

MICHIGAN AERONAUTICS COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

Lansing, Michigan

November 15, 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 Coleman A. Young International Airport, 11499 Conner Street, Detroit, Michigan on November 15, 2023.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Kelly Burris, Chair
Dr. Brian Smith, Vice Chair
Benjamin Carter, Commissioner
Rick Fiddler, Commissioner
Russ Kavalhuna, Commissioner
Jean Ruestman for Laura Mester, Designee MDOT
F/Lt. Greg Setla, Designee MSP
Brig. Gen. Bryan Teff, Designee, MDMVA
Mike Trout, Director
Bryan Budds, Commission Advisor
Alicia Morrison, Commission Analyst

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Kevin Jacobs, Designee MDNR

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

The November 15, 2023, MAC meeting was officially called to order by Chair Kelly Burris at 10:02 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 seven (7) Commissioners were present for a quorum.

II. WELCOME PRESENTATION

Chair Burris thanked Coleman A. Young International Airport (DET) for hosting and welcomed Airport Director, Jason Watt, to present on the airport.

Jason Watt started by sharing DET's vision, then continued with highlights of improvements at the airport. He noted several modernization and beautification projects including a new air traffic control tower, new parallel taxiway, and new hangar facilities. He continued by discussing partnerships with the Tuskegee Airmen National Museum, Friends of Detroit City Airport, Black Pilots of America, and Detroit Public



Schools. He noted future advancements hope to include next generation technologies and space for advanced air mobility systems. He concluded by thanking several partners who continue to work on the improvement of DET including the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Office of Aeronautics (Aero) staff for all their work and the Commission for holding their meeting in Detroit.

III. 2024 ELECTIONS AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Chair Burris announced her term had come to an end. She continued by thanking the MDOT Aero staff for all their assistance during her tenure. She also thanked her fellow Commissioners, especially Commissioner Kavalhuna and Commissioner Fiddler, for their guidance as past chairs. She concluded by saying she was honored to serve as chair and glad to be handing over the gavel in Detroit. She then read “In accordance with our bylaws and pursuant to agreement from members of the Nominating Committee, we hereby tender the following nominations for the offices of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Michigan Aeronautics Commission for a one-year term beginning immediately upon election. For the office of Chair, Commissioner Brian Smith. For the office of Vice Chair, Commissioner Ben Carter. It is understood these nominations will require a vote of approval by a majority of the members of the Aeronautics Commission at today’s meeting.”

Chair Burris asked for any further questions or comments. There were none. Chair Burris entertained a motion to approve the nominations as presented. The motion was moved by Commissioner Kavalhuna and seconded by Commissioner Fiddler to elect Chair Smith and Vice Chair Carter. **All voted in favor. Chair Burris announced the motion is carried.**

New Chair Smith accepted the gavel from past-Chair Burris and thanked the Commission for the honor of being elected Chair. He noted the honor of being the third African American elected to the office of MAC Chair. He also recognized Wayne State University and their partnership with DET to address the future of the aviation workforce. Chair Smith concluded by thanking the Commission and past Chair Burris for the honor of being Chair.

New Chair Smith called on Director Trout to highlight past-Chair Burris’ accomplishments. Director Trout shared her efforts including oversight on transfer of hundreds of millions in federal funding for airport infrastructure projects; establishing the MAC Aviation Career Pipeline Committee to encourage aviation workforce development especially for under-represented populations; collaborating with bipartisan legislative and government figures in support of Michigan airports; development of the MAC Road Show taking the 2023 meetings to airports across the state; and providing outstanding hands on leadership of the MAC. He concluded by thanking Kelly Burris for her time as Chair and presenting her an honorary gavel plaque.



A. Establish Executive Committee

New Chair Smith stated in accordance with Article VI of the MAC Bylaws on Standing Committees, he has the honor and duty to appoint members to the Executive Committee. He continued, the bylaws state the Committee is to be comprised of three commissioners, at least two of whom shall be appointive, with the Commission Chair serving and acting as presiding officer. Chair Smith then appointed Vice Chairperson Ben Carter and immediate past Chair Kelly Burris to serve with him on the Executive Committee. No vote was required.

B. Establish MAC Aviation Career Pipeline Committee

New Chair Smith read “In accordance with Article VII of the MAC Bylaws on Special Committees, the newly elected Chairperson has the honor and duty to re-establish the Aviation Career Pipeline Committee.” Dr Smith continued by appointing Commissioner Kelly Burris to serve as Chair of the committee and noted membership would be appointed at the Chair’s discretion and may include both Commission and non-Commission members. No action was required or taken.

