

MINUTES

Beaufort County Airports Board

September 11, 2025 | 10:00 am | Meeting called to order by Chairman Chris Butler
[Video and Transcript](#)

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chris Butler, Howard Ackerman, Brian Turrisi, Mark Bailey, Rich Sells, Leslie Adlam Flory, and Nick Mesenburg

Absent: Jim Starnes, Thomas Sheahan, and David Nelems

County Staff: Jon Rembold, Airports Director; Stephen Parry, Deputy Airports Director; Jeremy Mathes, ARFF Chief; Brandon Chavis, Airport Manager; and Rocio Rexrode, Airports Senior Administrative Specialist.

Beaufort County Council Liaison:

Hilton Head Island Town Council Liaison: Melinda Tunner

Public: Judy Elder, Talbert, Bright and Ellington, Inc.; and Michelle Mealer, Town of Hilton Head Island

AGENDA ADOPTION

The September 11, 2025, BCAB meeting agenda was adopted with unanimous consent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A question was raised regarding the August 14th minutes to ensure all attendees were accurately listed. It was noted that Nick Mesenburg needed to be added to the attendance record. With this correction, the minutes were approved as amended. Rich Sells made a motion to approve the August 14, 2025, meeting minutes. Brian Turrisi seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no Public Comments.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Airports Fourth Quarter Financial Update (Brian Cronin):

Cronin provided the Finance Report, highlighting key revenue and expense trends. He noted anticipated cable TV franchise revenues, new interest income from pooled cash accounts, and modest increases in firefighting fees. Miscellaneous revenues reflected insurance reimbursements. On the expense side, payroll increased due to cost-of-living adjustments and additional part-time firefighters, while contracted services decreased as some functions transitioned in-house. Utilities and maintenance costs rose due to ongoing infrastructure work, and certain capital expenditures were noted. Overall, Brian reported that net income experienced a decrease compared to the prior year, but emphasized that the airport continues to maintain a strong cash position and remains financially stable and self-

sufficient, closely monitoring revenues and expenses to support ongoing operations and future projects.

- **TERMINAL UPDATE:**

Rembold provided a detailed update on terminal construction progress. He reported that the building's pace has accelerated, with signage and other interior elements advancing rapidly. Exterior work has made significant progress, particularly around the main entrance, and lane striping—including handicap and pull-up parking—has been completed, improving traffic flow from the terminal.

Inside, visitors can see extensive drywall finishing, which features intricate details with multiple edges and reveals. Rembold praised the specialized drywall crew for their work, noting that some areas already have final paint applications. Decorative elements, such as lighting behind poles and laser-cut accents, are also taking shape, contributing to the overall aesthetic of the terminal.

- **DEPARTMENT UPDATE:**

Farmers Insurance Event: Rembold reported that an event planning company contacted the airport regarding buses, noting the airport's size posed coordination challenges. They were able to organize bus flow effectively, and the event did not disrupt other passengers or vehicles. The extra lanes in the drive along the building proved valuable. The airport was chosen due to the convention location, avoiding the need to shuttle buses to other events. This involved busloads across multiple aircraft over two days and demonstrated the benefit to resort partners, as it drives hotel bookings and convention attendance.

Airfield Equipment Acquisition: Rembold highlighted the airport's investment in a new airfield marking machine. The machine allows precise airfield markings and helps maintain compliance with regulatory products. Repainting is required every one to one and a half years due to fading from weather conditions. Dan, trained on the equipment, will operate it, which is expected to save money and ensure quality.

Hangar Development Progress (ARW): Rembold reported that hangar construction is progressing rapidly, with daily coordination and oversight of contractors. Visitors checking on hangar waiting list positions have expressed satisfaction with the progress.

- **AIRPORTS' BUSINESS UPDATE:**

Part 139 and TSA Inspections: Rembold reported that the Part 139 and TSA inspections occurred recently and involved many observers. The TSA portion went smoothly. The Part 139 inspection lasted two days, with inspectors from Atlanta and DC reviewing past inspections. FAA inspections showed a more collaborative approach, and only minor discrepancies were noted. The operations chief ensured the airfield and records were well-prepared.

Tree Management Critical Issue: Rembold emphasized the importance of addressing trees affecting approach and departure surfaces for safety and efficiency. An inspection will identify trees requiring action. Previous efforts limited tree cutting, but growth continues to pose obstacles, particularly near the gas station on the approach to the runway. Obstructions are affecting aircraft operations, including seating and fuel capacity due to weight restrictions. This negatively impacts revenue and efficiency.

Airborne Position Reference Tool (APRT): Rembold stated that the FAA has approved a private company to provide the APRT, an upgraded STARS display system. The APRT enhances operational awareness by providing real-time aircraft positioning, improved coordination with air traffic control, and integration with airport operations systems. Implementation is underway, with the airport team actively coordinating with the vendor to ensure timely deployment.

Mitchelville Freedom Park: Rembold mentioned that a groundbreaking was held for the Archaeological Research and Education Center on the northern airport property at Mitchelville Freedom Park. The center will provide educational opportunities and incorporate local history into airport initiatives.

ATAX Marketing Application: Rembold informed that the airport's ATAX marketing application has been submitted, with a presentation scheduled for October. Funds are intended for marketing outside a fifty-mile radius, targeting larger cities including Washington, DC, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Online advertising is used to reach potential vacationers in the Southeast.

Chamber Event: Rembold noted the airport will participate in the State of the Region Chamber event in October, continuing their typical level of involvement.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business.

NEW BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS

1. **GRANT ACCEPTANCE - RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT SCAC GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$40,505.12 FOR HXD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING RENOVATION (DESIGN)**

Rich Sells made a motion to approve a recommendation to approve a resolution to accept a SCAC grant of \$40,505.12 for the HXD administration building renovation design. Mark Bailey seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

CHAIRMAN UPDATE

1. **Finance Committee**

Members: Howard Ackerman (Chair), Chris Butler, Rich Sells, Tom Sheahan, and Brian Turrisi.

The Chairman requested scheduling budget discussions earlier than usual, noting that current meetings primarily provide information rather than allowing in-depth discussion. He acknowledged that recent improvements in financial management have expanded the committee’s capabilities.

2. Passenger Service Committee

Members: Leslie Adlam Flory (Chair), David Nelems, Jim Starnes, and Tom Sheahan

Leslie reported that recent testing and evaluations of passenger services were completed successfully, with plans to continue and expand activities in the upcoming season.

3. ARW Facilities Use and Improvement Committee

Members: Chris Butler (Chair), Mark Bailey, David Nelems, Jim Starnes, and Nick Mesenburg

The Chairman noted that the committee is working on a new project, exploring ideas and coordinating with County Council to obtain guidance and approvals as needed.

4. HXD Airport Improvement Committee

Members: Brian Turrisi (Chair), Howard Ackerman, Rich Sells, and Chris Butler

The Committee had nothing new to report this month. They will keep the board informed of any new developments.

5. Government Affairs Committee

Members: Rich Sells (Chair)

Rich provided an update on efforts to secure support from local representatives, noting ongoing challenges in advancing funding initiatives.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no Public Comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn was made at 11:09 a.m. It passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING

October 9, 2025 | 10:00 a.m.

TBD