Treasurer Pendergrass expressed hesitancy to raise the Purchasing Policy contract approval limit to \$50,000, as one of the airport commission’s main functions was to protect public funds. Staff stated the policy still required bids be obtained for contracts up to \$50,000, and the change would only allow staff to internally make decisions on the bids received up to \$50,000 without commission approval being required.

A motion to approve the proposed updates to the Fort Smith Airport Commission Rules & Regulations and Purchasing Procedure Policy was made by Commissioner Hawkins and seconded by Commissioner McGhee. There was no further discussion. Voting aye: Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, McGhee, and Voris. Voting nay: Pendergrass. Motion carried.

4. Airport Hangar Development – At the January commission meeting, a discussion was held regarding the need for general aviation hangars and the potential costs for development. Since that time, staff obtained construction estimates based on 2023 hangar projects which range from \$85-\$96 per square foot. The alternatives for construction all include building on the existing Charlie South T-hangar ramp. Using existing rate structure, the units would rent for \$300 per month. The prices presented ranged from \$750,000 for a 6-Bay Rectangular Hangar up to \$1.8 million for a 12-Bay T-Hangar. An alternative to commission funding the construction would be to make a change in the airport’s minimum standard that would allow private developers to



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construct and operate leased hangar space. Commissioners requested that staff develop the change in the minimum standards and return it to the commission for review at the next meeting.

**5. Director's Report**

- A. Airport air service consultant from Mead & Hunt will be in town May 9-10. Several individual meetings with local businesses have been scheduled. A community meeting will be held May 10 at 5:30pm at the UAFS Center for Economic Development in the Bakery District. A lunchtime study session with the commissioners will be held at the airport May 9 to discuss the work being done to bring increased air service to Fort Smith.
- B. The Runway Extension Project is on schedule to be completed in June 2023. The full-length runway will be open and the NAVAID instrument approach will be operating at that time.
- C. The City of Fort Smith and Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce notified Director Griffin of their intent to expand the boundary of the 188<sup>th</sup> base to house the Foreign Mission Service program. The proposed boundary expansion will close Airport Boulevard for public use, which will adversely affect airport general aviation tenants and users. Commissioners determined a letter should be sent to the city addressing concerns, and propose working together to find a solution.

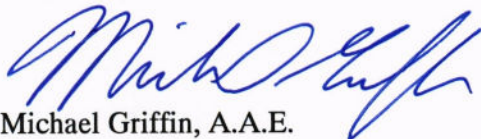
**NEXT COMMISSION MEETING**

The date of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Fort Smith Airport Commission will be Tuesday, May 23, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Commissioner McGhee and second by Commissioner Hawkins the meeting adjourned 7:12 p.m. Voting aye: Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, McGhee, Pendergrass, and Voris. Voting Nay: None. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Griffin, A.A.E.  
Airport Director