

## **West Michigan Airport Authority**

November 10, 2025

### *Approved Meeting Minutes*

**CTO:** Chair Murray called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M. Local time.

**Roll Call:** The following members answered the call: Byrd, Shea, Gruppen, Dannenberg, Hoekwater, Brandsen, Zeerip, and Fogg. Ex-officio Member Van Beek was absent. Also present were Treasurer McCammon, Airport Director Neyens, Avflight Manager Lotz, and Authority Counsel Hillegonds. Member Byrd excused himself during the Closed Session and returned at 5:20 P.M.

**Agenda:** Member Shea moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Dannenberg. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Public Comment:** Chair Murray offered an opportunity for public comment to anyone in attendance, and no one sought recognition.

**October Meeting Minutes:** Member Byrd moved to approve the October 20, 2025 meeting minutes, seconded by Dannenberg. Member Fogg provided a comment, noting the line where the committee chair stated 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.” Member Fogg voiced his strong disagreement with that statement. Chair Murray advised that the minutes accurately reflect what the committee chair said, and that is the purpose of the minutes. The only other comment was to accurately reflect the roll call, noting that Chair Murray was marked absent despite attending the October meeting in its entirety. A motion to amend the minutes was made by Shea, seconded by Dannenberg, to include Murray in the roll call. The amendment passed unanimously by voice vote. The motion to approve October 20, 2025, minutes amended, passed by voice vote. Members Roden and Shea abstained.

### **Unfinished Business:**

**Closed Session – Consider the Purchase or Lease of Real Property:** At 4:14 P.M., Vice Chair Gruppen moved that the Board enter a Closed Session to discuss the purchase or lease of real property. The motion was seconded by Byrd. Chair Murray called for a roll call vote. Member Byrd, yes; Member Shea, yes; Member Roden, yes; Vice Chair Gruppen, yes; Secretary Dannenberg, yes; Member Hoekwater, yes; Member Brandsen, yes; Member Zeerip, yes; Chair Murray, yes. The vote passed unanimously.

**Reconvene Open Session: The Board reconvened in Open Session at 5:19 P.M.** Member Hoekwater moved that the Board enter into an agreement with Mr. Merkle to lease or purchase real property, with the modifications to the agreement discussed in Closed Session. The motion was seconded by Dannenberg. A roll call vote was called. Member Shea, yes; Member Roden, yes; Vice Chair Gruppen, yes; Secretary Dannenberg, yes; Member Hoekwater, yes; Member Brandsen, yes; Member Zeerip, yes; Chair Murray, yes.

The vote passed unanimously. Member Byrd was absent for the vote, as he had left the room during the Closed Session.

**Update on North Taxiway Project:** Manager Neyens advised that Change Order Number One for the project was now in MDOT's possession and under review. The fencing subcontractor had been working extra hours to complete the fence as soon as possible. The remaining work involved the electrician connecting the main gate, which was on track to be completed this week. The primary contractor was now removing the old fence that had been rendered useless by the new installation. Manager Neyens explained a situation involving Crown Motors, noting that construction equipment had caused rutting on their land and they requested repairs. Mead Brothers corrected the issue immediately. Crown Motors later expressed concern that the airport's project would increase runoff onto their property. Manager Neyens clarified that pre-construction plans show the land was already sloped toward Crown Motors' property and that Mead Brothers restored the land to its pre-existing condition.

**Updates on Agriculture Leases:** Neyens briefed the Board that the agriculture leases approved by the Board had been distributed to the farmers. Two of the four farmers had returned executed leases, while the remaining two had not been communicating with the airport. The airport intends to have all four leases signed by December 31, 2025 to begin the new year with consistent agreements in place. The Board discussed issuing letters containing notices to quit if signed leases are not returned.

**Building and Development Committee:** Neyens briefed the Board on the committee's meetings and discussions to date. November 5 was the committee's second meeting. Discussions included priorities within the Capital Improvement Plan and whether adjustments were needed based on airport demand and operational needs. The committee also discussed, in general terms, the letter of intent that had been received. Because it had not yet been discussed publicly, the details remained confidential. Lastly, the committee discussed the creation of a lifecycle matrix for key infrastructure to support long-term budgeting, planning, and preparation for equipment failure or required maintenance.