IV. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Minutes of the September 13, 2023, Meeting

Chair Smith asked if there were any revisions to the minutes of the meeting held on September 13, 2023. There were none. Chair Smith entertained a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was moved by Commissioner Kelly Burris and seconded by Commissioner Bryan Teff to approve the minutes as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Smith announced the motion is carried.**

B. 2024 MAC Meeting Schedule

Chair Smith presented the 2024 MAC meeting schedule noting the Road Show will continue with meeting locations planned for Jackson, Big Rapids, Pellston and Hillsdale. Chair Smith asked for any further questions or comments. There were none. Chair Smith entertained a motion to approve the schedule as presented. The motion was moved by Commissioner Ben Carter and seconded by Commissioner Rick Fiddler to adopt the schedule. **All voted in favor. Chair Smith announced the motion is carried.**

C. Request for Approval and Transfer of Appropriated Funds

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

Airport Sponsor Contracts

1. Alpena County Regional Airport, Alpena (AMN)
2. Huron County Memorial Airport, Bad Axe (BAX)
3. Fitch H. Beach Municipal Airport, Charlotte (FPK)
4. Detroit Metro Wayne County Airport, Detroit (DTW)
5. Detroit Metro Wayne County Airport, Detroit (DTW)
6. Detroit Metro Wayne County Airport, Detroit (DTW)



7. Frankfort Dow Memorial Field, Frankfort (FKS)
8. Roscommon County Blodgett Memorial Airport, Houghton Lake (HTL)
9. Brooks Field, Marshall (RMY)
10. Brooks Field, Marshall (RMY)
11. Jerry Tyler Memorial Airport, Niles (3TR)
12. South Haven Area Regional Airport, South Haven (LWA)

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

1. Greenville Municipal Airport, Greenville (6D6)
2. Romeo State Airport, Romeo (D98)

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

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

D. 2024 Weather Systems Contract Approval

Chair Smith called on Mike Soper, who then presented the Weather System Contracts.

Automated Weather Observation Systems (AWOS)

1. South Haven Area Regional Airport, South Haven (LWA)
2. Brooks Field, Marshall (RMY)
3. Presque Isle County Airport, Rogers City (PZQ)
4. Tuscola Area Airport, Caro (CFS)
5. Cheboygan County Airport, Cheboygan (SLH)
6. Oakland/Troy Airport, Troy (VLL)
7. Mackinac Island Airport, Mackinac Island (MCD)
8. Toledo Suburban Airport, Lambertville (DUH)
9. Beaver Island Airport, Beaver Island (SJX)
10. Drummond Island Airport, Drummond Island (DRM)

Mike Soper discussed the importance of weather in aviation; how AWOS assists many with weather predictions, not just for 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.

Chair Smith asked for a motion to approve the Weather Systems Contracts as presented. The motion was moved by Commissioner Kelly Burris and seconded



by Commissioner Rick Fiddler to approve the contracts as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Smith announced the motion is carried.**

E. 2024 Michigan Association of Airport Executives (MAAE) Contract Approval

Chair Smith called on Director Mike Trout who presented the 2024 MAAE Contract request. The total amount requested is not to exceed \$45,500.

Commissioner Burris asked if the amount was the same as last year. Director Trout answered it was slightly less than last year. Commissioner Carter asked if all monies were spent last year. Director Trout answered yes. Chair Smith asked for a motion to approve the 2024 MAAE Contract as presented. The motion was moved by Commissioner Ben Carter and seconded by Commissioner Bryan Teff to approve the contract as presented. **All voted in favor. Chair Smith announced the motion is carried.**

V. DIRECTORS REPORT

A. MAC Director's Report

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

Director Trout began by thanking all those in attendance in Detroit and via Teams. He thanked Coleman A. Young International Airport for hosting, noting the community benefits and economic impact the airport provides the community.

Director Trout reviewed the MAC Goals and Priorities:

- Preserve a critical airport infrastructure including pavements and navigation aids.
- 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 issues.

Director Trout gave a federal legislative update noting Michael Whitaker was named as FAA Administrator and the State Block Grant Program Memorandum of Agreement is close to being signed. He also noted Senate Bill 22 passed clarifying the prohibition of weapons in a sterile airport area. He continued with a state legislative update discussing the Aero Code Revisions being reintroduced this year. Bills to incentivize production and use of SAF and creating tax exemptions for aircraft parts and aircraft purchases are also expected to be introduced.

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 help air service airports address the loss and decline of commercial air service to Michigan communities. The program timeline has an expected Call for



Project in December 2023, pre-applications due to MDOT Aero in February 2023, and final applications due in June 2024.

Director Trout also offered further details on the State/Local Program developed to help non-air service airports address unfunded airport maintenance, preventive maintenance, and capital needs. The program timeline has an expected Call for Projects in January 2023 with applications due in March 2024.

Director Trout highlighted fiscal year (FY) 2023 funding and grant totals for Aero. 50 grants totaling \$220,730,975 in federal funding and \$4,864,803 in Aero State Match were awarded. He also noted the following amounts of Covid relief funding remaining – CARES 10.7%, CRRSA 4.2% and ARPA 61%.

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

Director Trout updated on PFAS efforts ongoing throughout the state including continued support to airports, monitoring of the national situation, and updates on grant status and testing.

Director Trout discussed current uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) and advanced air mobility (AAM) initiatives including the release of the UAS Corridor Feasibility Study report which can be found at www.michigan.gov/aero. He noted the creation of the MDOT UAS Workgroup which brings together drone operators from a variety of areas across MDOT to collaborate on future use cases and operation efficiencies. He also discussed the launch of the Advanced Aerial Innovation Region, in partnership with Michigan Central, to accelerate commercial drone development, attract start ups catalyzing new high skill jobs and to advance policy and adoption of drone technology.

