

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regular meeting of the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport Commission was called to order at 9:30 a.m. in the Airport Conference Room by the Airport Director.

Upon roll call, the following Commission members were noted present: Steve Barrows, Darrel Palmer, Kevin Stunek, Glen Nygard and Kevin Yeager. Also present: Steven Wright, Airport Director, Jessica Ruehling, Executive Assistant, and Michelle Baird, Consulting Engineer Program Manager. Also present according to Minn Statute 13D.021 via video call: Kassy Loftus Deputy Director, Tom Schauer; Mead & Hunt and Paul Strege; Mead & Hunt.

**APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS:**

**A. Chair Nomination:**

Steve Barrows nominated Darrel Palmer for Chair. No further nominations received. All members present voted “aye” in favor of Darrel Palmer for Chair of the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport Commission.

**B. Vice Chair Nomination:**

Motion to postpone Vice Chair nominations until the next meeting.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY STUNEK AND BARROWS TO POSTPONE THE VICE CHAIR NOMINATIONS UNTIL THE NEXT AIRPORT COMMISSION MEETING.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Approved.**

MOVED AND SECONDED BY BARROWS AND STUNEK, DULY CARRIED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED.

**CONSENT CALENDAR – Approved.**

Approval of Minutes for the regular meeting of December 5, 2024, with Financial Report of November 2024, as distributed.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY STUNEK AND YEAGER, DULY CARRIED THAT THE CONSENT CALENDAR BE APPROVED.

**APPROVAL TO PAY BILLS – Approved.**

Bills that were reviewed for more information; AAAE invoices for digi-cast renewal and master consultant ad. Request to review the possibility to change update accounts to reflect the specific project that it references.

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MOVED AND SECONDED BY YEAGER AND BARROWS, DULY CARRIED THAT THE PAYMENT OF ALL BILLS DISTRIBUTED TO THE COMMISSIONERS VIA EMAIL, BE APPROVED.

Upon roll call, all members present voted “aye” to approve to pay the bills emailed to Commissioners prior to the meeting.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

**Introductions and Items Not on Agenda**

Michelle Baird; Mead & Hunt, Andy Loftus; HDR, Dan Sherer; TKDA, Mike Petersen; Hangar Tenant, Will Smith; NorthPoint Aviation, Walter Roberts; Hangar Tenant, Corinne Roberts; Hangar Tenant, James Norwood; ARFF Operations, County Commissioner Paul Koering, & Aaron Hautala; Strateligent.

**REPORTS**

**A. Airport Staff & Marketing/Creative Services**

The Airport Director presented a written and verbal report to the Commission. Chairman Palmer asked how many times it actually snowed in the last month considering the report stated that airport staff responded to multiple snow events. ARFF Operations staff confirmed, since October there have been 3 to 4 events, but one consisting more of freezing rain than snow. Airport metrics confirmed passenger enplanements ended the year just above 2023. NorthPoint Aviation fuel numbers reflecting solid growth for traffic. Wing’s Café continues to reflect positive sales; steady revenue year-round maintaining local business.

Strateligent informed the Commission that with use of the Skywest grant the Google search project will begin again for those that are searching for airline service. Along with Google click, the Facebook remarking campaign begins. A video that educates others about the services and businesses here at the airport will be used, showing the public that there is more to the Brainerd Airport than just flying. Regional radio ads will start again utilizing the local Air Service Grant.

**B. Consulting Engineer**

The Consulting Engineer informed the Airport Commission that Mead & Hunt has been working with staff over the last month to get four close out reports sent over to the FAA & MnDOT for review. There are also two more close out reports in draft form sent over for review. Fence plans and specs are in progress to be sent out to the public for bid by the end of January so that those can be brought back to the Commission table for review at the March Commission meeting. Proposed equipment grants were submitted by the Deputy Director at the end of December. One for a water resupply tank for the ARFF truck and the second for a soil reconditioner for the safety areas to assist in tilling rocks and regrade the areas. Mead & Hunt assists in these grants but doesn’t submit the application.

Motion to have the CIP distributed to the Airport Commission whenever it is updated.

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MOVED AND SECONDED BY YEAGER AND BARROWS FOR STAFF TO DISTRIBUTE THE CIP TO THE AIRPORT COMMISSION WHENEVER IT IS UPDATED.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. 5-Year Master Consultant Selection**

Airport staff recommended that Consultant services be split up between Mead & Hunt and TKDA; a written detailed list was provided to the Commission. Staff supported the selection of Mead & Hunt for all services.

Motion to move forward with all services from Mead & Hunt.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY STUNEK AND NYGARD THAT ALL MASTER-CONSULTANT SERVICES CONTINUE WITH MEAD & HUNT.

**B. Airport Authority Update – Information Only**

A cultivation plan was presented several meetings ago, and the City is still planning to continue with divesting their share of the airport. The Airport Director had a meeting with Matt Killin and Tyler Glen. Both parties should be involved in the airport authority discussions, and they have data that is available to the airport to assist in this process. A study to review the relevancy of an Airport Authority model would cost approximately \$250,000. Discussion about how to pay this expense should the Commission decide that a study would be a good step. The study for St. Cloud Airport Authority came from the economic development area.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Personnel Policy Manual Review/Update**

The airport personnel policy manual was last updated in 2015. Things continue to change and there continues to be an investment in the people. Commissioner Yeager suggests that it would be a good idea to use some of the airport's legal funds and have the personnel policy manual reviewed. Suggestion of a Personnel Finance Committee from the Airport Director with agreement from Commissioner Barrows. City Administration and HR are willing to review the manual and then submit it to legal for a revision.

Motion to proceed with City Administration and City HR to review the Personnel Policy Manual and submit it to legal for revision at up to an expense of not more than \$2,000.00

MOVED AND SECONDED BY STUNEK AND BARROWS DULY CARRIED THAT THE PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL BE REVIEWED BY CITY STAFF AND SUBMITTED TO LEGAL FOR REVISIONS AT AN EXPENSE OF NO MORE THAN \$2,000.00

Upon roll call, all members present voted "aye" to approve the review and revision of the Personnel Policy Manual.

Motion to proceed with the development of a Personnel & Finance Policy Committee to be made up of Crow Wing County Representative, and City Council Representative from the Brainerd

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Lakes Regional Airport Commission.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY BARROWS AND STUNEK THAT A PERSONAL & FINANCE COMMITTEE BE DEVELOPED WITH ONE CROW WING COUNTY REPRESENTATIVE AND ONE CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE.

**B. Hangar Tenant Presentation**

T-Hangar Tenant Walter Roberts provided a presentation to the Airport Commission explaining the importance of airports and how they benefit their community by bringing growth and education. This airport is becoming less fun and is less functional than it once was. In 2008 hangars were well maintained and everything worked; lights worked, doors closed and opened, seals were intact and pebbles on the tarmac were swept. After hangar inspections were completed, tenant Roberts said letters were sent out stating that magnets weren't allowed in the hangars because they would be used to close the doors. Other airports have remote controls to open and close the doors, so why is this a concern when there are other maintenance issues that need attention. Airport staff says that fuel containers are to be metal containers with self-closing lids. Metal containers can vent fumes and can corrode. Other airports allow certain approved plastic containers. Plastic cans do melt, and they do add fuel to the fire, but they don't explode. Tenants are to abide by NFPA fire code. Driving on the ramp is no longer allowed, but that is the only place to wash an aircraft. There are concerns that the Commission isn't hearing the General Aviation community. Tenant Roberts suggested that a Brainerd Regional Airport Tenants group be formed to be informal or formal type of advisory committee and collectively make improvements.

Commissioner Barrows supports the creation of an advisory group with a member from the Airport Commission and discussions can be brought to the regular meetings of the Commission.

The biggest concerns are the fuel cans and the manipulation of the hangar door buttons to open and close the doors.

Airport staff contacted the fire marshal about the rules and regulations about the fuel cans in the hangars. State, OSHA and fire marshal rules are not the same.

A decision was made for airport staff to send out a letter to hangar tenants informing them of interest in starting a Tenant Committee and to reach out if that were something they would like to be a part of.

**NEXT MEETING:**

All Commissioners present indicated that they would be able to attend the next meeting on February 6, 2025.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

MOVED AND SECONDED BY BARROWS AND STUNEK, DULY CARRIED, THAT THE COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING ADJOURN AT 11:39 AM.

Upon roll call, all members present voted "aye" to adjourn.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven A. Wright', written in a cursive style.

Steven A. Wright, A.A.E.  
Airport Director