#### **New Business:**

**North Taxilane Contract Modification #2:** Neyens explained that overall, this modification was a reduction in cost of 55,934 dollars on the project. Jeff from Mead and Hunt advised that this is a normal balancing process. Member Byrd moved to approve Change Order Number Two as presented, seconded by Dannenberg. A roll call vote was conducted. Member Byrd, yes; Member Shea, yes; Member Roden, yes; Vice Chair Gruppen, yes; Secretary Dannenberg, yes; Member Hoekwater, yes; Member Brandsen, yes; Member Zeerip, yes; Chair Murray, yes. The vote passed unanimously. Member Byrd had rejoined the meeting and participated in the roll call vote.

**Calendar Year 2026 WMAA Board Meeting Schedule:** Chair Murray advised the Board that this needs to be agreed upon before the 2026 calendar year begins. Member Byrd informed the Board that he had not been reappointed to the Holland City Council, which is how he came to serve on the Authority Board. He stated that he was unsure how the City of Holland planned to address this situation but noted that he was open to continuing to serve on the Airport Board. If he continues to serve as a citizen member, he explained that the 4:00 P.M. meeting time would present a conflict unless the Board is comfortable with him stepping out for approximately fifteen minutes around 5:00 P.M. during each meeting. Member Dannenberg commented that he had less concern with Byrd stepping out briefly than with changing the day or time of the meetings. Member Shea moved to approve the draft schedule for the 2026 calendar year, seconded by Brandsen. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Financial Reports:** Treasurer McCammon advised that we are a third of the way through our fiscal year and everything still appears to be on track. McCammon noted that based on current projections, we are only expected to transfer about 10,500 dollars to the Capital Fund. McCammon also advised the auditors to be ready to present their findings and stated that we will need to allocate time for them at the December meeting. Additionally, it is approaching mid-year budget amendment season, and December is an appropriate time to begin coordinating that effort. Dannenberg moved to accept the financial report as presented, seconded by Gruppen. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**FBO Report:** Mr. Lotz reviewed fuel sales and noted that year over year for the month of October, jet fuel sales were up significantly, with approximately 19,000 more gallons sold compared to last October. This increase was attributed primarily to higher tenant activity. Lotz also presented a map showing recent destinations. Chair Murray requested that numerical data be added to the destination list so the Board can see which locations are most frequently visited from our airport. Members Roden and Shea commented that it would also be useful to see activity levels from based tenants to better demonstrate how often they use the airport and where they travel when they do. Member Shea moved to accept the FBO report as presented, seconded by Gruppen. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Space Source Letter of Intent:** Chair Murray reviewed the letter of intent for the Board, pointing out several items for possible review as the process moves forward. Specifically, he highlighted item 3 regarding the term, and line item 6 regarding lease execution. Manager Neyens commented that this appears to be a significant step forward and would demonstrate to the FAA and MDOT that there is demand for additional development at the airport, supporting future investment. Member Fogg asked whether there would be room for a taxiway to the north if that were desired. Manager Neyens confirmed that this had been factored into planning. Fogg also asked whether allowing the developer to lease the