Director Trout shared year end stats on various Aero programs, noting the MAC transferred \$237,934,576 in funding to Michigan airports last fiscal year.

Grosse Ile Airport (ONZ) was highlighted by Director Trout for their Reconstruct Taxiway A East Project. The project amount was \$5,520,825 and was completed by contractor Anglin Civil, LLC. Paul Nicastrì is the Aero Project Manager and C & S is the Consultant on the project. The construction crew overcame tornado season, a crusher refusing to make material and MDOT's fiscal year end to accomplish this project.

Director Trout announced Colonel James F. Grady II was named Director, Michigan State Police and Suzanne Schulz was appointed to the State Transportation Commission. He also noted the NASAO Regional Directors and Executive Committee for 2023-2024.



Director Trout discussed recent good news items including stories on [Detroit's Tuskegee Airmen Flight Academy](#), [The Most and Least Satisfying Airports in North America](#), and [Service Puppies Earn Training Wings at DTW](#). 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 gave a special reminder about the [NASAO 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 by wishing everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving holiday.

VI. AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Chair Smith called on past-Chair Burris to present the MAC Awards of Excellence. Past-Chair Burris stated "In 1990, the MAC began a tradition to recognize individuals and organizations each year whose innovative contributions have led to significant improvements to facilities, operations, or public relations that support aviation in Michigan. Since that time, many groups and/or individuals throughout Michigan have been recognized by the MAC for their significant commitment to aviation and their extraordinary efforts, with the MAC Excellence Awards."

Individual Award

Past Chair Burris stated she was proud to announce the 2023 MAC Excellence Award winner in the individual category is Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan. She read from the award, "For recognition of your outstanding contribution to the state of Michigan as the Mayor of the City of Detroit and the valuable leadership you have provided to ensure the safety, viability, and long-term stability of the Coleman A. Young International Airport. Your dedication to ensure the airport remains a vital element of the Michigan Aviation System has had a significant economic impact in Detroit and will promote continued revitalization of the area and attract economic investment well into the future. You have been a leader and strong partner in the aviation community with your firm business approach, positively benefiting both the Coleman A. Young International Airport and the aviation industry in Michigan as whole. On behalf of the Michigan Aeronautics Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation Office of Aeronautics, it is a privilege and honor to present you with this fitting award of excellence." Past-Chair Burris offered her congratulations and invited Mayor Duggan to say a few words. Mayor Duggan gratefully accepted the award noting it was an honor to be recognized.

Organization Award

Past-Chair Burris announced the 2023 MAC Excellence Award winner for an organization is the Tuskegee Airmen National Museum. She read from the award, "For recognition of your outstanding contribution to Michigan aeronautics through your continuous support of aviation education and workforce development. Creating a



pipeline for underrepresented youth to explore future career options with the Aviation Career Education (ACE) Academy and allowing new generations to experience flight with the Young Eagles, are just two of many examples of excellence the Tuskegee Airmen National Museum provide. The Michigan Aeronautics Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation Office of Aeronautics commend your organization and are honored to present you with this award.” Pas-Chair Burris offered her congratulations and invited Dr. Brian Smith to say a few words on behalf of the Tuskegee Museum. Dr. Smith gratefully accepted the award giving thanks to the many people who contribute to the organization’s success.

Special Award

Past-Chair Burris announced a special award was being given to the Aviator Cookie Company in recognition of their treats provided to the Commission meetings, and their unique contribution to aviation in Michigan. Representatives from Aviator Cookie were not in attendance, but Sarah Pagano, Midland Airport Manager, accepted on their behalf.

VII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Chair Smith asked if any Commissioners would like to make comments.

Vice Chair Ben Carter commented on the record crowd in attendance. He thanked past-Chair Kelly Burris for her leadership and stated he was looking forward to his role as vice chair. He thanked Mayor Duggan for this attendance and congratulated him on the award of excellence. He also thanked everyone in attendance and especially the students promoting youth in aviation.

Commissioner Kelly Burris noted Operation Good Cheer was coming up next week and thanked the airports and pilots who contributed to such a worthy cause.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Smith asked if anyone would like to make a public comment.

Beverly Kindle-Walker, a member of the Blue Coats Detroit Chapter Tuskegee Airmen and Friends of Detroit City Airport, thanked Mayor Duggan for his attendance and support. She noted she feels encouraged at the changes taking place and wants to continue the legacy. She emphasized the need for youth advocates for aviation industries including mechanics and drone operations. She also noted the importance of the Detroit Women in Aviation chapter.

The Dean of Wayne State University offered his congratulations and thanked the Tuskegee Aviation Program for their partnership and support.

IX. CLOSING

The next MAC meeting is scheduled for 9:00am on Thursday, January 25, 2024, at the Office of Aeronautics in Lansing, Michigan.



Chair Smith 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 11:25 a.m.



Brian Smith, Chair



Michael G. Trout, Director

