

MISSOULA COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY  
Regular Board Meeting  
March 31, 2026  
1:30 pm, Johnson Bell Conference Room

THOSE PRESENT

BOARD: Vice Chair Adriane Beck  
Secretary/Treasurer Shane Stack (via Teams)  
Commissioner Matt Doucette (via Teams)  
Commissioner Jack Meyer  
Alternate Commissioner Richard Huffman  
Alternate Commissioner Chay Hughes

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  
Field Maintenance Supervisor Jake Sol  
HR Manager Nikki Munro  
Federal Compliance Manager Jesse Johnson  
IT Manager Dylan O'Leary  
Staff Accountant Brianna Brewer

OTHERS: Gary Matson, Runway 25 Hangars  
Shaun Shea, Morrison & Maierle  
Sarah Michaelson, Morrison & Maierle  
Cole Jensen, Martel Construction (via Teams)

Vice Chair Adriane Beck 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

Vice Chair Adriane Beck noted that one Alternate Commissioner needed to be seated.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to seat Alternate Commissioners Richard Huffman and Chay Hughes as regular Commissioner for the duration of the meeting.

Second: Commissioner Shane Stack

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any changes to the agenda and noted that there are three grant approvals associated with the AIP Grant Approval Action Item. There were none.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to approve the agenda.

Second: Commissioner Matt Doucette

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

#### PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there was any public comment on items not on the Board's agenda. There was no public comment.

#### MINUTES

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if anyone had questions, edits, or public comments regarding the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting dated February 24, 2026. There were none.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting dated February 24, 2026.

Second: Alternate Commissioner Richard Huffman

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

#### CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell presented the Claims for Payment for February 2026. Starting with project expenses, the airport incurred approximately \$658,000 in project expenses. Of that amount, approximately \$613,000, or 93% of total project expenses, was or will be submitted to the FAA for reimbursement. The remaining project expenses will be paid with reserves and debt. Will also provided a summary of the general checking account notable non-recurring or significant payables during the period.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any Board questions or public comments regarding the Claims for Payment. There were no questions or comments.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to approve the Claims for Payment

Second: Commissioner Matt Doucette

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell presented the February 2026 financial report narrative, which included a breakdown of accounts receivable on the balance sheet with aging percentages, budget information, long-term debt activity, and a construction and progress roll-forward for the East Concourse project.

He also provided a procurement update noting that airport-owned equipment at the air traffic control tower is approaching the end of its useful life, and that a local Federal Aviation Administration technician recently advised staff that a server replacement is needed. The replacement and installation cost may exceed \$10,000 and was not budgeted for fiscal year 2026; therefore, staff are considering an emergency procurement. If utilized, the procurement will be reported to the Board at a future meeting. The airport continues to monitor tower equipment inventories, budget accordingly, and pursue tower-specific federal funding opportunities to support modernization efforts.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any Board questions or public comments regarding the Financial Report. There were none.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to approve the Financial Report

Second: Alternate Commissioner Chay Hughes

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Airport Director Brian Ellestad reported that February activity was up approximately 8% year over year, with continued strong performance anticipated for March and April. He noted some uncertainty for the remainder of the summer related to national factors such as potential TSA shutdown impacts, geopolitical tensions, fuel prices, and

airlines' discussions of targeted schedule reductions; however, no service reductions have been proposed for Missoula at this time.

Brian also shared an update on TSA, noting strong community support and outreach efforts that resulted in approximately \$10,000–\$12,000 in donated gift cards and other contributions.

He reported that airport leadership attended a Destination Missoula awards ceremony, where the airport was unexpectedly recognized with the Jay Award, an explanation of which was included in the board packet. Brian acknowledged recent advocacy work tied to the airport's American Airlines grant, including travel to Washington, D.C. and meetings with Montana's congressional delegation.

Brian also noted new Destination Missoula and Glacier Country promotional displays being installed in the terminal near the new restrooms and rental car area. He concluded by noting that upcoming budget development will be a primary focus in the coming months.

#### LEGAL UPDATE

Legal Counsel Juniper Davis reported that the recent RFP to lease the former Visitor Information Center space adjacent to ticketing received no responses, and staff will now explore alternative options to repurpose the area.

