

MICHIGAN AERONAUTICS COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting
Lansing, Michigan
September 13, 2023

Pursuant to Section 31 of Act 327 of the Public Acts of 1945, the Commissioners of the Michigan Aeronautics Commission (MAC or Commission) met at the Muskegon Convention Center, 460 West Western Avenue, Muskegon, Michigan on September 13, 2023.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Kelly Burris, Chair
Dr. Brian Smith, Vice Chair
Benjamin Carter, Commissioner
Rick Fiddler, Commissioner
Russ Kavalhuna, Commissioner
Laura Mester, Designee MDOT
Kevin Jacobs, Designee MDNR
Brig. Gen. Bryan Teff, Designee, MDMVA
Mike Trout, Director
Alicia Morrison, Commission Analyst

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

F/Lt. Greg Setla, Designee MSP – joined via Teams
Bryan Budds, Commission Advisor

I. OPENING REMARKS, ROLL CALL, and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The September 13, 2023, MAC meeting was officially called to order by Chair Kelly Burris at 10:04 am.

Chair Burris welcomed all to the meeting and thanked all in attendance.

Chair Burris then asked everyone to join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Burris asked for a formal roll call. Roll call was taken by Alicia Morrison. It was announced eight (8) Commissioners were present for a quorum.

II. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Minutes of the July 19, 2023, Meeting

Chair Burris asked if there were any revisions to the minutes of the meeting held on July 19, 2023. Commissioner Kevin Jacobs noted on Page 2 the title Chair should be removed from his name. Alicia Morrison noted the change would be made prior to certifying the minutes. Chair Burris entertained a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was moved by Vice Chair Brian Smith and seconded by



Commissioner Ben Carter to approve the minutes as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Burris announced the motion is carried.**

B. Request for Approval and Transfer of Appropriated Funds

Chair Burris called on Alissa VanHoof, who then presented the transfers.

Airport Sponsor Contracts

1. Padgham Field, Allegan (35D)
2. Atlanta Municipal Airport, Atlanta (Y93)
3. Huron County Memorial Airport, Bad Axe (BAX)
4. Fitch H Beach Municipal Airport, Charlotte (FPK)
5. Gerald R. Ford International Airport, Grand Rapids (GRR)
6. Hillsdale Municipal Airport, Hillsdale (JYM)
7. Capital Region International Airport, Lansing (LAN)
8. Ontonagon County Schuster Airport, Ontonagon (OGM)
9. Paul C. Miller Airport, Sparta (8D4)
10. Cherry Capital Airport, Traverse City (TVC)

Supplemental Transfers < 15% of original transfer – No Action Required

1. Padgham Field, Allegan (35D)
2. Gratiot Community Airport, Alma (AMN)
3. Beaver Island Airport, Beaver Island (SJX)
4. Dowagiac Municipal Airport, Dowagiac (C91)
5. Dow Memorial Airport, Frankfort (FKS)
6. Griffith Field, Lakeview (13C)
7. Mason Jewett Field, Mason (TEW)
8. MBS International Airport, Saginaw (MBS)
9. Delta County Airport, Escanaba (ESC)

Chair Burris asked for a motion to approve the transfers as presented. The motion was moved by Commissioner Ben Carter and seconded by Commissioner Rick Fiddler to approve the transfers as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Burris announced the motion is carried.**

A complete list of contract descriptions can be viewed at www.michigan.gov/aero under the Aeronautics Commission tab.

C. Airport Loan Program Request

Chair Burris asked Alissa VanHoof to present the Airport Loan Request.

Alissa VanHoof presented the information on a \$100,000 loan request from South Haven Area Regional Airport for land acquisition to remove primary runway obstructions. She noted once approved by the MAC, the request is then sent to the



Michigan Department of Treasury for determination the sponsor is in material compliance with the financial criteria necessary to receive the loan. She also noted the sponsor will have 10 years to repay the loan and the interest rate is 2.6%.

Chair Burris asked if there is any oversight that the airport remains in compliance with the terms of the loan agreement over the 10 years. Alissa VanHoof stated she would find out what oversight occurs and by whom and follow up with the Commission. There were no further questions.

Chair Burris asked for a motion to approve the loan request as presented. The motion was moved by Vice Chair Brian Smith and seconded by Commissioner Bryan Teff to approve the transfers as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Burris announced the motion is carried.**

D. Presentation and Request for Approval of Automated Weather Observation Station (AWOS) Contracts

Chair Burris called on Mike Soper, who then presented the AWOS Contracts.

