

**REGULAR MEETING
GREATER ASHEVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
March 13, 2026**

The Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority (“Authority”) met on Friday, March 13, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. in Council Chambers at the Fletcher Town Hall, 300 Old Cane Creek Road, Fletcher, NC 28732.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nathan Kennedy

STAFF AND LEGAL COUNSEL PRESENT: Sabrina P. Rockoff, Authority Legal Counsel; Lew Bleiweis, President & CEO (“president”); Tina Kinsley, Chief Administrative Officer; Amy Harris, Chief Financial Officer; John Coon, VP – Operations and Maintenance; 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; David King, Guest Services & Advertising Manager; Linda Rogers, Guest Services Clerk; Sam Finkelstein, IT Systems Technician; and Ellen Heywood, Clerk to the Board

ALSO PRESENT: James Moose, AVCON; Jason Sandford, Ashvegas.com

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

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITIONS: The Chair recognized Linda Rogers with a service award and gift for her 10 years of service with the Authority.

The Chair also recognized John Coon with a service award and gift for his 10 years of service with the Authority.

PRESENTATIONS: None

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

CONSENT ITEMS:

A. Approval of the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority February 6, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes:

B. Approval of Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Audit Contract with Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, P.A.:

Ms. Russo Klein moved to approve Consent Items A and B. Dr. Leatherwood seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

C. Approval of Change Order No. 6 with Tennoca Construction Company for the South Parking Lot and ROFA: Ms. Russo Klein remarked that she would need to recuse herself from voting on Consent Item C.

Mr. Ricker moved to approve Consent Item C. Dr. Leatherwood seconded the motion and it carried by a 5 to 0 vote.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Preliminary Approval of the Authority's Amended Ordinance of Airline Rates, Fees and Charges for the Asheville Regional Airport: Amy Harris stated that in preparation for the upcoming FY26/27 budget, a new Schedule of Airline Rates, Fees and Charges for FY26/27 has been created with the assistance of Frasca and Associates, LLC. Ms. Harris further stated that the updated model includes enhanced cost allocation logic and advanced scenario analysis to support the airport's growth and that the proposed rates were higher overall to provide adequate revenue to cover airline operating costs. Ms. Harris advised the Board that the only significant change was the addition of Section 9.8 that incorporates a penalty for late payments. The proposed Ordinance of Airline Rates, Fees and Charges for FY26/27 has been shared with the airlines. As required by the ordinance process, a public hearing will be held at the next regular meeting of the Authority Board followed by the Board's adoption of Ordinance No. 201601-12.

The president stated that staff met with the airlines and that the airlines were in agreement with the new rates and charges. Staff has been transparent with the airlines for several years concerning the anticipated increase in rates with the new terminal.

Mr. Lovin moved to consider and approve the proposed Airline Rates, Fees and Charges; schedule a public hearing and accept public comment on the proposed Airline Rates, Fees and Charges; and following the minimum period for public comment and public hearing, adopt the Airline Rates, Fees and Charges for FY2026/2027 at the next scheduled Authority Board meeting. Ms. Russo Klein seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Authority's Preliminary Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget: Amy Harris presented the FY2026/2027 Preliminary Budget to the Board for approval and to allow for the budget to remain available for public inspection for a minimum of 10 days. Ms. Harris

reviewed the operating revenue which included an increase in operating costs in the Terminal cost center for airline terminal rents, including higher debt service costs in FY27 with the first year of principal payments on the bonds for the terminal, increase in concessions, and an increase in land lease revenue due to the first full year of the land lease with FAA for new Air Traffic Control Tower. Ms. Harris provided details of the operating expenses that included an increase in contractual services, commercial insurance coverage and operating supplies, a salary adjustment pool and adjustments to the employee count including unfunded positions. Ms. Harris advised the Board that staff will evaluate the budget later in the year, and if appropriate, would seek Board approval for up to 6 new positions that staff feels are needed with the expansion of the terminal building. Ms. Harris outlined the items included in the proposed capital budget as well as the reserve funds.

The Board questioned whether the amount included in the Emergency Repair Reserve should be in line with the overall budget, and how often staff had to use the funds. The President responded that staff did not typically have a need to use the funds and did not see a need to increase the reserve. The president further stated that there had only been a couple of times that those funds were utilized over the last several years. The Board suggested that it would be helpful if staff provided a report detailing the usage of the Emergency Repair Reserves prior to next year's fiscal budget.

Ms. Harris reviewed the cash balance and concluded the presentation with a review of the changes made to supplemental fees.

The topic of a disparity in the parking rates was raised for discussion by the Board. The president remarked that staff has recently retained a parking consultant who compared Asheville to other airports of similar size and recommended a new rate structure for parking. At a future date staff would like to seek approval of an increase in the garage rate to \$19 or \$20 per day, the daily lot rate to \$15 or \$16 per day, and to keep the rate as is for the shuttle lots and hourly lot. After brief discussion by the Board, it was agreed to continue with the approval of the proposed preliminary Fiscal Year 2026/2027 budget and to consider increases in parking rates at a future date.

Ms. Russo Klein moved to approve the Proposed Preliminary Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget and accept public comment on the Proposed Preliminary Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget during the next 10 days. Dr. Leatherwood seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

C. Approval of Scope of Services No. 4 with AVCON Engineers and Planners, Inc. for Analysis and Recommended Emergency Runway Pavement Repairs: Jared Merrill informed the Board that the southern half of the runway is in need of pavement repairs. Staff has worked with AVCON Engineers and Planners, Inc. to provide a scope and fee for analysis and recommended action. Mr. Merrill reported that the cost for these services was \$51,653.00 and does not include construction administration or Resident Project Representative services. The following budget amendment will be necessary to pay for the services:

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		\$51,653
Totals	<hr/>	<hr/> \$51,653 <hr/>

This will result in a net increase of \$51,653 in the appropriations. Revenues will be revised as follows:

REVENUES:

	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Transfer from GARAA Cash – Emergency Repair		\$51,653
Totals	<hr/>	<hr/> \$51,653 <hr/>

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 13th day of March, 2026.

Brad Galbraith, Chair

Attested by:

Ellen Heywood, Clerk to the Board

A question was raised regarding the impact to flight operations during the repair of the runway to which Mr. Merrill responded that the goal was to do as much work during the night as possible.

Mr. Lovin moved to approve the Scope of Services No. 4 with AVCON Engineers and Planners, Inc. in the amount of \$51,653.00; 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.

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

A. \$2.5 Million Grant from FAA: The president was pleased to report that Representative Edwards recently presented the airport with a \$2.5 million grant from the FAA for projects on the west side of the airport.

B. Contingency Transfers: The president informed the Board that contingency funds were used for the following items: \$8,678 for labor and materials for security enhancements to the Administration building and \$5,480 for disposal of remaining PFAS residue from fire equipment.

C. TSA Workers: Due to the ongoing government shutdown, TSA workers were entering their fourth week working without pay. Staff arranged for a pop-up food pantry with Manna Food Bank to be held on March 24th. Staff is also looking into providing fuel assistance to TSA workers.

D. Runway 5k Proceeds: The president was pleased to report donations to the following groups from the \$38,000 in proceeds from the Runway 5k held last fall: \$15,000 to the WNC Pilots Association Education Foundation, \$15,000 to the AB Tech Aviation Program, \$6,000 to Big Brothers Big Sisters of WNC, and the remaining \$2,000 to Manna Food Bank for their support to the federal workers.

E. Events: Angi Daus shared the following events to be held at the airport: Honor Air Flight on April 18; Girls in Aviation Day on April 29. The airport is partnering with NATA and PAGE for this event and some of the tenants will also be participating; Press events for the upcoming baggage claim and rental car facility with dates to be determined; Runway 5k on October 3.

F. Terminal Construction Time-lapse Video: Jared Merrill shared a time-lapse video recently taken by Hensel Phelps of Phase 2 of the Terminal Modernization and Expansion project. Mr. Merrill stated that the majority of the terminal will be completed by the end of 2027 with some clean-up items taking place into 2028.

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 April 10, 2026 at Council Chambers, Fletcher Town Hall.

AUTHORITY MEMBER REPORTS: None

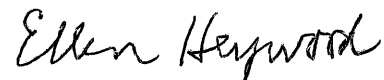
CLOSED SESSION: At 9:55 a.m. Mr. Lovin moved that the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority go into closed session at this time pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a) subsections (3) and (4) to consult with an attorney retained by the Authority in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the Authority, which privilege is hereby acknowledged; and, to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the Authority, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations. Ms. Russo Klein seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Open Session resumed at 10:33 a.m.

GREATER ASHEVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY MARCH 13, 2026 CLOSED SESSION MINUTES: Mr. Lovin moved to seal the minutes for the Closed Session just completed and to withhold such Closed Session minutes from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purpose or purposes thereof. Ms. Russo Klein seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

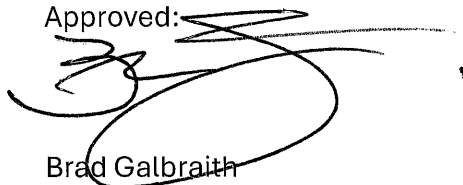
ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Lovin moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:34 a.m. Ms. Russo Klein seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Ellen Heywood
Clerk to the Board

Approved:



Brad Galbraith
Chair