

# MICHIGAN AERONAUTICS COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting  
Lansing, Michigan  
June 8, 2022

---

Pursuant to Section 31 of Act 327 of the Public Acts of 1945, the Commissioners of the Michigan Aeronautics Commission (MAC) met at the Western Michigan University College of Aviation, 237 North Helmer Road, Battle Creek, Michigan 49037, on Wednesday, June 8, 2022.

## COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Russ Kavalhuna, Chair  
Kelly Burris, Vice Chair  
Benjamin Carter, Commissioner  
Dr. Brian Smith, Commissioner – via Microsoft Teams, abstained from voting per bylaws  
Laura Mester, Designee MDOT  
Kevin Jacobs, Designee MDNR  
F/Lt Greg Setla, Designee MSP  
Mike Trout, Director  
Bryan Budds, Commission Advisor  
Alicia Morrison, Commission Analyst

## COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Rick Fiddler, Commissioner  
Brig. Gen. Bryan Teff, Designee MDMVA

## I. OPENING REMARKS

The June 9, 2022, MAC meeting was officially called to order by Chair Russ Kavalhuna at 2:32 pm.

Chair Russ Kavalhuna welcomed all to the meeting. He thanked the Western Michigan University (WMU) College of Aviation for hosting and continued with how WMU was a great advocate and resource for those wanting a career in aviation. He also noted the attendance of special guest Lieutenant Governor Gilchrist and extended his appreciation for Lt. Governor Gilchrist's time. He reviewed how the Office of Aeronautics (Aero), and the MAC duties are to serve the aeronautics community in the state and emphasized how important this role is. He thanked everyone on the Commission and at Aero for their dedication and hard work. He then asked everyone to join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Kavalhuna asked for a formal roll call. Roll call was taken. It was announced six (6) Commissioners were present for a quorum.

Chair Kavalhuna introduced Dr. Raymond Thompson, interim Dean, WMU College of Aviation.



## II. WELCOME – WMU

Dr. Raymond Thompson welcomed the MAC to WMU and stated they were honored to host. He noted and thanked special attendees including Lt. Governor Gilchrist, Duncan Aviation, Battle Creek Executive Airport, and students of WMU. He continued stating he had immense pride for the college and its place among the top aviation programs in Michigan, offering a variety of aviation related degrees in Flight Sciences, Aviation Management and Operations, and Technical Operations. He spoke on helping students find a career and not just a job in aviation. He then introduced and welcomed Phil Kroll, Airport Manager, Battle Creek Executive Airport at Kellogg Field, who thanked and welcomed all for attending then stated he would be giving a short presentation later in the meeting.

## III. COMMISSION BUSINESS

### A. Minutes of the March 23, 2022, Meeting

Chair Kavalhuna asked if there were any revisions to the minutes of the meeting held on March 23, 2022. There were none. He entertained a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was moved by Commissioner Ben Carter and seconded by Vice Chair Kelly Burris to approve the minutes as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Kavalhuna announced the motion is carried.**

### B. Request for Approval and Transfer of Appropriated Funds

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

#### Airport Sponsor Contracts

1. James Clements Municipal Airport, Bay City (3CM)
2. Fitch H. Beach Municipal Airport, Charlotte (FPK)
3. Clare Municipal Airport, Clare (48D)
4. Clare Municipal Airport, Clare (48D)
5. Dowagiac Municipal Airport, Dowagiac (C91)
6. Fremont Municipal Airport, Fremont (FEX)
7. Gaylord Regional Airport, Gaylord (GLR)
8. Gladwin Zettel Memorial Airport, Gladwin (GDW)
9. Gladwin Zettel Memorial Airport, Gladwin (GDW)
10. Gladwin Zettel Memorial Airport, Gladwin (GDW)
11. Gladwin Zettel Memorial Airport, Gladwin (GDW)
12. Roscommon County Blodgett Memorial Airport, Houghton Lake (HTL)
13. Ionia County Airport, Ionia (Y70)
14. Gogebic-Iron County Airport, Ironwood (IWD)
15. Gogebic-Iron County Airport, Ironwood (IWD)
16. Gogebic-Iron County Airport, Ironwood (IWD)
17. Reynolds Field, Jackson County (JXN)
18. Reynolds Field, Jackson County (JXN)



19. Mason County Airport, Ludington (LDM)
20. Mason Jewett Field, Mason (TEW)
21. Menominee Regional Airport (MNM)
22. Menominee Regional Airport (MNM)
23. Luce County Airport, Newberry (ERY)
24. Luce County Airport, Newberry (ERY)
25. Luce County Airport, Newberry (ERY)
26. Oakland County International Airport, Pontiac (PTK)
27. Paul C. Miller-Sparta Airport, Sparta (8D4)
28. Paul C. Miller-Sparta Airport, Sparta (8D4)
29. Paul C. Miller-Sparta Airport, Sparta (8D4)
30. Paul C. Miller-Sparta Airport, Sparta (8D4)
31. Paul C. Miller-Sparta Airport, Sparta (8D4)
32. Statewide – Pavement Condition Index Surveys
33. Statewide – Crack Seal Program
34. Statewide – Pavement Marking Program

Chair Kavalhuna then asked for a motion to approve the transfers as presented. The motion was moved by Commissioner Greg Setla and seconded by Commissioner Ben Carter to approve the transfers as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Kavalhuna 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.