1. Fitch H. Beach Airport, Charlotte (FPK) - 2023
2. Harry W. Browne Airport, Saginaw (HYX) - 2023
3. Wexford County Airport, Cadillac (CAD) - 2023
4. Marquette County Regional Airport, Gwinn (SAW) – 2023
5. Mackinac Island Airport, Mackinac Island (MCD) – TBD
6. Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport, Oscoda (OSC) – TBD
7. Gratiot Community Airport, Alma (AMN) – TBD
8. Antrim County Airport, Bellaire (ACB) – TBD
9. Grosse Ile Municipal Airport, Grosse Ile (ONZ) – TBD
10. Mason Jewett Field, Mason (TEW) – TBD
11. Monroe Custer Airport, Monroe (TTF) – TBD
12. Kirsch Municipal Airport, Sturgis (IRS) – TBD
13. Huron County Memorial Airport, Bad Axe (BAX) – TBD
14. Branch County Memorial Airport, Coldwater (OEB) – TBD
15. Brooks Field, Marshall (RMY) – TBD
16. Luce County Airport, Newberry (ERY) – TBD
17. Roben-Hood Airport, Big Rapids (RQB) – TBD
18. Hillsdale Municipal Airport, Hillsdale (JYM) – TBD
19. Schoolcraft County Airport, Manistique (ISQ) – TBD
20. Mason County Airport, Ludington (LDM) – TBD
21. Mount Pleasant Community Airport (MOP) – TBD
22. Beaver Island Airport, Beaver Island (SJX) – TBD
23. Charlevoix Municipal Airport, Charlevoix (CVX) – TBD
24. Cheboygan County Airport, Cheboygan (SLH) – TBD



25. Harbor Springs Municipal Airport, Harbor Springs (MGN) – TBD
26. Toledo Suburban Airport, Lambertville (DUH) – TBD
27. Saint Clair County International Airport, Port Huron (PHN) – TBD
28. Tuscola Area Airport, Caro (CFS) – TBD
29. Dow Memorial Airport, Frankfort (FKS) – TBD
30. Owosso Community Airport, Owosso (RNP) – TBD
31. Presque Isle County Airport, Rogers City (PZQ) – TBD
32. South Haven Area Regional Airport, South Haven (LWA) – TBD
33. Oakland – Troy Airport, Troy (VLL) – TBD
34. Drummond Island Airport, Drummond Island (DRM) – TBD
35. Livingston County Spencer J Hardy Airport, Howell (OZW) – TBD
36. Dr Haines Three Rivers Municipal Airport, Three Rivers (HAI) – TBD
37. Fremont Municipal Airport, Fremont (FFX) – TBD
38. Jack Barstow Airport, Midland (IKW) – TBD
39. Ionia County Airport, Ionia (Y70) – TBD
40. Dupont Lapeer Airport, Lapeer (D95) – TBD
41. West Branch Community Airport, West Branch (Y31) – TBD

Mike Soper discussed the importance of weather in aviation; how AWOS assists many with weather predictions, not just pilots; and how the MDOT Aero Electronics Unit maintain the AWOS stations. He also made note of the MAC AWOS Task Force which recommended a full replacement of the AWOS in Michigan and helped to secure a \$3.9M appropriation for this project.

Commissioner Ben Carter asked how the maintenance and ownership of the AWOS worked. Mike Soper answered the airport would own the land and MDOT Aero would own the equipment which would then be leased to the airport for a very minimal fee over a 20-year contract. He noted this would be a non-revenue generating arrangement.

Chair Burris asked how the maintenance of the AWOS would work and if the locals have a share in responsibility. Mike Soper answered yes, the locals would share the maintenance responsibility as is the current arrangement.

Chair Burris asked for a motion to approve AWOS Contract items 1-41 as presented. The motion was moved by Commissioner Kevin Jacobs and seconded by Vice Chair Brian Smith to approve the contracts as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Burris announced the motion is carried.**

III. DIRECTORS REPORT

A. MAC Director's Report

Chair Burris called on Director Trout who presented his Director's Report.



Director Trout began by thanking all those in attendance at both the airport conference and the MAC meeting.

Director Trout provided a legislative update noting the upcoming September 30 deadline to fund the Federal Government. A continuing resolution is expected. He next noted Michigan Aeronautics Code revisions were being discussed at an upcoming Committee session. He also discussed potential tax cuts which could help aviation businesses and the need for continued revenue streams.

Director Trout discussed Aero's upcoming budgets noting FY23 year end is now occurring with the budget on target; FY24 includes \$5M for Air Service, \$2M for State/Local Program, and \$10M for UAS/AAM; FY25 strategy is exploring the sustainability of General Fund contributions and future revenue sources.

