

# MICHIGAN AERONAUTICS COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting  
Lansing, Michigan  
July 21, 2021

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Pursuant to Section 31 of Act 327 of the Public Acts of 1945, the Commissioners of the Michigan Aeronautics Commission (MAC) met at the Office of Aeronautics (Aero) Building, 2700 Port Lansing Road, Lansing, Michigan, on Wednesday, July 21, 2021.

## COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Rick Fiddler, Chairperson  
Russ Kavalhuna, Vice Chairperson  
Flight/Lieutenant Brian Bahlau, Designee for Michigan State Police (MSP)  
Kelly Burris, Commissioner  
Ben Carter, Commissioner  
Kevin Jacobs, Designee for Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Laura Mester, Designee for Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)  
Dr. Brian Smith, Commissioner  
Mike Trout, Director  
Bryan Budds, Commission Advisor  
Alicia Morrison, Commission Analyst

## COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Brigadier General Bryan Teff, Designee for Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

## I. OPENING REMARKS

Director Mike Trout began by welcoming everyone back in person after an 18-month period of meeting virtually. He also introduced and welcomed Mr. Ben Carter, new Commissioner, to his first meeting. Director Trout stated that while the meeting was being conducted in person, there was still a Teams link where attendees could view the meeting online as well. He then turned the meeting over to Chair Rick Fiddler.

The July 21, 2021, MAC meeting was officially called to order by Chair Rick Fiddler at 10:01 am.

Chair Fiddler thanked the Commissioners and all in attendance for participating, noting it was good to be back in person. He then asked for a formal roll call. Roll call was taken. It was announced that eight out of nine Commissioners were present for a quorum.

Chair Fiddler then led the attendees in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

## II. COMMISSION BUSINESS

### A. Minutes of the May 26, 2021, Meeting



Chair Fiddler asked if there were any revisions to the minutes of the meeting held on May 26, 2021. There were none. He entertained a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was moved by Vice Chair Russ Kavalhuna and seconded by Commissioner Kelly Burris to approve the minutes as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Fiddler announced the motion is carried.**

**B. Appointment of Nominating Committee**

Chair Fiddler stated during the September meeting a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will be selected. In accordance with MAC bylaws, Chair Fiddler appointed Commissioner Brian Smith to serve with him as the Nominating Committee. This Committee will recommend the persons considered for election to the Chair and Vice Chair positions, for a one-year term, beginning upon election at the September meeting.

**C. Appointment of State Aviation Resource Efficiency Committee**

Commission Advisor, Bryan Budds, gave a briefing on the new State Aviation Resource Efficiency Committee purpose, stating Aero and MSP were exploring opportunities to share resources, create efficiency, and reduce redundancy within the Air Transport Sections of both agencies. Bryan Budds stated it was a good time to form this supportive committee and create a strategic plan and goals for the initiative.

Chair Fiddler then stated, in accordance with MAC bylaws, he was appointing Commissioner Brian Bahlau and Commissioner Kelly Burris to serve with him as the MAC State Aviation Resource Efficiency Committee. This committee will assist in developing a strategy for implementation and report to the Commission regularly on its progress.

**D. Request for Approval and Transfer of Appropriated Funds**

Chair Fiddler called on Alissa VanHoof, who then presented the Airport Sponsor Contracts and Supplemental Transfers.

**Airport Sponsor Contracts**

1. Lenawee County Airport, Adrian
2. Antrim County Airport, Bellaire
3. Grosse Ile Municipal Airport, Grosse Ile
4. Grosse Ile Municipal Airport, Grosse Ile
5. Bishop International Airport, Flint
6. Bishop International Airport, Flint
7. Gerald R. Ford International Airport, Grand Rapids
8. Gerald R. Ford International Airport, Grand Rapids
9. Gerald R. Ford International Airport, Grand Rapids
10. Gerald R. Ford International Airport, Grand Rapids
11. Gerald R. Ford International Airport, Grand Rapids



12. Houghton County Memorial Airport, Hancock
  13. Houghton County Memorial Airport, Hancock
  14. Oceana County Airport, Hart/Shelby
  15. Livingston County/Spencer J. Hardy Airport, Howell
  16. Capital Region International Airport, Lansing
  17. Capital Region International Airport, Lansing
  18. Muskegon County Airport, Muskegon
  19. Muskegon County Airport, Muskegon
  20. Muskegon County Airport, Muskegon
  21. Muskegon County Airport, Muskegon
  22. Muskegon County Airport, Muskegon
  23. Muskegon County Airport, Muskegon
  24. Muskegon County Airport, Muskegon
  25. Pellston Regional Airport of Emmet County, Pellston
  26. Pellston Regional Airport of Emmet County, Pellston
  27. Pellston Regional Airport of Emmet County, Pellston
  28. Pellston Regional Airport of Emmet County, Pellston
  29. Pellston Regional Airport of Emmet County, Pellston
  30. Romeo State Airport, Romeo
  31. MBS International Airport, Saginaw
  32. MBS International Airport, Saginaw
  33. MBS International Airport, Saginaw
  34. MBS International Airport, Saginaw
  35. Sault Ste Marie Chippewa County International Airport, Sault Ste Marie
  36. Three Rivers Municipal/Dr. Haines Airport, Three Rivers
- Supplemental Transfers >15% of Original Transfer*
37. Fitch H. Beach Airport, Charlotte

