

MINUTES OF AIRPORT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY – MARCH 17, 2026
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 Voris, presiding. Commissioners Barr, Cooper, Hagy, Kelly, Pendergrass and Ridgley were present. Also present were Andrew Meyer, Airport Director, Lindsay Conley, Director of Finance and Administration, and Reginald Evans, Operations Director.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On motion by Commissioner Cooper and second by Commissioner Pendergrass, the commission approved the minutes of the February 24, 2026 regular meeting. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hagy, Kelly, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

TREASURERS' REPORT

Commission Treasurer Barr presented the February 2026 financial report. With 16.2% of the year complete, operating revenues reached 12.0% of the annual budget, while operating expenses reached 12.1%, resulting in a net operating income of \$15,898 for the month and a year-to-date net operating income of \$8,536. Director Conley explained that both revenues and expenses are currently below projections because AJUA funding and the associated expenditures—budgeted for the year—have not yet been recognized, as the AJUA agreement remains pending. Notable expenses for the month included the purchase of timeclocks from the City of Fort Smith for \$6,383, a new motor for the baggage claim belt totaling \$6,711, and a coolant leak repair for ARFF Unit 17 costing \$2,973.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Air Force Report/Update – Col. Nicholas Ihde, Commander of the U.S. Air Force 85th Fighter Group, reported that Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Ken Wilsbach and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force David Wolfe visited Ebbing Air National Guard Base to meet with Brig. Gen. Ireneusz Jatczak, the Polish Air Chief. Their discussions focused on the F-35 Foreign Military Sales mission and long-term readiness. A notable milestone was reached in February, with Polish F-35s logging 1,000 flight hours. In addition, the 15th F-35 has now arrived at Ebbing, marking continued progress in the mission. Col. Ihde also reported Representative Womack met with FAA Administrator Chief Bryan Bedford to discuss airspace expansion initiatives.
2. 2025 Audit and Annual Financial Report Review – David Coleman, auditor with Forvis Mazars, LLP, presented the results of the 2025 Fort Smith Regional Airport Financial Statement Audit. He reported that as a governmental entity, the airport is subject to four audit opinions: 1) airport financial statements are materially correct; 2) airport internal controls have no significant weaknesses or material deficiencies; 3) the airport complies with major federal programs regulations; 4) the airport complies with PFC program regulations. The airport was issued clean, unmodified opinions in all four categories, with no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. Mr. Coleman also highlighted that three major construction projects—totaling \$32 million—were placed into service in 2025: the Runway 8/26 extension, the Arresting Barrier Arm and Dearm Pads, and the ARFF station expansion. Bringing these assets in service resulted in an increase of \$1.8 million in depreciation expense over prior year.

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3. Lease Proposal - The 188th ANG has selected a contractor for their Main Ramp Rehabilitation Project. To support construction activities, the contractor must establish a laydown yard and concrete batch plant in close proximity to the airfield to ensure timely delivery and maintain concrete quality. After coordination with the City, the recommended location for these operations is the corner of Savannah Street and South 46th Street. FAA airspace studies for the proposed site are underway and are not expected to affect navigable airspace. A proposed ground lease has been negotiated with the contractor, Pono Aina Management, LLC, for approximately 3.5 acres. The initial 12-month term includes rent of \$2,500 per month, with escalators incorporated for potential extension options. All gate access, badging, driver training, and other FAA/TSA regulatory requirements will apply to contractor personnel accessing the leased site and the airfield. During discussion, Commissioner Kelly requested confirmation that the lease includes provisions requiring the site to be returned in the same or better condition upon termination, which Director Meyer affirmed.

A motion to approve the Pono Aina Management, LLC ground lease and to authorize the Airport Director to execute the agreement was made by Commissioner Kelly and seconded by Commissioner Ridgley. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hagy, Kelly, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting nay: none. Motion carried. There was no further discussion.

4. Director's Report

- Flight Data – In January, FSM had 4,289 enplanements and an average load factor of 73.9%. There were 82 flights scheduled, with 13 delayed flights and no cancellations.
- Industry Update - Jet fuel prices have doubled in recent months as a result of ongoing international conflict. If prices remain elevated, airlines may consider reducing flight schedules this fall to manage operating costs. The FAA is also becoming increasingly involved at Chicago O'Hare (ORD) due to a significant rise in flight activity by United Airlines and American Airlines. As a result, the agency is evaluating potential flight caps to help manage congestion and maintain operational safety.
- American Airlines at FSM is resuming its 4th flight in May, which will continue through August. The airline is rebanking flight times in Dallas, which could result in better connectivity and higher load factors.
- AAAE Certified Member – Director Meyer attended AAAE Certified Member (CM) Academy in February and passed the CM exam, earning his CM accreditation.
- Hanna Oil & Gas Company has expressed interest in obtaining a ground lease with the airport and constructing GA hangars.
- The FAA ATCT at FSM replaced their generator March 4-5. The FAA tower was offline for approximately 16 hours.
- Director Meyer attended the opening of the XNA FAA control tower in Bentonville and had a meeting with Representative Womack and the FAA administrator, Bryan Bedford.
- Meetings with CEOs in the community continue, this month including Trent Goins and Teresa Riley.

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- The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) awarded Halff Engineering for the BAK-14 project that was completed at FSM in 2024.
 - The CDS grant for FSM's Snow Removal Equipment Building was awarded and the FAA checkbook was loaded. The Construction Bid RFQ will be posted in April.
 - Director Meyer will attend the Mead & Hunt Air Service Conference March 24.
 - The Rotary Club has invited Director Meyer to speak at the July 2026 meeting.
 - Director Meyer asked the Commission to consider an airport rebranding initiative, including an updated logo and color palette. He noted the cost would be minimal since most logo applications are digital. Chairman Voris requested volunteers to serve on a committee to make a recommendation for the rebranding effort. Commissioners Pendergrass and Cooper agreed to serve on the committee.
5. Chairman's Report - Chairman Voris reported that he is working with Lockheed Martin to secure an F-35 static display model for installation at the airport, either at the terminal entrance or in the parking area. Commissioners expressed a preference for placing the display inside the terminal.

NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Fort Smith Airport Commission will be held Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Commissioner Pendergrass and second by Commissioner Ridgley, the meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m. Voting aye: Barr, Cooper, Hagy, Kelly, Pendergrass, Ridgley and Voris. Voting Nay: none. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew Meyer, C.M.
Airport Director