Director Trout further detailed the Air Service Program developed to stimulate economic activity and air service connectivity in Michigan. He noted the intention is to use this funding for commercial service airports that have not previously received other resources to support Air Service development. Aero will prioritize airports that maximize state funding with local commitment and that will maintain goals of strengthening air service across the state using market analysis, airline commitment and other metrics to help drive selection. The goal is to encumber funds before FY end to demonstrate the need and impact of continued funding.

Director Trout noted Aero is undergoing an audit from the Office of Auditor General to assess the effectiveness of various programs. No final report has been issued, but Aero is expected to strengthen licensing processes and look at written policies and procedures to ensure continued compliance and providing the best possible customer service.

Director Trout gave an update on Aero funding programs including CARES, CRSSA, ARPA, BIL and AIP, sharing statistics on how much was spent year-to-date on each and that Aero continues to process grants and reimbursements at a high level for all programs.

Director Trout provided current Excise Fuel Tax and Sales Fuel Tax data.

Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport (OSC) was highlighted by Director Trout for their Rehabilitation of Taxiway A Project. The project amount was \$7,436,731 and was completed by contractor Rieth-Riley. Paige Luft is the Aero Project Manager on the project. A detail of interest – the total taxiway paving length was 15,548 feet. Director Trout encouraged those in the area to check out the final product.

Director Trout gave an update on Aero news and outreach: Aero staff attended the GRR groundbreaking; Congrats to Michael Carnarvon, Aero Inspection and Licensing Manager on his multi-engine rating; Congrats to Ashley Lucas, Aviation

Services Manager and Wendi Chen, Project Manager, on their upcoming new arrivals; Congrats to Alicia Morrison, Zach Bormet, Ryan Panlener, Michael Soper, Linn Smith, and David Mellino on their Simply Super Service Award. Director Trout concluded with noting the [Aero newsletter](#) summer edition was published, along with the updated remote work policy for both Aero and MDOT.

Director Trout highlighted state leadership updates and appointments including Marlon Brown named Acting Director for LARA, Justine Johnson named Chief Mobility Officer at OFME, Scott Bowen named Director for DNR, Phil Roos named Director for EGLE and finally thanking retiring Col. Joe Gasper with MSP for his service.

Director Trout then discussed recent good news items including [GRR being a candidate for USA Today's Best Small Airport award](#), [Cherry Capital Airport getting a financial boost for future projects](#) and how [wreckage from a Tuskegee airman's plane that crashed during WWII was recovered from Lake Huron](#). He also shared a timeline with upcoming events at airports around Michigan. A full list of events, fly-ins and aviation happenings can be found at www.michigan.gov/aero.

Director Trout shared year to date stats on various Aero programs, making special note of Air Space Reviews, with 1,629 being received in just two weeks.

Director Trout gave a special reminder about the [NASA International Art Contest](#). This year's theme is Air Sports for a Peaceful World, and all entries must be submitted to Aero by January 9, 2024.

Director Trout concluded with an UAS/AAM update noting the following: Comments to the USDOT were finalized in response to their RFI on AAM; Aero Deputy Director Bryan Budds received a shout out from NASA President Greg Pecararo on his emerging aviation efforts; FAA announced updated guidance for states and localities on drone regulation and air space policy; SMART Grant applications are being accepted now through October 10, 2023; and Aero is actively seeking partners interested in supporting deployment of BVLOS infrastructure. He ended with a video showing collaboration between MDOT Aero and MDOT Signs where drones were flown over a recent tornado path in search of debris. The mission was successful and proved another important use case for Aero drones.

IV. ELECTIONS

Chair Burriss made a motion to suspend the bylaws and move the elections to the November 15, 2023, meeting. The motion is moved by Commissioner Russ Kavalhuna and seconded by Vice Chair Brian Smith. Chair Burriss stated the motion is carried. The 2024 MAC elections will be added to the November 15, 2023, meeting agenda.



V. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Kavalhuna commented on PFAS in the state.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Burris asked if anyone would like to make a public comment. Thanks was given to MDOT Aero for their continued support of small general aviation airports in Michigan.

VII. CLOSING

The next MAC meeting is scheduled for 10:00am on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, in Detroit, Michigan, at the Coleman A. Young Municipal Airport (DET).

Chair Burris thanked the Commissioners, Office of Aeronautics staff, and the public for their participation today, reminding everyone that information presented today could be found at www.michigan.gov/aero or by calling 517-335-9568.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:01 a.m.



Kelly Burris, Chair



Michael G. Trout, Director

