

**MINUTES OF AIRPORT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY – DECEMBER 21, 2021  
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 McGhee, presiding. Commissioners Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, Nordin, Pendergrass, and Ridgley were present. Also, present were Michael Griffin, airport director, and Kathey Boze, administration director.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On motion by Commissioner Nordin and second by Commissioner Pendergrass, the Commission approved the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 23, 2021. Voting aye: Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, McGhee Nordin, Pendergrass, and Ridgley. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

**TREASURERS' REPORT**

Commission Treasurer Hawkins stated the finances are on track. Director Griffin gave a brief overview of finances as well. Professional services account is over budget in part due to expenses for executive search firm to fill the operations director position and an interior designer who has overseen all the updates upstairs and in the terminal. The executive search firm, ADK has narrowed their search down to ten candidates. No further questions were asked of the financial report and no motion was required.

**ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

1. Ground Lease discussion – Airport is in the process of leasing property for construction of a new hotel next to the Home2 Suites. Previous leases included a provision for the airport not allow any other new hotel/motel or temporary lodging on the airport for 5 years without written consent of the tenant. The developers of the new proposed hotel requested to include this exclusive right in their lease. Staff recommends the provision not be included in new leases. However, if the commission elects to allow it, staff recommended it be limited to a stated area and not the whole airport.

The developers include Dwight Curry, current leaseholder for Homewood and Home2 and CSK Hotels, who currently manage those properties. Storm Nolan, CSK and Dwight Curry spoke on their project. They see this new project as a great compliment to Fort Smith for business/pleasure. They are asking for the provision for a 5-year period.

Staff reported there is another developer wanting to lease property next to Homewood Suites for a new hotel. Both developers have letters of intent and staff is currently waiting on approval from the FAA. Both leases will come to the commission before finalized.

The Chairman called for a motion with further discussion. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to not include in the ground lease a provision to require written consent from a tenant for future development on airport property and second was made by Commissioner Nordin. No vote was called.

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The matter was discussed. Developers said the provision for all airport property would provide a stabilization period after their investment, estimated at \$18M. Mr. Curry said approximately 35/36 years remain on his current hotel leases and he would consider extending the leases to 50 years as an incentive.

Commission Pendergrass said he felt more information was needed to decide and recommended the item be tabled for now. There being no vote on the first motion, Commissioner Pendergrass made a motion to table the item until more information is provided, with second by Hawkins. Voting aye: Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, McGhee Nordin, Pendergrass, and Ridgley. Voting nay: none. There was no further discussion and motion carried.

This matter will be placed on next month's meeting agenda.

2. Airfield Bobcat/Toolcat Bids – This purchase is included in the 2022 budget. The Bobcat/Toolcat is a multifunction equipment which will primarily be used for mowing around the airfield lights. It will replace the airport's John Deere mower (Mower 40), which has been repaired several times. This mower will either be used as a trade-in or sold. The estimated proceeds are \$8,000-\$10,000.

Three bids were received with low bid submitted by Williams Tractor in Fayetteville for \$67,750. Staff recommended accepting the low bid from Williams Tractor. Motion made by Commissioner Grimes to accept the bid from Williams tractor, in the amount of \$67,750 seconded by Commissioner Kelly. Voting aye: Grimes, Hawkins, McGhee, Nordin, and Pendergrass. Voting nay: none. There was no further discussion and motion carried.

3. Director's Report:

- A. Staff Positions – Staff is optimistic the operations director position will be filled within the next 60 days. The part time office assistant position has been filled.
- B. Runway Expansion – Project is progressing well. A new arresting barrier will be installed separate from the expansion project. Commissioner Kelly inquired about noise barriers at the end of the runways.
- C. Air Service – Air service consultant is getting ready for next year and is currently working on a business travel survey to determine destinations and travel trends. Development of a grant application that allows subsidizing airlines was discussed. The 2022 marketing will include information regarding the new military mission and all the new development taking place in the area. Air Service development meetings will be attended in March and meetings with airlines are hosted by the airport's air service consultants.

**NEXT COMMISSION MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Fort Smith Airport Commission will be held Tuesday, January 25, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.

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ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Commissioner Nordin and second by Commissioner Ridgley, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m. Voting aye: Grimes, Hawkins, Kelly, McGhee Nordin, Pendergrass, and Ridgley.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Griffin".

Michael Griffin, A.A.E.  
Airport Director