

BRainerd Lakes Regional Airport
August 7, 2025, Meeting Minutes

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 Commission Chair.

The following Commission members were noted present: Steve Barrows, Neil Bratney; Vice Chair, Darrel Palmer; Chair, Andrew Shipe, and Glen Nygard. Members noted as absent: Kevin Yeager. Also present: Neil Planzer; Interim Director, Jessica Ruehling; Executive Assistant, and Michelle Baird, Consulting Engineer Program Manager.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Approved.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY BARROWS AND NYGARD, DULY CARRIED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED WITH CHANGES.

CONSENT CALENDAR – Approved.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY BARROWS AND NYGARD, DULY CARRIED THAT THE CONSENT CALENDAR BE APPROVED.

APPROVAL TO PAY BILLS – Approved.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY SHIPE 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, Zach Jackson, Mike Petersen; Hangar Tenant, Nick Broyles; City Administrator, Jim Wulf; ARFF/Operations, Aaron Hautala; Strateligent, Walt Roberts; Hangar Tenant, Corinne Roberts; Hangar Tenant; & James Norwood; ARFF/Operations.

REPORTS

A. Airport Staff & Marketing/Creative Services

Mr. Planzer informed the Commission that one of our Operations staff members plans to retire at the end of October 2025. We will be posting for this position soon.
Staff have a couple of meetings coming up in reference to the EAS bid. One with Crow Wing

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County, and one with Congressman Stauber. We will be able to provide the community preference at these meetings. Draft letters will be prepared. All letters will need to be submitted by August 29, 2025. Skywest has provided written communication to provide BRD with the early morning flight. BRD received really strong offers from both Skywest and Denver Air, however, the stronger bid for the community is Skywest. The letters will cover all the reasons why Skywest is the best choice for the community.

Stratigent reviewed the clicks report that was previously provided to the Commission. It was agreed that MnDOT needs to make an EAS selection prior to advertising new ads. BRD will continue communications with Skywest on the schedule change. Stratigent offered to draft new ads but not distribute them and reviewed what those ads would say and who to distribute them to. The goal is to get enplanements back up to pre-covid number first, then work to increase them more.

BRD continues to work with BLADEC on getting ads on the monitors within the terminal.

Longster Project – this is just about complete, Mr. Petersen advised that there is still a need for a blonde wig for the pilot that is in the plane. The aircraft is all balanced and it's known how it will hang. The project took about 5 years to complete. It is about 500-600 lbs. and the airport plans to find someone that is properly equipped to hang it. Mead & Hunt has provided a preliminary report and everything looks well, but a formal one needs to be completed. An agreement will need to be created to document the ownership and responsibilities.

B. Consulting Engineer

Mead & Hunt informed the Commission that the security fence project, phase I, is going well and should be finishing up here within the next couple of weeks. The new pivot gates for #2 and #6 should arrive next week and are planned to be worked on when phase I is complete. During this time, those gates will be out of service and alternate routes for tenants will be provided. The new gates will be connected to the Avigilon system so that tenants will be able to use their badge for airside access. The Federal AIP grants are still pending to be distributed. The Taxilane grant, the Loader and the Erosion Control are all part of this pending grant distribution. The Erosion Control area is getting bad and needs to be repaired this fall. Anderson Brothers was the low bid for this project; they are currently on the suspension list for MnDOT and FAA projects. No contracts are signed at this time. Mead & Hunt asked if we should reach out to DeChantel, the other bidder, or move forward with Anderson Brothers. The Commission agreed to have DeChantel complete the project if they are will to price match Anderson Brothers. The Airport received three offer letters for grants, a fuel management system, a new fuel tank and pavement maintenance.

Motion to move forward with pursuing three grants to include all items, Fuel Management System, Fuel Tank and Pavement maintenance.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY BARROWS AND SHIPE, DULY CARRIED, TO MOVE FORWARD WITH PURSING THREE GRANTS, FUEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, FUEL TANK AND PAVEMENT MAINTENANCE.

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The 2026 Federal grants for AIP and AIG are being sent off to the FAA and MnDOT. The local share for AIP - \$43,000 and the local share for AIG - \$50,000. Mead & Hunt is working with the Executive Assistant on a new PFC application, and it will need to be submitted to the FAA sooner rather than later.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Progress on Airport Director Position - Discussion

Mr. Planzer advised that we need to put together a solid job description. He has met a few times with other MN airport managers, and they advised to advertise on AAAE, NEOGOV and NASAE. This would be a first step versus spending money on a consultant. BRD's ideal candidate will be from the upper mid-west. Someone from Florida likely won't embrace the winter. The ARFF position needs to be posted as well. Working to fill that one needs to happen first. It's suggested to update the title from Airport Director to Airport Manager. The reality is that a director implies a multi-level management position and BRD is one level. The Commission prefers to review the Airport Manager job description prior to posting to the public.

B. Travis Mills Hangar – Discussion

This hangar is privately owned, and the owner is interested in selling. Individuals on the current box hangar waiting list were contacted and not interested. The owner currently has it listed at an asking price of \$699,900.00. Mr. Smith from NorthPoint believes that the land rental rate for where this building sits is also too high. NorthPoint was interested in the purchase, but the price is too high for purchase and land rent. Mr. Planzer advised that there is no action for this from the Commission at this time.

NEXT MEETING:

All Commissioners present indicated that they would be able to attend the next meeting on September 4, 2025.

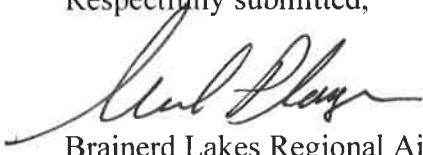
ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED AND SECONDED BY BARROWS AND BRATNEY, DULY CARRIED THAT THE COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING ADJOURN AT 11:04 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 "Paul Slagter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport Commission