

MISSOULA COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY
Regular Board Meeting
October 28, 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
Commissioner Andrew Hagemer
Alternate Commissioner Shane Stack (via Teams)
Alternate Commissioner Jack Meyer

STAFF:

Director Brian Ellestad
Deputy Director Tim Damrow
Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell
Legal Counsel Juniper Davis
Business Development Manager Dan Neuman
Director of Maintenance Nate Cole
Maintenance Supervisor Jake Sol
HR Manager Nikki Munro
Federal Compliance Manager Jesse Johnson
IT Manager Dylan O'Leary
Administrative Assistant Kathi Fritz

OTHERS:

Gary Matson, Runway 25 Hangars
Shaun Shea, Morrison & Maierle
Sarah Michaelson, Morrison & Maierle
Kevin Heisler (via Teams)
Richard Huffman (via Teams)

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

Legal Counsel Juniper Davis performed a roll call of Board members, staff members, and members of the public.

AGENDA

Chair Deb Poteet noted that one Alternate Commissioner needed to be seated.

Motion: Vice Chair Pat Boyle moved to seat Alternate Commissioner Jack Meyer as regular Commissioner for the duration of the meeting.

Second: Commissioner Winton Kemmis

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

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

Motion: Secretary Adriane Beck moved to approve the agenda.

Second: Alternate Commissioner Jack Meyer

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. There was no public comment.

MINUTES

Chair Deb Poteet asked if anyone had questions, edits, or public comments regarding the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting dated September 30, 2025. There were none.

Motion: Commissioner Winton Kemmis moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting dated September 30, 2025.

Second: Commissioner Andrew Hagemeyer

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell presented the Claims for Payment. Starting with project expenses, Will reported that September project expenses totaled \$12.8 million. The project expenses were primarily related to runway rehabilitation, for which 88% was incurred in one week. Approximately 3% was submitted to FAA for reimbursement with the remainder funded by reserves and 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: Vice Chair Pat Boyle moved to approve the Claims for Payment

Second: Alternate Commissioner Jack Meyer

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

FINANCIAL REPORT

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

Will informed the Board that the FY2025 audit nearing completion. Currently the Airport is awaiting OPEB report before draft issuance of the audit.

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

Motion: Commissioner Winton Kemmis moved to approve the Financial Report

Second: Alternate Commissioner Jack Meyer

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Brian Ellestad provided several operational updates to the Board. Brian reported that September enplanements decreased by 16.4% compared to September 2024, largely due to the runway closure that canceled nearly a week of flights. While this ended a 19-month streak of record growth, the decline was considered reasonable under the circumstances. Nationally, September traffic increased only 0.9% year-over-year. Looking ahead, October is expected to remain flat, with growth anticipated in November and December. Alaska Airlines will upgrade its overnight Seattle service beginning Sunday, with three total departures. Portland service will remain at two flights through year-end before reducing to one daily flight for the winter. Brian noted that overnight mainline aircraft operations have begun, and American Airlines' Dallas service will shift to an early morning departure starting November 2. Sun Country Airlines has reloaded its summer schedule for Missoula, offering flights to Minneapolis on Wednesdays and Saturdays from June 17 through August 22, starting two weeks earlier than last year.

In response to the federal government shutdown, the airport has been providing meals to TSA staff, with Faber & Co. now matching those efforts.

Ellestad thanked staff for their efforts during the recent runway closure, emphasizing the successful completion of grooving work, which required overnight monitoring six days a week. He praised the contractor and crews for quality work that positions the airport well for continued operations.

Additionally, installation of a second advanced imaging technology machine at the security checkpoint is scheduled for the week of December 8, which will improve passenger throughput.

Brian reported that negotiations have begun with union groups representing public safety, building, and airfield staff, as current agreements are nearing expiration. New contracts are expected in early 2026.

Finally, terminal construction is progressing, with completion of first-floor bathrooms anticipated before Christmas. This will mark the final phase of the terminal expansion project.

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any Board questions or public comments for Brian or Tim. There were no questions or comments.