**Supplemental Transfers – No Action Required**

1. Jack Barstow Airport, Midland

Chair Fiddler asked if there were any further comments or questions. There were none. Chair Fiddler then asked for a motion to approve the transfers as presented. The motion was moved by Commissioner Ben Carter and seconded by Commissioner Brian Smith to approve the transfers as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Fiddler announced the motion is carried.**

A complete list of contract descriptions can be viewed at [www.michigan.gov/aero](http://www.michigan.gov/aero) under the Commission tab.



### III. REPORTS

#### A. MAC Director's Report

Chair Fiddler called on Director Trout who then presented his report.

Director Trout began by welcoming Ben Carter to his first meeting as a newly appointed Commissioner. He gave a short introduction then invited Commissioner Carter to say a few words. Commissioner Carter thanked Director Trout and the Commission for his warm welcome, then gave his background as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Trinity Health, along with being a pilot and certified flight instructor. He is excited to be a part of the Michigan aviation community and looks forward to his time on the Commission.

Director Trout then started his report by giving an overview of the multiple coronavirus relief packages currently being worked on.

- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided \$256,958,769 to 94 Michigan airports.
  - All state block grant agreements have been awarded for a total amount of \$2,628,000 to 75 airports.
  - 18 direct Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grants have been awarded for a total amount of \$239,625,000.
  - 124 reimbursement payments to 80 airports for a total amount of \$185,114,011 have been processed.
  - Additional information can be found at [www.faa.gov/airports/cares\\_act](http://www.faa.gov/airports/cares_act)
- The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) provided \$55,841,582 for 92 eligible Michigan airports.
  - 27 grants have been awarded to date totaling \$55,409,275.
  - A few Michigan airports still waiting on Concessions Relief Amendment.
  - State appropriation for these funds is pending.
  - Further information on formulas used to determine amounts and eligibility can be found at [www.faa.gov/airports/crrsaa](http://www.faa.gov/airports/crrsaa).
- The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is an additional \$8 billion to airports nationwide to 'prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.'
  - Grant allocation amounts for Michigan have been released and can be found at [https://www.faa.gov/airports/airport\\_rescue\\_grants/media/20210622\\_ARP\\_Allocations.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_rescue_grants/media/20210622_ARP_Allocations.pdf)
  - Airport Improvement Program grants awarded this year will be at 100 percent federal share.
  - MDOT Aero is currently verifying with State Block Grant Airports on accepting funding.
  - Additional information can be found at [www.faa.gov/airports/airport\\_rescue\\_grants](http://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_rescue_grants)



Director Trout presented the latest aviation gallons (Avgas and jet fuel) amount of 138,286,068 for October 2020 through May 2021. While this still amounts to a (23.05%) decrease over the same reporting period last year, the numbers are slowly improving from the 2020 pandemic historic lows. He also showed the aviation fuel excise tax revenue for the same period, reporting \$2,490,520, which is a (16.96%) decrease over last year, but is also showing signs of improvement.

Director Trout highlighted a recent airport project at Brooks Field in Marshall. This was a construction of a new ADA Terminal at a cost of \$917,600. The architecturally sensitive addition has beautiful windows and a bow truss design that complement the existing unique hangar, designed by Timothy A. Spitzley Architects, and supported by Mead and Hunt. The project construction was done by Kalleward Group and the Aero Project Manager was Amanda Hopper.

Director Trout noted current fiscal year (FY) 2021 stats from Aero which include 4,023 tall structure permit applications reviewed and processed, 41 active design projects, 91 active construction projects, 12 active equipment projects and 50 airport development projects cleared. He also noted the statewide pavement marking and crack sealing programs have much greater participation than in years past.

Director Trout shared the following events and information from around the state:

- State office buildings, including Aero, re-opened to the public on July 15. Most staff are working a hybrid of remote work and in-person schedules.
- The Wings of Mercy are hosting a flying event in conjunction with the fall Michigan Association of Airport Executives (MAAE) Airport Conference, on September 11-12.
- Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GRR) is partnering to create an innovation lab. This initiative is a platform for GRR Airport Authority to collaborate with innovation-driven companies and start-ups to study, design, develop, and test complex airport-oriented solutions in a live airport environment.
- The West Michigan Aviation Academy Foundation Flight Training Center will be holding its grand opening in September.
- The [Michigan Aviation Professional Training Course](#) (formerly known as Airports 101) will be held at the Livingston County EMS Facility in Howell on August 24-25.

