

***MINUTES OF AIRPORT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY – JANUARY 21, 2025  
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 Pendergrass, presiding. Commissioners Cooper, Hawkins, Kelly and Voris were present. Also present were Michael Griffin, Airport Director, Lindsay Conley, Finance & Administration Director, and Andrew Meyer, Operations Director. Commissioners Barr and Ridgley were absent.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On motion by Commissioner Hawkins and second by Commissioner Kelly, the commission approved the minutes of the December 17, 2024 regular meeting. Voting aye: Cooper, Hawkins, Kelly, Pendergrass and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

**TREASURERS' REPORT**

Commission Treasurer Cooper presented the December 2024 financials. Operating cash and investments totaled \$10.9 million. Project funds totaled \$1.1 million. Posting of yearend accruals, including new GASB101 requirement to accrue for sick leave earned, resulted in a net loss for the month of \$4,872. Net operating loss for the year was \$5.6 million due to the cost of the Runway 8/26 Extension reimbursement to the City of Fort Smith. Excluding this reimbursement, airport net operating income would be \$347,655 for the year. FBO Flowage Fee revenue exceeded budgeted amounts by 7% due to increase fuel sales at Signature. Rental Car revenue exceeded projections 7% as well. Notable expenses were reported, including a \$2,000 payment made to Paris Marketing for the fall social media campaign, a \$5,300 replacement nozzle for an ARFF truck, a \$6,200 payment to Halff for engineering services, and a \$6,600 payment to Northwest Fire for a 5-year fire suppression service.

**ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

1. Audit Engagement – The accounting firm selected to provide airport audit services for FY23-25, Forvis Mazars, LLP, submitted an engagement letter for the FY24 financial records audit. The proposed cost was \$51,000, which was in line with the FY25 budgeted amount. Chairman Pendergrass noted that this was the most expensive audit he has encountered in the audits he has been involved with.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kelly and seconded by Commissioner Hawkins to approve the Forvis Mazars engagement letter and to authorize the airport director to execute it. Voting aye: Cooper, Hawkins, Kelly, Pendergrass and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried. There was no further discussion.

2. 2024 Review – Director Griffin reported 2024 major accomplishments and high points.
  - The Arresting System Project was completed. An arresting system has never been constructed at a civilian airport where the runway wasn't fully closed. This

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was quite the undertaking to coordinate with the FAA and the users of the airport to ensure we could remain open for business during construction.

- The Element Hotel opened in December. The airport is fortunate to have quality buildings at the forefront of our property.
- The lease for HTeaO was signed, the survey has been started, and the lot is being replatted. The airport is excited for this project to begin.
- Two new employees were hired: Andrew Meyer, Director of Operations and Kort Kennedy, Airfield Maintenance. Both are doing an excellent job and representing the airport very well.
- Construction of the ARFF Station Expansion began, and is progressing on schedule for completion in November 2025. This project is funded by the National Guard Bureau.
- Staff has streamlined and digitized airport training programs for employees and tenants, enabling them to complete training at their convenience from their home or office. This saves time for airport badge holders as well as staff.
- Marketing & Air Service efforts were continued with Mead & Hunt and Paris Marketing.

### 3. Director's Report

- 188<sup>th</sup> Lease Update – Environmental studies being done by the Air National Guard are almost finished. Once complete, the lease update can be finalized, and will be brought before the commission for review. Director Griffin reported that he took measures to ensure the new lease protected the airport and its necessary functions, such as maintaining access to perimeter roads for airport operations.
- Runway 8 Blast Pad – Jet traffic will cause crumbling rocks and gravel to be blown off of the west end of the runway, and the FAA requested the airport repair this blast pad. This project will be funded with Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funds. Construction bids will be submitted to the commission in the coming weeks. Construction will likely begin in late March when temperatures are above 40 degrees.
- Snow Removal Equipment Building – This project is under design and will be funded with BIL funds. Bids will be presented to the commission in May.
- Temporary Arresting System – Installation of this system was complete and certified last week. Poland will begin F35 training at the end of January. The lids on the permanent Arresting System pits will be raised to prevent future flooding.

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- Snow Operations – Staff worked overnight through the weather event in mid-January, and did an excellent job keeping the runway clear until the snow stopped. The airport is fortunate to have good snow equipment as well.

**NEXT COMMISSION MEETING**

The next meeting of the Fort Smith Airport Commission will be Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Commissioner Hawkins and second by Commissioner Voris, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m. Voting aye: Cooper, Hawkins, Kelly, Pendergrass and Voris. Voting Nay: none. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Griffin", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Michael Griffin, A.A.E.  
Airport Director