entire area would limit opportunities for any future parties. Manager Neyens responded that the airport would include terms requiring development by a certain date, and failure to do so could place the lessee in violation of the agreement or subject to additional terms. Member Brandsen acknowledged that Logan Dykgraaf from Space Source was present. Member Shea then addressed Logan, asking whether any work had been done with the City of Holland. Logan explained that their engineer had handled those discussions and that the proposal appeared feasible. He further noted that the plan was conceptual and may undergo minor changes. Logan stated that they would like to begin investing in design work and due diligence, ideally in coordination with the Building and Development Committee, but that it was difficult to commit further resources without a letter of intent in place. Logan also addressed concerns about control of the property, stating that it was not their intention to hold all the land indefinitely. Their interest is in leasing or selling some of the properties after making improvements to the land, and only after improvements had been completed. Chair Murray stated that he would like to amend paragraph 6, Lease Execution, by changing the timeframe from fourteen days to thirty days. Logan suggested establishing a target of executing the lease within two months, generally aligning with the January Board meeting. Chair Murray proposed appointing one or two members to assist Manager Neyens and Counsel Hillegonds in negotiating final terms of the letter of intent, specifically addressing paragraph 6 and the change from fourteen to thirty days. Member Byrd moved to appoint Member Shea, Ex-officio Member Fogg, and Member Brandsen to work with Manager Neyens and Counsel Hillegonds to appropriately amend the letter of intent. The motion was seconded by Dannenberg and passed unanimously by voice vote. Member Byrd then moved to amend the letter of intent, paragraph 6, Lease Execution, from fourteen days to thirty days. The motion was seconded by Dannenberg. Member Shea moved to amend the previous motion to include lease agreement negotiations in the appointed group's scope of work. The motion was seconded by Gruppen and passed unanimously by voice vote. Member Byrd then moved to approve the amended motion appointing Member Shea, Ex-officio Member Fogg, and Member Brandsen to work with Manager Neyens and Counsel Hillegonds to appropriately amend the letter of intent, specifically paragraph 6 regarding lease execution, changing fourteen days to thirty days, and to work on the lease agreement negotiations. The motion was seconded by Member Shea and passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Ex-Officio Resolution:** Vice Chair Gruppen moved to adopt the Resolution of the West Michigan Airport Authority regarding the appointment of Ex-Officio Board Members, as presented. The motion was seconded by Dannenberg. Discussion followed regarding the original intent of the Ex-Officio positions, which from the inception of the Authority was that they be held by elected county commissioners.

Ex-Officio Member Fogg stated that this resolution was toxic and created a “good ole boys club.” Chair Murray voiced his disagreement with that statement. Member Shea pointed out that this was not an effort to “get rid of Mr. Fogg,” as Member Fogg had suggested, but rather a step to ensure that an elected official from the county served in the Ex-Officio role. Member Byrd suggested pausing action on the motion to allow members more time to consider the resolution. Chair Murray, recognizing that a motion had been made and seconded, proceeded to call for a vote. Member Byrd, no; Member Shea, no; Member Roden, yes; Vice Chair Gruppen, yes; Secretary Dannenberg, yes; Member Hoekwater, no; Member Brandsen, yes; Member Zeerip, yes; Chair Murray, yes. The motion passed with six yes votes and three no votes.

**Manager Updates:** Manager Neyens briefed the Board on the status of the snow removal fleet, noting that it is severely lacking in operational capability. The front-mounted broom truck, considered the most critical piece of equipment for many aspects of snow removal, has experienced the most difficulty remaining operational. Manager Neyens explained that a new broom truck would be eligible for State and Federal funding through the Capital Improvement Plan process, although once funding is approved, the lead time for this type of equipment is approximately six hundred days. He also noted that the airport will need to budget for regular maintenance of this used equipment. Additionally, the sand and chemical spreader was not operational on Monday during the ice event, which resulted in aircraft diverting away from West Michigan Regional Airport. Manager Neyens clarified that the sweeper issue is separate from the ice issue. Ice events require dedicated treatment operations and dedicated equipment. He stated that the airport should engage tenants to understand their needs and priorities regarding operations during ice events. If tenants prioritize flying during such events, the airport should consider asking them to contribute financially, consistent with how other similarly situated airports operate. Member Byrd moved to waive the sealed bid process due to the emergency facing the airport and to allow the Airport Manager to pursue opportunities to acquire equipment immediately. The motion was seconded by Hoekwater. A roll call vote was conducted. Member Byrd, yes; Member Shea, yes; Member Roden, yes; Vice Chair Gruppen, yes; Secretary Dannenberg, yes; Member Hoekwater, yes; Member Brandsen, yes; Member Zeerip, yes; Chair Murray, yes. The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Dannenberg Motioned to adjourn, seconded by Roden. Motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Submitted by,  
Matt Neyens, Airport Manager