Director Trout provided the following staffing updates:

- Welcome to the new FAA Head of Airports, Shannetta Griffin, PE.
- Welcome to Aero's new staff
  - Students Ryan Kramer and Ryan Markowski
  - Engineering Co-op Morgan Zaenia
  - Aviation Inspectors Stephenie Snell and Tony Smit
- Aero is currently interviewing for the open Aviation Manager position.



- A new [State Block Grant Specialist/Licensed Engineer](#) position is currently posted.

Director Trout gave special recognition to the Aero team for a thank you received from Ann Arbor airport, featured in the MDOT Monday Memo, in appreciation for going above and beyond during a pavement marking project conducted the Friday before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday weekend. He also shared appreciation for the following staff:

- Jay Henning, Kim (Kermie) Bowman, Paul Bruder, Mike Soper, Gene Rench and Tom Smith for their continued efforts maintaining the Aero building and electronic equipment repair throughout the pandemic.
- Michael Carnarvon on completing his instrument rating.
- Steve Houtteman on his hard work for the PFAS Grant initiative.
- Tammie Lewandowsky and Zach Tecson on becoming Part 107 certified drone pilots.

He concluded with a special thank you to former Commissioner Roger Salo, giving his appreciation for his service and dedication to the Commission. A formal recognition is planned for the September meeting.

#### IV. PRESENTATION

Chair Fiddler called on Linn Smith, Aero Supervisor, to give his presentation 'Navigating Airspace Permitting Requirements – Airspace 101'.

Linn Smith began with a review of all the different entities that compete for airspace such as cell towers, buildings, power lines, wind turbines and construction equipment. He then discussed the multiple agencies with oversight responsibility from determinations to actual permits, which are the FAA, Michigan Tall Structures Act (Act 259 of 1959), Michigan Airport Zoning Act (Act 23 of 1950), Michigan Aeronautics Code (Act 327 of 1945) and the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Act 110 of 2006.)

He continued by defining what structures and heights need to be filed by detailing FAA Part 77.9 (Construction or Alteration Requiring Notice in the Vicinity of a Public Use Airport) and the Michigan Tall Structure Act. He also discussed the Meteorological Tower Requirements, amended in 2016 to change the notice criteria and set standards on the marking of these structures that pose potential danger to aerial applicators, as part of the Tall Structure Act.

Linn Smith reviewed the Tall Structure Process as follows, noting Aero helps first time users and as needed during the process:

1. FAA Notice Criteria Tool ([www.oaaaa.faa.gov](http://www.oaaaa.faa.gov)) – A simple online tool requiring coordinate and elevation information.
2. File 7460-1 with FAA



3. If tall structure permit is required, application package created by Aero
4. FAA issues determination
5. Applicable zoning
6. Airspace Review Team, if necessary
7. Aero issues Michigan Tall Structures Permit

Linn Smith then talked about the coordination and important role that Aero plays in the process from assisting with the application, to being a liaison for airport zoning issues and working with the FAA for final determination. He noted the process generally takes 60 days total but may take longer if there is a Notice of Presumed Hazard issued or the structure penetrates a surface and public comment is necessary.

Linn Smith concluded the presentation by sharing trends in permit applications, growing from 2,398 in 2011 to 5,372 in 2020, and giving contact information for Tall Structures and Airport Zoning information and questions with the Office of Aeronautics. This can also be found at [www.michigan.gov/aero](http://www.michigan.gov/aero).

Commissioner Kelly Burris asked if the FAA Criteria Tool was a secure site that required multi-factor authenticity to access? Linn Smith replied yes, although it holds public data, it is a secure site.

Commissioner Kelly Burris then asked how long the process takes to complete? Linn Smith replied generally 30 days but can be expedited. Aero works concurrently with FAA during the process to keep things moving.

Commissioner Laura Mester thanked Aero for their efficiency and excellent work issuing the permits, noting the quick turnaround time and the number of permits processed throughout the year.

## **V. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Chair Fiddler asked if any Commissioners would like to make a comment.

Vice Chair Russ Kavalhuna commented on the recent appointment of Commissioner Ben Carter, welcoming him to the MAC. He stated what a good group of appointees the MAC has had in the past, and he looks forward to continuing the great work in the future. He also thanked past Commissioner Roger Salo for his service. He concluded his comments by recognizing current Chairperson Rick Fiddler, noting Chair Fiddler is one of the few Commissioners ever to be appointed by both a Democratic and Republican Governor, showing the true bipartisanship of the MAC.

Chair Fiddler noted the Grand Rapids Academy and Flight Center opening again, as mentioned in Director Trout's report.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chair Fiddler asked if anyone would like to make a public comment. There were no public comments.

**CLOSING**

The next MAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 15, 2021, at 11:00am during the MAAE Fall Airport Conference, being held at Crystal Mountain.

Chair Fiddler thanked the Commissioners, Aero staff, and the public for their participation today, reminding everyone that information presented today could be found at [www.michigan.gov/aero](http://www.michigan.gov/aero) or by calling 517-335-9568.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 a.m.



Rick Fiddler, Chairman



Michael G. Trout, Director

