

**REGULAR MEETING**  
**GREATER ASHEVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY**  
**February 6, 2026**

The Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority (“Authority”) met on Friday, February 6, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Room of the Airport Public Safety Building, 136 Wright Brothers Way, Fletcher, NC 28732.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brad Galbraith, Chair; Britt Lovin, Vice-Chair; Carl Ricker, Jr.; Susan Russo Klein; Nathan Kennedy; Laura B. Leatherwood; and Gene O. Bell

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF AND LEGAL COUNSEL PRESENT:** Sabrina P. Rockoff, Authority Legal Counsel; Lew Bleiweis, President & CEO (“president”); Tina Kinsey, Chief Administrative Officer; Lexie Farmer, Chief Operations Officer; Amy Harris, Chief Financial Officer; Christina Madsen, VP – Business Development and Properties; Jared Merrill, VP – Planning; Samuel Sales, Chief of Public Safety; Angela Wagner, VP - Administration and Human Resources; Angie Daus, VP – Air Service and Corporate Communications; Sebastien Feyaerts, IT Systems Technician; and Ellen Heywood, Clerk to the Board

**ALSO PRESENT:** Jason Sandford, Ashvegas.com; Zeke Cooper, Dreamcatcher; Paul Puckli, CHA Consulting; Amanda Sheridan, McFarland Johnson; Bob Overby, McFarland Johnson; Travis Bird, Avcon, Inc.; Chris Cavanaugh, Magellan Strategy Group, Raynetta C. Waters, Paradies Lagardere

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**A. Golf Course and Hotel Update:** Zeke Cooper with DreamCatcher provided updated renderings of the planned hotel and conference center and spoke about the various design details. Site work is expected to start in mid-April followed by a 24-month build with a projected completion in May of 2028. Mr. Cooper also presented photos of the rebuilt clubhouse and golf course as well as renderings for the improvements to the driving range and putting green. The Board thanked Mr. Cooper for his presentation and vision for bringing the golf course in an incredible direction and a much-needed four diamond hotel and conference center to the area.

**B. AVL Dashboard:** The president informed the Board that staff has been working on an updated strategic plan over the last two years. The final steps in the plan are the metrics

and dashboard to keep track of goals, and Ms. Kinsey has been instrumental in implementing the dashboard for the goals and objectives. Tina Kinsey walked the Board through the dashboard stating that the dashboard is 85% complete as it currently contains data points, however, integrated data is the goal. Information is pulled from the Authority's departments, TSA, FAA, NCDOT, the financial system, the parking operator, etc. Ms. Kinsey spoke about the overall airport performance including customer experience ranking, non-stop flight options, enplanements, seats, and revenue by source. The dashboard will have tools that will allow staff to compare year-over-year data for operational planning purposes, flight operations, etc. Staff will also be able to review parking data, personnel information, and financial aspects including sources of operating revenue and expenses. The dashboard will be an excellent management tool for staff.

The Board inquired about ability to incorporate weather data and it's effects on operations as well as P&L information to bring in balance sheet info. A brief discussion also took place with regard to tracking parking shortages as well as passenger wait times and the ability to provide accountability back to the airlines.

The Board thanked Ms. Kinsey for the presentation.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** The president delivered a review of enplanements, aircraft operations, and general aviation activity for the month of December. Amy Harris reported on the financial results for the month of December.

**CONSENT ITEMS:**

**A. Approval of the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority December 12, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes:**

**B. Approval of Grant of Easement to Duke Energy Progress, LLC, a North Carolina LLC, for Electrical Service at Sheetz:**

Mr. Lovin moved to approve Consent Items A and B. Dr. Leatherwood's seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Approval to Unseal Closed Session Minutes:** The president stated that in accordance with policy, a review of the preceding year's Closed Session Minutes has been completed and the president was recommending the unsealing of certain Closed Session

Minutes. The minutes recommended to be unsealed are of a business matter that have come to fruition and are no longer of a confidential nature.

Mr. Lovin moved to unseal those portions of Closed Session Minutes as designated and recommended by the President & CEO. Mr. Ricker seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**B. Approval of Standard Space Lease between United States of America Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration and the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority:** Christina Madsen informed the Board that negotiations have been taking place with the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) for the lease of the new Air Traffic Control Tower (“ATCT”) which is expected to be commissioned in late spring of 2026. The lease of the 24,000 sf tower and office building will continue through September 30, 2045. The Authority owns and will be responsible for maintaining the facility and the FAA will reimburse the Authority for actual operating and maintenance expenses. Mrs. Madsen reviewed the annual rent as well as the operating and maintenance expenses for the facilities to be paid to the Authority, both of which will be adjusted annually by 2.5%. Mrs. Madsen outlined the reconciliation of the operating and maintenance expenses which will be completed beginning in the third year and continuing throughout the lease.

