MISSOULA COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY
Regular Board Meeting
September 30, 2025
1:30 pm, Johnson Bell Conference Room

THOSE PRESENT

BOARD:	Chair Deb Poteet
	Vice Chair Pat Boyle
	Secretary/Treasurer Adriane Beck
	Commissioner Winton Kemmis
	Commissioner Matthew Doucette (via Teams)
	Commissioner David Bell
	Commissioner Andrew Hagemeier
	Alternate Commissioner Shane Stack (via Teams)
	Alternate Commissioner Jack Meyer (via Teams)
STAFF:	Director Brian Ellestad
	Deputy Director Tim Damrow
	Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell
	Legal Counsel Juniper Davis (via Teams)
	Business Development Manager Dan Neuman
	Public Safety Chief Justin Shaffer
	Director of Maintenance Nate Cole
	Ground Handling Manager Andrew Bailey
	Federal Compliance Manager Jesse Johnson
	Evan Eshleman, Public Safey Officer
	IT Manager Dylan O'Leary
	Accounting Clerk Brianna Brewer
	Administrative Assistant Kathi Fritz
OTHERS:	Gary Matson, Runway 25 Hangars
	Judy Matson, Runway 25 Hangars
	Cole Jensen, Martel Construction
	Sarah Michaelson, Morrison-Maierle
	Scott Bell, Morrison-Maierle
	Kenden Campbell, Blackfoot Aviation

Chair Deb Poteet called the meeting to order and advised everyone that the meeting was being recorded.

Deputy Director Tim Damrow performed a roll call of Board members, staff members, and members of the public.

SEATING OF ALTERNATE COMMISSIONER
Chair Deb Poteet noted that Alternate Commissioners needed to be seated.

Motion: Vice Chair Pat Boyle moved to seat Alternate Commissioner Shane Stack as regular Commissioner for the duration of the meeting.
Second: Commissioner Winton Kemmis

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

AGENDA

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There were none.

Motion: Commissioner Winton Kemmis moved to approve the agenda.

Second: Secretary Adriane Beck

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there was any public comment on items not on the Board's agenda. Nate Cole read an email that was received by a member of the public, Meghan Maloney, which stated:

> "Essentially locals are dealing with increased noise pollution and concerned about this becoming more of an issue with the airport expansion. Those of us stuck along the flight path would like to see a curfew and/or appropriate noise reducing measures taken so the late night commercial flights don't keep us up. In particular, the commercial flights landing after 11pm have become very disruptive. A curfew of some sort, such as airports like San Diego have taken, would be welcomed and reasonable to protect locals' quality of life who work hard to serve our community. I appreciate your time and help with this."

Airport Director Brian Ellestad acknowledged that the airport is growing and has increased numbers of flights and larger planes. Brian also mentioned that airplanes have gotten quieter over time. He also mentioned that San Diego's curfew was put in place during the 1970s before a federal law was put in place that effectively prohibits new curfews. He also provided context by describing that the early morning and late night flights are currently necessary for the Missoula market so that travelers can make connections in hub airports to get to their final destinations.

MINUTES

Chair Deb Poteet asked if anyone had questions, edits, or public comments regarding the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting dated August 26, 2025. There were none.

Motion: Vice Chair Pat Boyle moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting dated August 26, 2025.

Second: Commissioner Winton Kemmis

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell presented the Claims for Payment. Starting with project expenses, during the month of July 2025, the airport incurred approximately $3 million in project expenses; of the $3 million in project expenses approximately $2.4 million was submitted to the FAA for reimbursement. The remaining project expenses will be paid with reserves and/or debt.

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any Board questions or public comments regarding the Claims for Payment. There were no questions or comments.

Motion: Commissioner Winton Kemis moved to approve the Claims for Payment

Second: Vice Chair Pat Boyle

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

FINANCIAL REPORT

Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell presented the Financial Report for the month of August, 2025, which is included in the Board packet.

Will explained that the parking revenue presented in the Financial Report is presented on a gross basis and the budget revenue for the same line item is presented on the net basis, which makes parking revenue difficult to understand. This will be fixed in future months to avoid confusion.

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any Board questions or public comments regarding the Financial Report. There were no questions or comments.

Motion: Secretary/Treasurer Adriane Beck moved to approve the Financial Report

Second: Commissioner David Bell

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Airport Director Brian Ellestad presented his report to the Board. Brian reported on August's performance, which marked the 16th consecutive month of record-breaking growth, showing a 2.2% increase. Shortly after, the FAA released its FY24 data, resulting in the airport's reclassification as a small hub. This change is favorable for funding opportunities but also requires a 5% local match. The timing of the completed runway project was fortunate, especially with the possibility of a federal government shutdown approaching at midnight.

Discussion followed regarding the implications of the shutdown. TSA staff are expected to continue working without pay until appropriations are restored. However, it was confirmed that the airport's contract tower will still receive payment, unlike FAA-operated towers.

During the runway closure, staff remained highly productive. Public safety teams conducted extensive training, and facilities staff performed deep cleaning and maintenance throughout the terminal. The checkpoint area was refreshed, and new signage was installed to improve passenger navigation.

Brian extended thanks to Gary and Judy Matson for organizing the General Aviation BBQ event, which they manage annually with dedication. Their efforts were recognized as central to the event's success.

Deputy Director Tim Damrow provided photos and updates on the progress of the terminal expansion and the runway rehabilitation project. Tim extended thanks to Morison-Maierle, Schellinger and airport staff for their hard work on the runway project. Tim also showed a video of the runway project which is available on request.

<u>LEGAL REPORT</u>

Legal Counsel Juniper Davis informed the board that the lease agreement for the shop space on Aviation Way with Avis Budget is on hold as an environmental site assessment is completed. Also, the Airport will be releasing an RFP for solid waste disposal and recycling in the upkeeping few weeks.

Juniper moved on to an update on land use planning and development adjacent to the Airport. Juniper reminded the Board that over the past year, the City has been working on a long-range growth policy update with a 20-year horizon. The Airport had submitted comments on the plan, expressing concern about proposed high-density residential development immediately east of airport property. From both the Airport and FAA's perspective, residential uses—especially high-density—are considered incompatible with airport operations due to noise and safety risks. The airport advocated for commercial, industrial, open space, or park uses in these areas instead.

Following the comment letter, a meeting was held with City officials in January to discuss the Airport's concerns. The City expressed interest in learning more and committed to ongoing collaboration. In a recent follow-up meeting, the City presented proposed amendments to the land use plan. These included reducing residential density near the airport and clustering development away from areas of concern, along with increased emphasis on parks and open space. While the airport appreciated the City's responsiveness, the proposed densities remain higher than in past plans, and staff are currently evaluating next steps.

The City is expected to release its zoning proposals imminently, with subdivision regulations to follow in November. Adoption of both is anticipated in December. The Airport may hold additional meetings and submit further comments to ensure its concerns—particularly regarding safety and health impacts—are clearly communicated to both the city and the public.

Additionally, the airport is monitoring a proposed subdivision called Paisley Park, located southeast of Airport property and within the flight path of a potential future second runway. The subdivision features high-density residential development, which raises similar concerns. A comment letter was submitted, and while no major changes resulted, further engagement may occur.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Chair Deb Poteet notified the Board that there was an Executive Committee meeting on September 30, 2025, to discuss the Board agenda and packet.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Notice of Postponement of Intent to Adopt Updates to Primary Guidance Documents

Deputy Director Tim Damrow explained that the Primary Guiding Documents have been in development for a number of years, and that staff want the opportunity to look back through the draft one last time before formal adoption. The document will likely be approved in November or December, and public notice of the new draft will be available for review beforehand.

NEW BUSINESS

Aviation Operator and Lessee Application, Blackfoot Aviation of Montana

Business Development Manager Dan Neuman presented to the Board an application from Blackfoot Aviation of Montana to operate as an aviation service provider at the Airport. Dan explained that Blackfoot Aviation is in the process of purchasing a hangar within the LZ condo complex, currently occupied by Ace Aviation. The company intends to continue offering aircraft maintenance services from that location. These services fall under Federal Aviation Regulation Part 91, which governs general aviation maintenance such as annual inspections, 100-hour inspections, static system checks, transponder inspections, and emergency locator transmitter inspections. The operation does not include Part 145 maintenance, which involves more comprehensive work and requires larger facilities, more staff, and greater federal oversight.

Under the airport's current minimum standards for commercial operators, Blackfoot Aviation qualifies as a Specialized Aviation Service Operator (SASO), which typically provides a limited scope of aviation services rather than the full range offered by a Fixed Base Operator (FBO). The existing standards do not distinguish between Part 91 and Part 145 maintenance operations.

Blackfoot Aviation is requesting a variance from the minimum standards in three areas: hangar size, Part 145 designation, and operational hours. These variances are sought due to the narrower scope and more limited nature of their business model.

