

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA AERONAUTICS COMMISSION

September 27, 2022

Commission Members in Attendance

Delphin A. Gantt, Jr., Chairman
Anne Esposito, District 1
David Anderson, District 2
Skeets Cooper, District 3
Lara Kaufmann, District 4
Doug Barnes, Vice Chairman/District 5
Marco Cavazzoni, District 6 (via telephone)
Chris Bethea, District 7

Aeronautics Staff in Attendance

James Stephens, Executive Director
Ericka Thomas, Commission Secretary
Gary Siegfried, Program Manager
Tim Truemper, Chief Pilot
Melody Mikell, Finance Director
Austin Wagler, Associate Engineer

Visitors

Bud Coward, Commissioner Emeritus
John Hodge, South Carolina Aeronautics Legal Counsel
Mike Gula, Executive Director, Columbia Metropolitan Airport
Frank Murray, Director of Planning and Development, Columbia Metropolitan Airport
Paul Werts, Talbert, Bright & Ellington

Welcome & Call to Order

Chairman Gantt called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., welcomed everyone, announced a quorum in attendance, and Commissioner Cooper gave the invocation.

Mr. Stephens introduced attendees and recognized John Hodge (SCAC Legal Counsel) and presented the Commission with a book recently published by Mr. Hodge, South Carolina From the Air. Chairman Gantt noted that this is James Stephens last meeting as Executive Director of the Aeronautics Commission and presented James with a model of the State King Air 350, NISC.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Gantt presented the minutes of the June 21, 2022 meeting and asked if anyone had any edits or corrections. Since none were forthcoming, the minutes were approved as written.

Financial, Budget, & Executive Director's Reports

Mr. Stephens presented the Operating and State Aviation Fund financials as of August 31, 2022. Stephens presented the financials for the State Aviation Fund, reporting a beginning balance of \$18,721,023.37. This balance along with fuel sales tax revenues of \$1,165,136.19, a general fund recurring appropriation of \$500,000, and a refund of prior year expense & miscellaneous revenue of \$40,472.08 brought total available funds for airport projects to \$20,426,631.64. After considering budgeted/committed items of \$16,858,904.38 the remaining \$3,567,727.26 is available for new grants.

Mr. Stephens presented his Executive Director's Report during which he highlighted the \$53M one-time legislative allocation for airport development. The funding was to have been divided \$50M for commercial service airports and \$3M for general aviation airports, however, a proviso was attached to the special funding that dedicated 20% of the allocation to develop airports in South Carolina counties that do not currently have one. There are three counties without airports, Cherokee, Calhoun and Abbeville. The proviso means that there is \$42.4M available for airport development rather than \$53M.

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Meeting attendees had a lengthy discussion concerning the method of distributing the funding. Commercial service airport representatives met previously to try to come to a consensus and proposed a methodology based upon operations and maintenance (O&M) costs. This distribution using this method resulted in the following distribution:

CHS	34.6%
GSP	26.9%
MYR	19.9%
CAE	16.1%
HXD	1.8%
FLO	0.8%

The Commission decided that they needed additional time to consider this topic. Commissioner Cooper made a motion to table the issue until the November meeting. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

Mister Stephens also discussed that the legislative process has begun for FY 2024-2025 budgeting. Mr. Siegfried will be presenting the Aeronautics budget for consideration before the Executive Budget Office on October 19th, 2022.

Airport Development

Mr. Siegfried presented the Airport Development Report and the Grants for Consideration to the Commission.

Grants for Consideration

Challenger Learning Center (education)

Paul Werts was in attendance to present the grant request for the Challenger Learning Center. The Center is requesting an education grant to assist with a flight planning program. The goal of the program is to provide a realistic learning experience in how to prepare a flight plan. Students will use flight planning and weather apps to create flight plans for airplane and drone flights.

The grant will assist the CLC with the purchase of student workbooks and iPads that students will use in their flight planning. The program anticipates reaching 500 students per year over a 10 year program lifespan.

As an education grant the funding will be at 100% SCAC participation.

Amount of grant funding requested is \$11,723

Commissioner Barnes made a motion to approve the above request. Commissioner Bethea seconded, and the grant was approved unanimously.

Beaufort Executive Airport – Terminal Exterior Renovation (construction)

The Beaufort Executive Airport is requesting assistance to renovate the exterior of the terminal building. The project will include upgrades to lighting, paint, airport signage, handicap and pedestrian handrails, walkways, trim and landscaping.

The total cost of the project is \$187,500 funded at 60% State/40% Local.

Amount of grant funding requested is \$112,500

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Commissioner Esposito made a motion to approve the above request. Commissioner Cooper seconded, and the grant was approved unanimously.

Oconee County Airport – The Oconee Airport has two grants for consideration.

Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (construction)

The Oconee County Airport is requesting assistance to rehabilitate Runway 7/25. The PCI of runway 7/25 ranges from a low of 53 to a high of 70 with an average of approximately 62. Rehabilitation is warranted for this condition.

The total cost of the project is \$6,983,738 and will be funded at 90% FAA/5% State/5% Local.

Amount of grant funding requested is \$349,187

Parking Lot Expansion (construction)

The Oconee County Airport is requesting assistance to expand the automobile parking. The airport is frequently short of automobile parking spaces and this is a much needed improvement.

The total cost of the project is \$300,885 and will be funded at 60% State/40% Local.

Amount of grant funding requested is \$180,531

The total amount of both grant requests is \$529,718.

Commissioner Kaufmann made a motion to approve the above requests as written. Commissioner Cooper seconded and both grant requests were approved unanimously.

Bamberg County Airport – Apron Repair

The Bamberg County Airport is requesting assistance with repair to their aircraft parking apron, which was damaged during a fuel delivery.

The total cost of the repair is \$24,000 funded at 80% State/20% Local

Amount of grant funding requested is \$19,200

Commissioner Barnes made a motion to approve the above request. Commissioner Bethea seconded, and the grant was approved unanimously.

Newberry County Airport – Taxiway A Rehabilitation (Design and bid)

The Newberry County Airport is requesting assistance to rehabilitate Taxiway A (design and bidding). The most recent pavement condition index for Taxiway A was 76 indicating that rehabilitation will be warranted in approximately 2 years.

The total cost of the project is \$195,700 funded at 90% FAA/5% State/5% Local.

Amount of grant funding requested is \$9,785

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Commissioner Cooper made a motion to approve the above requests as written. Commissioner Esposito seconded, and the grant was approved unanimously.

Greenville Downtown Airport – Airport District Planning Study

The Greenville Downtown Airport is requesting assistance with an Airport District Planning Study. The purpose of the study is to investigate and prepare a comprehensive strategy for the development and redevelopment of the City of Greenville in the area surrounding the Greenville Downtown Airport taking into account both the needs of the City and the regulatory challenges of the Airport.

The total cost of the project is \$310,000 funded at 60% State/40% Local.

Amount of grant funding requested is \$186,000

Commissioner Barnes made a motion to approve the above requests as written. Commissioner Bethea seconded, and after some discussion, the grant was approved unanimously.

Flight Report

Chief Pilot Tim Truemper presented the flight reports, and stated that numbers are going up, but have not yet reached pre-COVID numbers. Since there are no guarantees of receiving an appropriation for new aircraft, we have scheduled NISC to have an auxiliary ground air conditioning unit installed at the Textron Service Center in Greensboro. I am also working with state HR to rewrite the Pilot I and II job descriptions and hope to engage them in discussions about pay bands and the current pilot market in general.

District Reports

Commissioner Esposito – Discussed Hilton Head Island Airport challenge with terminal funding.

Commissioner Anderson – Reported that there is a parcel of land for sale located between the Aiken Regional Airport and Highway 1 which the City of Aiken has first right of refusal to purchase. The property is ideally located for airport development. The City is discussing whether they wish to purchase property. Commissioner Anderson stated that he will be encouraging the City to purchase the land. Mr. Siegfried noted that he attended a conference call between Airport staff and the FAA to discuss potential funding for the purchase of the land. The FAA noted that this may be possible.

Commissioner Cooper – Reported that Pickens County and Oconee County are both currently closed for runway rehabilitation.

Commissioner Barnes – Commissioner Barnes noted that he thought the NASAO conference was very well done. The Commissioners discussed future attendance.

Commissioner Cavazzoni – Discussed the situation at Hampton County where the South Carolina Legislature has appointed a new member to the airport board. The board member has not been granted full access to airport records, so it has been recommended that funding be withheld until the new member receives all pertinent information.

Commissioner Bethea –

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New Business

None.

Next Meeting Date

The next Commission Meeting will be held on November 15th, 2022.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Bethea moved that the meeting be adjourned, Commissioner Cooper seconded, and all approved.

Delphin A. Gantt

**Delphin Gantt
Commission Chairman**

Gary Siegfried

**Gary Siegfried
Interim Executive Director**

November 15, 2022

Date