Mr. Lovin moved to approve the Standard Space Lease with the United States of America Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, and authorize the President & CEO to execute and implement the necessary process and documents. Ms. Russo Klein seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**C. Approval of Amendment No. 1 to Ground Lease and Agreement between Dreamcatcher Asheville, LLC. and the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority:** Christina Madsen stated that due to the government shutdown, there have been delays with the site work and permitting for the hotel and conference center to be built adjacent to the golf course. An adjustment to the construction completion date has been requested by Dreamcatcher Asheville LLC. Staff recommended the construction completion date be changed from September 2027 to April 2028.

A comment was made by the Board regarding the completion of the hotel and conference center as possibly being in May of 2028 as mentioned by Mr. Cooper during his presentation earlier in the meeting, and if this matter would need to come before the Board for an additional extension. Ms. Madsen responded that the amendment allows that if there are other issues, there is the ability for staff and Dreamcatcher to discuss the matter. Zeke Cooper assured the Board that he would do his best to have the hotel and conference center completed in April of 2028.

Dr. Leatherwood moved to approve Amendment No. 1 to Ground Lease and Agreement between Dreamcatcher Asheville, LLC. and the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority and authorize the President & CEO to execute and implement the necessary process and documents. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**D. Award of Contract with K West Group, LLC for the Construction of the Remain Over-Night Apron Project:** Jared Merrill reported that the Construction of the Remain Over-Night (“RON”) Apron project was advertised for bid in November. Mr. Merrill summarized the scope of work for the project and stated that only two bids were received. The project was re-bid in December and only two bids were received. The lowest responsible bid was received from K West Group in the amount of \$4,798,121.50. Mr. Merrill stated that staff recommends a 10% construction allowance of \$480,000.00, a budget of \$100,000.00 for technology requirements, and a budget for project soft costs of \$100,000 for a total construction budget of \$5,478,121.50. The previously approved design cost was \$551,640.00, bringing the total project budget to \$6,029,761.50. Since the project was not included in the FY25/26 budget, the following budget amendment will be necessary:

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026:

**Section 1.** To amend the appropriations as follows:

**EXPENDITURES:**

	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Capital Improvements		\$6,029,761.50
Totals		\$6,029,761.50

This will result in a net increase of \$6,029,761.50 in the appropriations. Revenues will be revised as follows:

**REVENUES:**

	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Transfer from GARAA Cash		\$6,029,761.50
Totals		\$6,029,761.50

[INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]

**Section 2.** Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority, and to the Budget Officer and to the Finance Officer for their direction.

Adopted this 6<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026.

---

Brad Galbraith, Chair

Attested by:

---

Ellen Heywood, Clerk to the Board

The Board inquired if staff was comfortable with the contractor given the 42% difference in price between their bid and that of the other bid received. Mr. Merrill confirmed that staff and McFarland Johnson, the Authority's consultant, were comfortable with the contractor.

The president advised the Board that this project is vital to bringing in more flights as it allows for more commercial aircraft overnight parking. The K. West Group has been very good to work with so far. Staff has had good conversations with them to ensure the project does not interfere with the anticipated general aviation traffic for the PGA Tour in September.

Mr. Lovin moved to approve the award of the contract with K. West Group, LLC in the amount of \$4,798,121.50 and a total project budget of \$6,029,761.50; authorize the President & CEO to execute the necessary documents; and amend the FY2025/2026 budget by adopting the budget ordinance amendment as presented by staff. Dr. Leatherwood seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**E. Approval of Amendment No. 2 to Task Order No. 1 with Kimley-Horn for Design of the Overlook Parking Lot and Northeast Drainage Outfall Improvements:** Jared Merrill stated that staff has been working with Kimley-Horn to complete the design and bidding for the Overlook Parking Lot and Northeast Drainage Outfall Improvements project. Additional services are needed to complete geotechnical testing and plan revisions to meet NCDEQ and Buncombe County Zoning as well as quality assurance testing during the construction administration phase. Mr. Merrill reported that the total for the additional services was \$194,580.00. The original task order was \$1,778,149, Amendment No. 1 was \$316,662 and with Amendment No. 2, the total design services will be \$2,289,391.00. Amendment No. 2 will require the following budget ordinance amendment:

[INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026:

**Section 1.** To amend the appropriations as follows:

**EXPENDITURES:**

	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Capital Improvements		\$194,580.00
Totals		\$194,580.00

This will result in a net increase of \$194,580.00 in the appropriations. Revenues will be revised as follows:

**REVENUES:**

	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Transfer from GARAA Cash		\$194,580.00
Totals		\$194,580.00

**Section 2.** Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority, and to the Budget Officer and to the Finance Officer for their direction.