LEGAL REPORT

Legal Counsel Juniper Davis reported that approval of the Primary Guiding Documents, previously postponed, remains on track for later in the year. Staff have continued refining the draft and expect to present a revised version to the Board in November, with formal approval anticipated in December to allow adequate time for review and comment. Juniper noted that this timeline could shift but is the current goal.

Juniper informed the Board that Commissioner David Bell has resigned from the Board due to his work travel obligations which have made it difficult for him to participate. Beginning on November 3, 2025, members of the public may submit applications for two open Board positions with terms beginning January 1, 2026.

The Airport released an RFP for Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Services which will close November 10, 2025.

Juniper also updated the Board on outreach efforts regarding the City's Land Use Plan and Unified Development Code. Since the last meeting, staff met with three City Council members to discuss concerns and potential counter proposals. Additional meetings are planned with the Mayor following the election and with the chair of the Land Use and Planning Committee. Staff may also prepare a new letter and participate in public meetings as the City moves toward approving these materials in November and December. Juniper emphasized that time is critical and staff are working diligently to communicate the Airport's position broadly and effectively.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Chair Deb Poteet notified the Board that there was an Executive Committee meeting on October 28, to discuss the Board agenda and packet.

NEW BUSINESS

Design Task Orders to the Master Agreement for Professional Engineering Services with Morrison-Maierle

Airport Director Brian Ellestad presented two task orders for the professional engineering work for upcoming airfield projects. Task Order #73 involves engineering services for converting Runway 8/26 into a taxiway, requiring significant electrical work, signage changes, and other modifications. The design and preparation work, estimated at \$325,000, will be funded in the current fiscal year, with construction projected to cost between \$2.5 - \$2.8 million next year.

Task Order #72 addresses the engineering services for design of a future parallel runway project anticipated for FY2027. While initial estimates were around \$18 million, Brian cautioned that actual costs could reach \$40–50 million due to infrastructure needs and heavier aircraft usage. The design work now will position the Airport to pursue discretionary FAA funding and potentially complete the project in a single phase rather than spreading it over multiple years.

Shaun Shea provided technical details regarding the taxiway project scope. Shaun also explained that while initial estimates were around \$18 million for the parallel runway, he cautioned that actual costs could reach \$40–50 million.

Chair Deb Poteet asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the task orders.

Motion: Alternate Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to approve Morrison-Maierle Task Order No. 72 in the amount of \$800,000.00 and Task Order No. 73 in the amount of \$325,000 both contingent on Independent Fee Estimates being completed.

Second: Secretary/Treasurer Adriane Beck

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

Missoula County Airport Authority 414(h) Plan Amendment

Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell explained that the Airport Authority offers several retirement and savings options for eligible staff, including Montana PERS defined benefit and defined contribution plans, as well as a 457 plan. The proposed amendment focuses on the 414-H plan, which currently requires employees to defer 4% of eligible compensation with an 8% employer match. Under the existing plan, participants cannot roll over funds to Montana PERS for purchasing service credits.

The amendment would allow such rollovers specifically for that purpose, providing staff greater flexibility in managing retirement benefits.

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

Motion: Commissioner Winton Kemmis moved to authorize the Airport Director to sign the 414(h) Plan amendment.

Second: Commissioner Andrew Hagemeyer

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

East Property Line Fence Extension

Maintenance Supervisor Jake Sol requested approval from the Board to continue property line fencing on the east side of the airport to limit access as new subdivisions are developed. In 2022, fencing began on the southeast corner, and the current project will add approximately 2,850 feet of six-foot chain link fencing, based on the most competitive bid from FenceCrafters. This work will leave about 3,500 feet to complete in future years. The project cost is \$50,000, which is fully budgeted.

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

Motion: Vice Chair Pat Boyle moved to approve the purchase and installation of fencing on the east side of airport property by FenceCrafters in the amount not to exceed \$50,000

Second: Alternate Commissioner Jack Meyer

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

Chair Deb Poteet noted that the next Board meeting will be held on November 25, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned.