

BRAINERD LAKES REGIONAL AIRPORT
JANUARY 26, 2026, SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

A brief discussion began about the Airport Manager employment agreement prior to the start of the meeting amongst the Commission.

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regular meeting of the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport Commission was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Airport Conference Room by Commission Chair Darrel Palmer.

The following Commission members were noted present: Neil Bratney: Vice Chair, Darrel Palmer; Chair, Andrew Shipe, and Kevin Yeager. Members noted present according to Minn Statute 13D.021 via video call: Steve Barrows. Also present: Neil Planzer; Interim Director, and Jessica Ruehling; Assistant Manager of Administration.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Approved.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY BRATNEY AND YEAGER, DULY CARRIED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED WITH ADDITIONAL ITEM OF “ARFF CONCEPT PROPOSAL.”

AIRPORT MANAGER – HIRING

The Commission proceeded with a discussion about the new Airport Manager Employment Agreement. Mr. Planzer informed the Commission that City HR, the City attorney and Ms. Roach have worked on and reviewed this agreement and are in agreement with the details. Ms. Roach wasn't able to attend this meeting, and a start date is to be determined. A typo was discussed in section 6.1 of the agreement. The words “an annual salary” were advised to be removed.

Motion to accept the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport Manager Employment Agreement with the removal of “an annual salary” in section 6.1.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY YEAGER AND BARROWS TO ACCEPT THE BRAINERD LAKES REGIONAL AIRPORT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT FOR AIRPORT MANAGER WITH THE REMOVAL OF “AN ANNUAL SALARY” WORDS IN SECTION 6.1 OF THE AGREEMENT.

Upon roll call, all members present and via video call voted “aye” to accept the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport Employment Agreement for Airport Manager.

PAY EQUITY:

A. Approve the Point Allocation

The Commission reviewed the point allocation for all employees at the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport. This is part of the Pay Equity report that is sent to the State of Minnesota. There was one

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change in points and that was for the Assistant Manager of Administration position, previously the Executive Assistant position.

Motion to approve the point allocation for the Assistant Manager of Administration position at 60 points, previously the Executive Assistant position at 53 points.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY BARROWS AND SHIPE TO APPROVE THE POINT ALLOCATION FOR THE ASSISTANT MANAGER OF ADMINISTRATION POSITION AT 60 POINTS, PREVIOUSLY THE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT POSITION AT 53 POINTS.

Upon roll call, all members present and via video call voted “aye” to approve the point allocation for the Assistant Manager of Administration Position at 60 points, previously the Executive Assistant position at 53 points.

B. Approve the Commission’s Pay Equity Reports

The Airport Commission reviewed the wages on the pay equity report. It was discussed that the range listed in the report was due to having four staff members in the position. Each other position only has one employee. Wages presented are for the year 2025 with a mention of longevity for the ARFF Maintenance staff.

Motion to approve the Commission’s pay equity reports reflecting wages as of December 31, 2025.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY YEAGER AND BRATNEY TO APPROVE THE COMMISSION’S PAY EQUITY REPORTS REFLECTING WAGES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025.

Upon roll call, all members present and via video call voted “aye” to approve the Commission’s pay equity reports reflecting wages as of December 31, 2025.

ARFF & WINTER OPERATIONS CONCEPT PROPOSAL:

Mr. Planzer informed the Commission that he has been thinking about areas where the airport can make additional revenue. The airport’s newest ARFF member wasn’t ARFF certified when hired and the Commission paid for his training in Florida. He also informed the Commission that the success rate of the last course at Ft. Ripley was very low. The airport is a great central location with all the equipment and facilities to coordinate ARFF training and Snow Removal training. Mr. Planzer requested the Commission to approve for him to dig into this concept and develop a plan. The FAA encourages this for airports and supports the idea. Area airport would utilize our training facility. This could help reduce or eliminate the funding the airport needs to support the airport. This may take 3 years to get it going. This could be done in coordination with Brainerd Fire. We would also bring out Brainerd Police Department and the Sheriff’s department as they should be familiar with what we do. Mr. Planzer is interested in continuing to work on this project even after Ms. Roach begins her position as Airport Manager. This could be a regional training center. Commissioners understand the concept and agree with Mr. Planzer. Chairman Palmer recommended that research continue about expenses vs. revenue and costs of

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insurance. The numbers are something that can continue to grow. We would have the ability to do mobility training. We could travel to Bemidji, or St. Cloud etc. The curriculum has to be FAA approved. It doesn't need to be developed from the ground up. The airport has met with Wade Boyat and he'll share the curriculum that he used with the airport. Commissioners would like to see success stories from other training facilities.

Motion to direct staff to move forward with a feasibility study regarding the Brainerd Lakes Area ARFF and Winter Operations training school.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY YEAGER AND BARROWS FOR STAFF TO MOVE FORWARD WITH A FEASIBILITY STUDY REGARDING THE BRAINERD LAKES AREA ARFF AND WINTER OPERATIONS TRAINING SCHOOL.

Upon roll call, all members present and via video call voted "aye" for staff to move forward with a feasibility study regarding the Brainerd Lakes Area ARFF and Winter Operations Training School.

NEXT MEETING:

All Commissioners present indicated that they would be able to attend the next meeting on February 5, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED AND SECONDED BY YEAGER AND SHIPE, DULY CARRIED THAT THE SPECIAL COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING ADJOURN AT 7:20 PM.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport Commission