Juniper noted that staff anticipate issuing a Request for Qualifications for planning and engineering services in the near term, as well as a separate solicitation related to potential hangar development on the east side of the airport.

With respect to lease activity, she reiterated that the Kembel Stevens hangar is still expected to pursue a 10-year optional renewal, though it was not scheduled for action at this meeting. She also noted that an addendum to the Lyft agreement is included on this month's agenda, with a similar addendum for Uber anticipated at a future meeting.

Juniper introduced a developing issue involving the U.S. Forest Service related to airport-owned property adjacent to Forest Service land containing former sewage lagoons. She explained that the Forest Service has requested to repurpose the lagoons for wash-water detention associated with fire-retardant cleanup activities. Staff are reviewing the request in light of existing easements, long-term ownership considerations, and potential liability exposure, and are exploring partnership structures that would protect the airport while addressing the Forest Service's operational needs.

Finally, Juniper provided an update on ongoing coordination with Minuteman regarding construction of a new maintenance hangar on the west side of the airport and deconstruction of the existing hangar on the east side. She noted that staff are actively reviewing preliminary plans against airport development guidelines and have been meeting regularly with Minuteman to resolve outstanding questions. Juniper stated that staff's goal is to bring a complete development package to the Board at the next meeting, including any requested variances and accompanying staff recommendations, to support timely decision-making and project certainty.

### COMMITTEE UPDATES

Vice Chair Adriane Beck notified the Board that there was an Executive Committee meeting on March 31 to discuss the Board agenda and packet.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Notice of Intent to Adopt Updates to Primary Guidance Documents (no action required)

Deputy Director Tim Damrow provided an update on the airport's primary guiding documents, a multi-year effort that has been underway for approximately six to seven years. He noted that a Notice of Intent was previously brought forward last fall, but additional review resulted in further refinement to the documents.

Tim explained that the primary guiding documents are intended to consolidate and clarify the airport's standards related to development, minimum operating requirements, and others. Recent updates to the minimum standards focus on improving consistency across commercial operators, including business requirements and lease size standards, with the goal of aligning airport expectations with those commonly accepted at peer airports.

The revised documents are currently available on the airport's website for public review and comment, and staff anticipate bringing them forward for Board consideration and approval at the next meeting.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any Board questions or public comments. There were no questions or comments.

### NEW BUSINESS

Grass Valley Farms Lease Addendum

Director of Maintenance Nate Cole presented a lease addendum for Grass Valley Farms. He explained that Grass Valley Farms has leased approximately 850 acres of airport-owned land for several years. Portions of the property were previously irrigated or planted in alfalfa, but those areas have since reverted and are no longer suitable for crop production. After review with staff and the lessee, the land was reclassified as grazing rather than cropland, and the lease rate was adjusted accordingly. The proposed revised lease rate would generate approximately \$19,000 annually.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the lease addendum. There were no questions or comments.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to approve the addendum to the agricultural lease with Grass Valley Farms LLC, for \$23.25 per acre and authorize Airport Director to execute the lease.

Second: Alternative Commissioner Chay Hughes

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

#### Lease Agreement with TJ Gardner Company

Director of Maintenance Nate Cole presented a proposed lease agreement with TJ Gardner Company. He explained that TJ Gardner recently acquired Pavlic Electric and is seeking to continue use of a portion of airport property that Pavlic Electric has historically leased while working on airport projects. The area is a fenced and secure site used for staging equipment and supplies, located near Whippoorwill Drive, and encompasses approximately 27,000 square feet. The proposed lease rate is \$700 per month.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the agreement. There were no questions or comments.

Motion: Alternate Commissioner Richard Huffman moved to award the property lease of approximately 27,000 square feet to TJ Gardner Company for \$700 per month and authorize Airport Director to execute the lease.

Second: Commissioner Matt Doucette

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

## Natural Gas Supply Contract

Director of Maintenance Nate Cole presented a proposed one-year natural gas supply contract with Jefferson Energy Trading LLC. He explained that the airport's previous natural gas provider was acquired by Jefferson Energy, which has supplied service for the past several months. Staff solicited an additional quote from another supplier, but pricing was equivalent, with no discernible advantage to switching providers.