#### IV. DIRECTORS REPORT

##### A. MAC Director's Report

Chair Kavalhuna called on Director Trout who then presented a shortened version of his report to allow time for the special guest speakers.

Director Trout began with a summary of the MAC and its priorities:

- Preserve critical airport infrastructure
- Leverage state resources to maximize federal funds
- Promote job creation and economic development
- Contribute to statewide efficiency and innovation
- Eliminate unnecessary or burdensome processes and regulations
- Have a positive influence on state and national aviation issues

He welcomed F/Lt Greg Setla as the new designee for the Michigan State Police, to the Commission.

Director Trout next discussed Aero and the MAC resiliency through the pandemic. Noting that grant amounts quadrupled to nearly \$500,000,000 and that the entire Aero team remained committed to delivering core programs



despite the constant state of transition. He highlighted how strong partnerships within the office and with external customers and consultants were critical to success.

Director Trout discussed the holistic approach Aero takes to equity in the office supporting the Transportation Diversity Recruitment Program, hosting Engineers through the Engineer Development Program and hiring a new office assistant through the Veteran Intern Program. Aero is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion even with the current significant workplace transitions occurring due to the pandemic.

Director Trout highlighted initiatives Aero is working on to support the future of aviation including a NASA partnership to evaluate vertiport placement for advanced air mobility, mobility funding platforms in partnership with MEDC, BVLOS corridor developments, and FLITE.

Director Trout concluded by thanking Battle Creek Executive Airport at Kellogg Field and WMU for hosting and Lt. Governor Gilchrist for participating.

## **V. SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER**

Chair Russ Kavalhuna introduced Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist III. The Lt. Governor began by thanking the Commission and WMU for hosting him and that it was an honor to attend and speak at the meeting. He then continued by emphasizing the importance of higher education and the impact it has on young lives.

Lt. Governor Gilchrist discussed his involvement in supporting Michigan aviation and how the recent influx of infrastructure dollars would be used to improve aeronautic infrastructure, not just roads, noting the number of passengers that utilize Michigan airports each day. As part of the Building Michigan Together Plan, the airport community will see infrastructure improvements that have been overdue for some time.

Lt Governor Gilchrist emphasized the importance of collaboration, including partnerships with WMU, MEDC, Aero and Duncan Aviation. Highlighting that Duncan Aviation was a big economic contributor to the Battle Creek area.

Lt Governor Gilchrist concluded by once again thanking the Commission and the Michigan aeronautics community for the outstanding economic impact it brings and work that is done for the people of the state of Michigan.

## **VI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

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



Vice Chair Kelly Burris stated that she was also a proud WMU graduate and touted the excellent work done by the College in preparing aviators of the future. She was grateful the Commission was able to highlight the importance of what they do.

Chair Russ Kavalhuna noted that Vice Chair Burris graciously sponsors a scholarship each year to assist students attending WMU for aviation related degrees. The Commission thanked her for this selfless charity.

## VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Kavalhuna asked if anyone would like to make a public comment. There were none recorded.

## VIII. PRESENTATION

Chair Kavalhuna introduced Phil Kroll, Airport Manager, Battle Creek Executive Airport at Kellogg Field (BTL).

Phil Kroll began by stating BTL was the third busiest general utility airport in the state. He continued with a brief history of the airport, stating investors such as WACO and Duncan aviation have contributed to the area and the airports success. He then introduced Joe Sobieralski, President and CEO, Battle Creek Unlimited (BCU).

Joe Sobieralski began also by thanking the Commission and WMU. He went on to discuss the future of aviation and unmanned aerial systems/drones at Battle Creek. They are working on virtual and physical infrastructure to create a "highway in the sky." Using the North Dakota Plains test site as a model, BCU is working towards drone manufacturing, workforce development and training in the real world, not just research and development. BCU is actively applying for federal grants and collaborating with legislators to secure funding for these future operations. He concluded by summarizing the next steps and noting all the entities within Michigan that are supporting this endeavor.

## CLOSING

The next MAC meeting is scheduled for 10:00am on Wednesday, July 20, 2022, at Charlevoix City Hall, 210 State Street, Charlevoix, Michigan.

Chair Kavalhuna thanked the Commissioners, Office of Aeronautics staff, special guest Lt. Governor Gilchrist, the Battle Creek community, 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 3:32 p.m.



Russ Kavalhuna, Chairman



Michael G. Trout, Director