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any Board questions or public comments regarding the Operator and Lessee application. I question was asked to provide an example of Part 91 versus Part 145 maintenance functions. Kendon Campbell from Blackfoot Aviation explained that Part 145 would be more along the lines of rebuilding structural damage to an Aircraft. Also, that Part 145 requires more FAA oversight, certification and documentation.

> Motion: Commissioner Winton Kemmis moved to approve the application and variance requests for Blackfoot Aviation of Montana as presented
>
> Second: Commissioner Andrew Hagemeier
>
> Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

<u>Deicing Agreement with Allegiant Air</u>

Ground Handling Manager Andrew Bailey explained the request to approve the contract for the Airport to handle deicing services for Allegiant during the 2025–2026 deicing season. This is part of an annual amendment to the general service terms agreement, which Allegiant initiates each year. There are no changes to pricing from the previous season.

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the deicing agreement with Allegiant Air. Clarification was provided regarding the types of deicing fluid.

> Motion: Vice Chair Pat Boyle moved to approve the Airport Services General Terms Agreement with Allegiant Air
>
> Second: Secretary/Treasurer Adriane Beck
>
> Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

<u>Public Safety Department Vehicle Purchase</u>

Public Safety Chief Justin Shaffer explained the request to approve the purchase of a new patrol vehicle to replace a 2016 Chevrolet Silverado that has reached the end of its service life. The vehicle serves as a mobile office for officers and is used around the clock for both operations and police duties. The replacement vehicle—a 2025 Ford F-150—was included in the FY26 Capital Improvement Budget. The purchase will be made through the National Auto Fleet Group.

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the vehicle purchase. There were no additional questions or comments.

> Motion: Commissioner Winton Kemmis moved to approve the purchase of a police responder and related equipment in an amount not to exceed $70,000
>
> Second: Commissioner Andrew Hagemeier
>
> Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

Purchase of Public Safety Department Body and Vehicle Cameras

Deputy Director Tim Damrow an update regarding the Public Safety Department's body-worn and vehicle camera systems. Last year, the board approved the purchase of Axon cameras for two officers as a pilot program to run alongside the department's existing Motorola system. The Axon system offers integration with other Axon equipment, and features direct cloud-based video upload, which has proven beneficial.

Over the past year, the department has evaluated the performance of the Axon system and now recommends transitioning the remainder of the department to Axon cameras. This recommendation is also driven by the need for critical security updates to the Motorola system, including Windows licensing, which would require a significant investment in new equipment if the department were to maintain the current system.

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the purchase of public safety cameras. Tim clarified that the two cameras bought last year will integrate with this system.

> Motion: Vice Chair Pat Boyle moved to approve the purchase of additional Axon cameras not to exceed the amount of $57,662.75
>
> Second: Secretary/Treasurer Adriane Beck
>
> Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) Fire Trainer

Public Safety Chief Justin Schaffer explained the request for approval for a contract with 139 Fire to rent an aircraft rescue and firefighting (ARFF) training prop in May. This mobile training unit will support the department's annual recertification requirements and fulfill FAA mandates for a full-scale disaster drill, which must be conducted every three years.

Historically, firefighters have traveled to Dallas, Texas for recertification, but in recent years the department has opted to bring the training prop on-site. This will be the third time the prop has been used locally, allowing for a full week of hands-on training. The prop comes with an instructor who facilitates live fire exercises and supports the disaster drill on the final day.

Mutual aid partners are invited to participate throughout the week, gaining experience with ARFF equipment and procedures in a realistic training environment. The full-scale drill has grown in scope and participation each year, with involvement from all relevant emergency response organizations. The most recent drill emphasized family reunification protocols, and board members have previously taken part.

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the fire trainer. There were no additional questions or comments.

> Motion: Commissioner Winton Kemmis moved to accept the quote from 139 Fire to lease an Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting Fire Trainer in the amount of $25,595
>
> Second: Vice Chair Pat Boyle
>
> Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

<u>CLOSED SESSION: Airport Director Annual Evaluation</u>

Chair Deb Poteet stated that the meeting is being closed to the public because it relates to a matter of individual privacy – specifically the Airport Director's performance. The meeting was then closed to the public.

Chair Deb Poteet re-opened the meeting to the public.

<u>Airport Director Compensation</u>

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there was any Board discussion or public comments regarding the Airport Director's compensation. There was no additional discussion or comments.

> Motion: Vice Chair Pat Boyle moved to increase the Airport Director's base wage 3%, effective September 29, 2025

Second: Secretary/Treasurer Adriane Beck

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

Chair Deb Poteet noted that the next Board meeting will be held on October 28, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned.