

West Michigan Airport Authority

October 20, 2025

Draft Meeting Minutes

CTO: Chair C. Murray called the meeting to order at . (1600) 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call: The following members answered the call: Murray, Gruppen, Dannenberg, Hoekwater, Brandsen, Zeerip; ex-officio Fogg. Roden joined virtually at 4:02pm. Also, present were Treasurer McCammon, Airport Director Neyens, and Avflight Manager Lotz. Members Byrd, Shea and Ex-officio Member Van Beek were absent. At 05:31 PM Secretary Dannenberg excused himself from the remainder of the meeting.

Agenda: Member Dannenberg motioned to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Hoekwater. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Minutes: Member Dannenberg motioned to approve of the September 8, 2025, meeting minutes, seconded by member Zeerip. Motion passed on a voice vote; Chair C. Murray abstained as he was not present for the September meeting.

Unfinished Business:

North-Taxilane Project: Manager Neyens briefed that the project is nearing completion, with only a few remaining items, many of which are dependent on the fencing subcontractor's work. Both Mead & Hunt and Mead Brothers have made multiple attempts to emphasize to the fencing subcontractor that their delays are impeding project completion. The subcontractor has been advised to complete their work as soon as practicable and informed that continued delays may result in financial repercussions. Remaining items include grass seeding and mulching, electrical tie-in, pavement markings, gate installation, and fence construction.

New Business:

Financial Reports: McCammon noted the packet included the first three months of the fiscal year, expenses and revenue are on track for the year. McCammon also mentioned that the auditors should be done in time for their findings to be presented during the December meeting, this will also be a good time to look at our budget and make necessary mid-year adjustments and transfer of surplus to the capital fund if it is appropriate. Hoekwater motioned to approve the financial reports as presented, Dannenberg seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

FBO Report: Lotz reported on the September fuel totals, 40,769 gallons of Jet Fuel, and 3,176 gallons of Avgas. This was down from last September, but in line with September 2023. The next portion of the report came from data derived in 1200Aero, it showed our busiest days of the year, types of operations, as well as a map showing the airports our clients visit the most. Two airports of note were Teterboro and St. Louis. Lotz also showed pie charts making up airport users, Items of note were 80% piston engine traffic, and 14% jet traffic, as well as 71% transient (departing or arriving from another airport) and 29%

local. Chair C. Murray noted the map as a key piece of data to investigate and possibly leverage for marketing use. Member Dannenberg motioned to accept the FBO report, Seconded by Gruppen. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

North Taxilane Change Order: Manager Neyens discussed the change order which was submitted by Mead & Hunt. It details the change order that was submitted based on feedback from the authority having jurisdiction, the Tulip intercounty Drain commission. They required various changes, mainly consisting of the addition of 36” drainpipe and added excavation to the drainage pond basins. Chair C. Murray asked where this added cost would come from in the budget, after discussion the budget portion was tabled until the audit was completed in December. Brandsen motioned to accept the contract modification as presented, member Zeerip seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously via a roll call vote.

Closed Session - Consideration of Purchase or Lease of Real Property: Vice Chair Gruppen moved to enter a closed session to consider the purchase or lease of real property. The motion was seconded by Member Dannenberg. The motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote. The closed session commenced at 4:44 p.m. Member Roden did not attend the closed session due to her participation being virtual.

Reconvene Open Session: The Board reconvened in open session at 5:30 p.m. Vice Chair Gruppen moved for the Board to approve the form of the option agreement and memorandum discussed in closed session, authorize our airport manager to deliver the proposed option agreement and memorandum to the owner of the property, authorize chairman Charles Murray to sign the option agreement and memorandum if accepted without meaningful changes by the owner of the property, and authorize the recording of the signed memorandum in the Allegan County real estate records. The motion was seconded by Member Hoekwater and passed unanimously by roll-call vote.

Crosswind Runway Committee Presentation: Chair C. Murray recognized Committee Chair J. Murray to present the committee’s findings. Committee members Linda Howell, Kevin Phillips, Paul Sachs, and Jeff Vos were also present.

Committee Chair J. Murray began by reading the committee’s findings verbatim from the report on page 69 of the board packet. Ex-Officio Member Fogg requested clarification on the differences between the \$5 million and \$20 million runway options. Jeff Vos was recognized and reviewed Prein & Newhof’s proposal, which was designed to reflect the true needs of the General Aviation community—specifically, a 3,000-foot paved runway without a parallel taxiway.

Chair C. Murray asked whether the committee had engaged with Lakeshore Advantage or the West Coast Chamber of Commerce. Kevin Phillips responded that they had not had any substantive conversations with either organization.

Manager Neyens noted that the report stated there would be negligible maintenance associated with the proposed crosswind runway; however, he pointed out that snow removal in winter months would constitute a maintenance expense as well as the need to reserve funds for necessary pavement and electrical rehabilitation when it is required. Kevin Phillips commented that the committee explored the potential for incremental revenue a north–south runway could generate but found the question difficult to quantify. He explained that additional development surrounding the airport would likely be necessary to attract increased General Aviation activity. Mr. Phillips referenced Jackson Airport as an example, noting that a restaurant there draws General Aviation traffic on weekends.

Vice Chair Gruppen observed that the user group and certain individuals have been pressuring the Board to support the crosswind runway, creating an “us versus them” dynamic. Gruppen stated that all parties should remain focused on the airport’s best interests, as those interests ultimately benefit both the user group and the broader airport community.

Committee Chair J. Murray added that historically, the airport has functioned primarily as a corporate airport since its inception, created and funded to support the community and attract jobs and industry to the area. The airport was not created as a General Aviation airport. He emphasized that the airport’s millage renewal will occur in 2027, and the Authority must be able to justify the airport’s value and community impact at that time. J. Murray concluded by stating that the current airport strategy does not support the construction of a crosswind runway.

Authority Chair C. Murray closed the discussion by clarifying that the committee’s task was to research the various considerations associated with recommending the retention or elimination of the crosswind runway from the existing airport layout plan, and that the committee’s official recommendation was to retain the crosswind runway on the plan.

Manager’s Notes: During the meeting, Manager Neyens reviewed several items that were included in the board packet. He noted that the FOIA request received by the authority resulted in a total of \$7,638 in legal fees. He also shared that the Board of Public Works (BPW) had approached the airport with interest in developing a solar farm on airport-owned land. Neyens explained that he would only consider two specific sites for such a project—both of which are blocked from direct access to the airfield via road and railway, ensuring no operational impact. Member McCammon added that lease rates for solar farms can be lucrative and encouraged the board to pursue the opportunity.

Manager Neyens also reported that the recent MDOT inspection went very well. The inspectors had no outstanding items that required action from the airport, though they did offer a few recommendations and posed clarifying questions for Neyens to follow up on.

Lastly, Manager Neyens shared an item that was not included in the board packet. He informed the board that Space Source had submitted a Letter of Intent to lease land surrounding the North Taxilane Project. Although this item was not placed on the agenda due to the timing of the LOI and the already full schedule of the meeting, Neyens expressed that the proposal is very exciting and promising for future development. Committee Member Linda Howell emphasized the point that the committee put in 5-year deadline as well as interim deadlines, and within the 5 years come up with a strategic plan to clarify if the airport sees the crosswind runway in its future. Committee member Kevin Phillips reinforced the need for the airport to come up with a vision for the airport to help dictate if a crosswind runway would help achieve this airport's goals. Authority Chair C. Murray clarified from the committee chair and its members that their recommendation was to keep the crosswind runway on the ALP.

Public Comment: Chair C. Murray called for public comment. No one sought recognition.

Adjournment: The business of the board having been completed, Hoekwater moved, Zeerip seconding, to adjourn the meeting. Passed at 6:44 p.m. (1844) by voice vote.

Submitted by,
Matt Neyens, Airport Manager