Nate noted that gas usage data is limited due to the recent start-up of the new building and an atypical winter season, making it impractical to lock in volumes or pricing at this time. Staff therefore recommend continuing service with Jefferson Energy Trading for the next year, and reevaluating supply options once more complete usage data is available.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the contract. There were no questions or comments.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to approve a contract with Jefferson Energy Trading L.L.C. for natural gas supply for the term of April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027.

Second: Commissioner Matt Doucette

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

## Lyft Rideshare Agreement Addendum

Director of Finance and Administration Will Parnell presented a proposed addendum to the existing Transportation Network Company (TNC) Agreement with Lyft. He explained that the amendment would increase the per-trip pickup and drop-off fee from \$1.00 to \$2.00. The addendum also formally designates approved pickup and drop-off locations for Lyft drivers on airport property and incorporates the airport's updated ground transportation rules and regulations by reference into the existing agreement.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the agreement. There were no questions or comments.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to approve the Amendment to Agreement between the Missoula County Airport Authority and Lyft, Inc.

Second: Commissioner Matt Doucette

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

#### Authorization to Accept DEQ Grant for Electric Vehicle

Business Development Manager Dan Neuman reported on a proposed authorization to accept a Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) grant for an electric vehicle replacement. The airport has been notified of a \$61,485.31 award through DEQ's Clean Trucks, Buses, and Airport Equipment Program funded by Volkswagen settlement proceeds, which requires a 15% local match. The grant will support replacement of an older bus with a new electric vehicle for property tours, training, emergency drills, and operational travel, and includes funding for related infrastructure. Staff are seeking pre-authorization to accept the grant in order to proceed with vehicle procurement once DEQ finalizes funding.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the DEQ grant. Staff clarified that the vehicle is a large passenger KIA and that no CDL license is needed.

Motion: Alternate Commissioner Richard Huffman moved to pre-authorize the Airport Director to accept upcoming DEQ Clean Truck, Bus & Airport Equipment Program grant in the amount of \$61,485.31.

Second: Commissioner Matt Doucette

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

#### Approval for Airport Director to accept FAA Grants AIP-96 and AIP-97

Airport Director Brian Ellestad requested Board authorization for the Airport Director to accept upcoming Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grants, which will include three separate awards. He explained that the entitlement funding associated with the final year of the current federal authorization is expected to be released soon, and staff are seeking approval in advance so the grants can be executed promptly without the need for a special Board meeting.

Brian noted that one grant relates to the airport's standard Airport Improvement Program (AIP) entitlement, while others are tied to projects including airfield and tower-related improvements. He highlighted the anticipated addition of an automated weather observing system (ASOS) as part of the current application cycle, noting that staff are coordinating with the FAA on siting.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the grant approvals. There were no questions or comments.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to pre-authorize the Airport Director to accept upcoming federal grants as detailed in the Agenda Action Sheet and as presented.

Second: Alternate Commissioner Richard Huffman

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

#### Commitment with Quotient Group for 2028 MSO Roundtable

Airport Director Brian Ellestad requested Board authorization to enter into a future commitment with Quotient Group to host the 2028 MSO Air Service Roundtable. The conference is scheduled for May 2028, within fiscal year 2027, and staff are seeking pre-authorization ahead of the FY27 budget to secure availability. Brian stated that the airport anticipates budgeting approximately \$20,000 for the conference fee and an additional \$20,000 for associated events.

Vice Chair Adriane Beck asked if there were any additional Board questions or public comments regarding the agreement. Brian clarified that previous roundtables have produced measurable air service gains and represent a strong return on investment by bringing airline planners directly to Missoula. The event, hosted by the airport's air service consultant and Quotient Group, typically draws 30–40 airports and approximately eight airlines.

Motion: Commissioner Jack Meyer moved to approve the commitment with Quotient Group for the 2028 MSO Roundtable as presented.

Second: Commissioner Matt Doucette

Vote: Motion Passed Unanimously

Vice Chair Adriane Beck noted that the next Board meeting will be held on April 28, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned.