

***MINUTES OF AIRPORT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY – APRIL 22, 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 Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Ridgley and Voris were present. Also present were Lindsay Conley, Finance & Administration Director, and Andrew Meyer, Operations Director. Airport Director Griffin and Commissioner Kelly were absent.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On motion by Commissioner Voris and second by Commissioner Hawkins, the commission approved the minutes of the March 18, 2025 regular meeting. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

TREASURERS' REPORT

Commission Treasurer Cooper presented the March 2025 financials. The airport maintained a healthy operating cash balance of \$8.8 million. With 24.7% of the year completed, both operating revenues (23.1%) and operating expenses (23.8%) were slightly below budget projections. March 2025 net operating income stood at \$16,634. Notable expenses included the final payment to Forvis Mazars for the audit, and increased gas expenses were higher due to the winter seasonal months.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Air Force Report/Update – Lt. Col. Don Roney, Director of Operations for the 57th Fighter Squadron reported the Exped BAK 12, installed on east end due to flooding, will be removed in the coming months as the BAK 14 comes back online. Adjustments will be made to the BAK 14 to better meet the Air Force's needs. While the Exped is in use, the city installed lighting around it, providing bi-directional capabilities. If any future issues arise, the Exped will serve as backup. Additionally, fences have been installed in front, and stadium lighting has been added for security and night operations. Power lighting and lighting protection are being installed in wolf cave (main ramp), where some A-10's were parked over the weekend. Looking ahead, there are plans to work with FAA Tech Ops to install in-ground flush lighting on the runway extension approach end due to a history of lights being hit. From a navigational standpoint, the F-35 is fairly basic, and there are ongoing efforts with FAA Tech Ops to install a low-power DB transmitter. Commissioner Hawkins inquired whether the BAK 14 Arresting System installed by the commission will work for the F-35s. Lt. Col. Roney responded that further tests are being conducted to determine this. Until then, the BAK 12 is being prioritized. They are using donuts on the BAK 14 to keep the cable up, rather than rising it out of the ground, as with the BAK 12. After the tests are completed, they will determine whether the BAK 14 can be used as built. The BAK 12 needs to be re-strung each time the flying window is open.
2. Runway 8 Blast Pad Project – The project was advertised, and the airport received only one bid from Forsgren, totaling \$603,400. This amount was significantly higher than the Pre-Design Opinion received from Halff Engineering, which estimated the cost at \$259,000. Forsgren justified their pricing given the limited quantity of work and the restrictive nature of working at the airport, including short windows available for night work only. They noted that

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they could pave 20 times the quantity in the same amount of time elsewhere. Anticipating that other potential local bidders would share this sentiment, Brian Mauer from Halff Engineering submitted a recommendation of award letter to the FAA. The FAA subsequently approved Forsgren's bid of \$603,400.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hawkins and seconded by Commissioner Cooper to accept the Forsgren bid for \$603,400 and to authorize the chairman to execute the construction contract and the FAA grant when received. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried. There was no further discussion.

3. Parking Facilities Operator Selection Committee – A Request for Proposals (RFP) has been issued for a Parking Facilities Operator, with submissions accepted until May 13, 2025. Staff requested a commissioner to serve on the selection committee, and Commissioner Barr volunteered. After proposals are reviewed and scored, a recommendation will be presented to the commission at the May 27, 2025 meeting.

4. Fuel Pump Replacement – The fuel pump at the car rental lot is not functioning properly. A temporary fix has been implemented to allow fuel dispensing, but the pump is not measuring the amount of fuel pumped. Consequently, the car rental agencies are operating on the honor system to report their fuel usage throughout the month. Spatco has indicated that a full replacement is the only viable option. Both the car rental and airfield fuel pumps were scheduled for replacement in the 2025 budget, but this was deferred to next year to reduce current year costs. Staff received two quotes (including sales tax) for the replacement of both pumps, new card terminals and tanks: Fort Smith Petroleum quoted \$60,819, while Spatco Energy Solutions quoted \$64,772. Fort Smith Petroleum services their own equipment, whereas Spatco Energy uses third-party repairmen, which can complicate getting timely and accurate repairs.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ridgley and seconded by Commissioner Barr to accept the quote from Fort Smith Petroleum and authorize the Operations Director to proceed with the fuel pump replacements. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried. There was no further discussion.

5. Director's Report

- Lavenue Hangar – Al Lavenue has applied for a building permit with the City of Fort Smith to construct his hangar on the Charlie South ramp. The City informed him that he would need to demolish the existing pavement and repour concrete footing 12 feet wide and 18 feet deep, as the current concrete is only 8 feet thick. An alternative site for his hangar, located in the corporate hangar area, was previously discussed with staff. Mr. Lavenue is working with his engineer to determine if this alternative site is feasible. The Commission will be updated on their findings.

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- Hangar 22 Door Replacement – The Arkansas Division of Aeronautics approved a 90-10% grant for the replacement of the Hangar 22 door, providing \$117,000 in funding. The airport portion will be \$13,000. The door has been ordered and the replacement will commence upon its arrival.
6. Executive Session – Chairman Pendergrass asked to move into Executive Session to discuss matters concerning the appointment, discipline, demotion, promotion or resignation of an employee.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cooper and seconded by Commissioner Hawkins to adjourn into Executive Session at 5:52pm. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Voris and seconded by Commissioner Ridgley to reconvene the regular meeting at 7:52pm. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

7. Post-Executive Session - Chairman Pendergrass reported that Michael Griffin had offered his resignation as the director of the airport, not as any result of any misconduct or wrongdoing. Pendergrass said that Griffin's service and contributions to the airport were much appreciated.

A motion to accept Michael Griffin's resignation and authorize the Chairman to negotiate and execute an exit or severance package was made by Commissioner Ridgley and seconded by Commissioner Hawkins. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

A motion to name as interim co-directors Lindsay Conley and Andrew Meyer was made by Commissioner Barr and seconded by Commissioner Voris. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

A motion to authorize Andrew Meyer to serve as a signatory on checks and expenditures that require a second signature was made by Commissioner Ridgley and seconded by Commissioner Cooper. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

A motion to authorize the Chairman to negotiate and hire a consultant to help interim co-directors run airport business was made by Commissioner Hawkins and seconded by Commissioner Ridgley. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Commissioner Voris volunteered to lead the airport director replacement search.

NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

The next meeting of the Fort Smith Airport Commission will be Tuesday, May 27, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

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ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Commissioner Barr and second by Commissioner Hawkins, the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hawkins, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting Nay: none. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lindsay Conley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lindsay Conley
Co-Interim Airport Director