Adopted this 6<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brad Galbraith, Chair

Attested by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ellen Heywood, Clerk to the Board

Ms. Russo Klein moved to approve Amendment No. 2 with Kimley-Horn in the amount of \$194,580.00; authorize the President & CEO to execute the necessary documents; and amend the FY2025/2026 budget by adopting the budget ordinance as presented by staff. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**F. Approval of Budget for Subcontractor Agreements for Additional Work to be Completed for the Air Traffic Control Tower Project:** Jared Merrill reminded the Board that additional items to complete the Air Traffic Control Tower (“ATCT”) project were approved by the Board at the October and November meetings. Staff has been working with Parsons and the FAA to identify the items necessary for the commissioning of the facility. Mr. Merrill reviewed three items that needed to be completed and stated that pricing from Comfort Systems USA was acquired and the total to complete the work was \$62,540.00. Mr. Merrill further summarized miscellaneous items that would need to be completed quickly and could be contracted with the President & CEO’s signing authority. Staff recommended approval of a budget of \$320,000, which includes the \$62,540.00 work by Comfort Systems USA, to complete all of the items needed for the commissioning of the ATCT. Mr. Merrill advised the Board that with approximately \$290,000 remaining of the design contract and the unutilized \$30,000 from the Resident Project Representative services in the Parsons contract, this was within the previously approved project budget. Any remaining portions of this budget would go towards the final change order with the general contractor to close out their contract.

Mr. Lovin moved to approve an agreement with Comfort Systems USA in the amount of \$62,540.00 and an additional budget of \$257,460.00 for the remaining work on the ATCT project; authorize the President & CEO to authorize any associated work and/or contract within his spending authority for any unforeseen work that needs to be completed for the ATCT project outside of the Kokolakis contract; and authorize the President & CEO to execute the necessary documents. Dr. Leatherwood seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT:** The president remarked that he had additional items to address that were not included on the agenda.

**A. Industry Conferences:** The president commented that staff has been working on the FY27 budget and to assist with budgeting appropriately, it would be helpful for Board Members to express interest in attending conferences. The president stated that Dr. Leatherwood was planning on attending the ACI-NA Business of Airports conference and that he believed Mr. Kennedy planned to attend as well. No other interest was shown by Board Members in attending any conferences.

**B. AVL Development Sites RFP:** Christina Madsen informed the Board that a Request for Proposals was issued on January 9<sup>th</sup> for development of three sites on airport property. Mrs. Madsen presented a map of the site locations, shared the acreage for each site, and disclosed that Site 2 was the only site available for a second Fixed Base Operator, with the other two sites slated for any type of aeronautical development. Mrs. Madsen further stated that 26 people representing 18 companies attended a mandatory pre-proposal meeting on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and those 18 companies are the only companies that can propose development on the sites. The proposals are due on March 26<sup>th</sup> and staff anticipate bringing a recommendation for development to the Board for consideration in late summer.

A question was raised regarding the existing fuel farm and whether there was room for expansion. Mrs. Madsen stated that the existing fuel farm was operated by Signature Flight Services, but that the area adjacent was available for a second FBO operator to store fuel trucks and have the opportunity to fuel commercial carriers.

There was also an inquiry concerning the airport's future expansion of the terminal building and whether site 1 would impact any future expansion plans. Mrs. Madsen responded that commercial development would not reach that area, but that it would affect the existing leasehold for Signature Flight Services.

**C. Air Service Announcement:** The president was pleased to report that Delta has announced seasonal non-stop service to Austin from June through September.

**D. ARFF Index:** With the purchase of the new ARFF truck last year, the airport has been approved for ARFF Index C. This allows for larger aircraft to operate from the airport, and with this increase in rating from the FAA, American Airlines has plans to bring in an Airbus 321 on a regular basis.

**INFORMATION SECTION:** No comments

**PUBLIC AND TENANTS COMMENTS:** None

**CALL FOR NEXT MEETING:** The Chair stated that the next regular meeting of the Board will be held on March 13, 2026 at Council Chambers, Fletcher Town Hall.

**AUTHORITY MEMBER REPORTS:** None

**CLOSED SESSION:** None

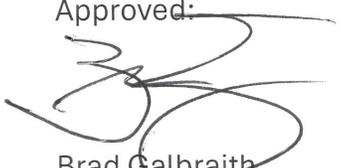
**ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Lovin moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 a.m. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Ellen Heywood  
Clerk to the Board

Approved:



Brad Galbraith  
Chair