

Habersham County Airport Commission

Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

Executive Conference Room

Habersham County Administration Building

130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523

The Habersham County Airport Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Executive conference room in the Habersham County Administration Building located at 130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA, 30523.

Members Present: D. Higgins, Lawrence Bridges, Justin Schapansky. NOTE: Chris Limbach submitted his resignation on February 5, 2025, effective immediately.

Members Absent: Andy Anderson

Others Present: County Staff, Members of the Public and Media.

Call to Order: D. Higgins called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Invocation and Pledge: Commissioner Kelly Woodall gave the invocation and D. Higgins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda: Motion by Lawrence Bridges, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted 3-0 to amend the agenda by adding "GDOT Statewide Report" to Other Reports, and to approve the agenda as amended.

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Justin Schapansky, seconded by Lawrence Bridges, and voted 3-0 to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2025 regular meeting.

Financials: Habersham County Airport Financials dated January 31, 2025, were presented by Kiani Holden. Year to date represents 58.3% of the fiscal year, therefore expenditures should be less than or equal to 58.3% and revenue should be at 58.3% minimum. The actual revenues that were collected were 47.6% of what was budgeted, and the actual expenses were 45.4% of what was budgeted. Kiani pointed out on the statement of revenues & expenditures that we are trending higher in revenue than expenditures. The fuel sales are starting to pick up now that the weather is beginning to improve. Tim explained that the airport closely monitors fuel prices around the area and stays very competitive while still making a good profit. Bill explained that we try to be on the lower side of average fuel prices to get more planes to fuel at our airport. The bank account balance was \$25,607 as of 1/31/25. Today's current balance is \$47,000. Kiani reminded the board that the bank balance is just a snapshot of a particular day's balance and will change due to revenues and expenditures. D Higgins asked if we accept rental payments online. Kiani explained that we do not take online payments currently, but that the county is looking into having that option in the future for several departments. We do take credit card payments for hangar rentals. Patti McLarty explained that when the county first took over the airport, she was taking credit card payments for hangar rent but that the airport is able to do that now and she rarely has to take a payment. Lawrence asked how payments are accepted at the airport. Patti explained that people drop off checks, pay by credit card or cash, prepay for several months, or keep their card on file to be billed monthly by airport staff.

Approval of Financials: Motion by Lawrence Bridges, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted 3-0 to approve the financials as presented.

Reports:

Fuel Sales and Airport Revenues: In the month of January 2025, the airport sold 3,977 gallons of Low Lead fuel and 3,703 gallons of Jet Fuel. Additional revenues for the month of January were \$61.98 for oil sales, \$300 in facility fees, \$80 in overnight fees, and \$125 in tie down fees, totaling \$605 in fees. Current full-serve fuel prices are \$4.84 per gallon for Jet A and \$5.35 for Low Lead. Self-serve Low Lead is \$5.62 per gallon. Lawrence Bridges asked what facility fees cover. Josh Hall explained that facility fees are for planes flying in but not buying fuel or receiving any other services. They occupy ramp space and take personnel time. The fee is very customary for the industry and is only for large jets and turbo props. The fees do not apply to single-engine piston or multi-engine piston aircraft. Kiani added that the fees have been charged by the airport for many years, but that to her knowledge the county never received the fees while the airport was managed by an outside FBO, as part of their contract was to keep the fees. Amanda added that per our FAA grant assurances, all the fees we charge are to go directly back to the airport. Justin Schapansky asked if Bill had come up with a solution to fill the diesel fuel trucks. Bill explained that the Public Works fuel truck will come out monthly and fill the trucks.

Airport Manager Update: Airport Manager Bill Harden gave the update. The upper gate has continued to give us trouble in rainy weather. The installers were called back several times to fix the issue but were unsuccessful. Bill called a different company (C&C) to look at it. They are putting a new “yelp” system in for Emergency Service, which had been wired incorrectly. Bill purchased new sensors for it. The vendor plans to rewire the whole gate. The EGR valve was replaced on the jet truck, and both trucks are working great. DBT came out to check the AWOS. Just the black box for the AWOS is \$1900 plus freight. Bill said the light that D Higgins put in the AWOS to keep it warm seems to be working so far. D asked Amanda if a new AWOS is included in the new lighting project, and she said no. The AWOS is on our CIP for the third or fourth year, but this item can be moved up if necessary. D asked if we could order the black box and keep it on hand and Bill said he would do that. DBT is the only supplier who carries the part. 40 more runway bulbs were ordered at a cost of \$700 but they are not good quality and many of them blow out immediately when installed, or within a couple of days. GE stopped making the good quality bulbs last year. There is nothing we can do except wait for the lighting project. Lawrence asked what Bill expects to spend in bulbs between now and when the lighting project is complete. Bill said probably \$3000 to \$4000. Lawrence then asked if there will be enough supply of the bulbs until then. Josh Hall said that 40 bulbs were ordered in December from Genesis Lamp, and they still have not arrived. There is a shortage because they are the only supplier for this type of bulb and many airports are still using the old type bulbs. Lawrence asked how much time the airport staff spends replacing bulbs and Josh said when they have replacement bulbs, it's almost daily. Josh said there are still many of the original GE bulbs on the runway that are still working, but those will eventually burn out. The only options we have right now are 1) Keep ordering the bulbs from Genesis Lamp, or 2) close the runway at night. Amanda Rostin said there are also missing lights on the runway but there is no point replacing them this close to the project. Lead Edge has issued a permanent NOTAM to inform the pilots that our lighting system is not 100% accurate. Amanda added that if we closed the runway at night, the FAA would get involved and it would be much more difficult to get our operations back. The runway is around 6,000 feet long, and per FAA the lights cannot be more than 200 feet apart, so they are typically placed 190 feet apart. Taxiway lights are closer together. So typically, we have 200-300 lights on the field. Bill continued his update. They are using the new tug, and he feels like it was a great purchase. New staff uniforms have been ordered from CINTAS. The back gate cable was cut by someone and will be replaced by Public Works. Bill doesn't know who cut the cable. Bill sent two prospects for the hangar projects to Lead Edge. Bill wants to talk to Jerry about installing a guardrail on the curve where cars keep running off the road and into our ditch and fence. Bill included the sign quotes in the meeting packets for the board to review. Bill has continued to work with Tracy in IT to get fobs for the fuel system for Horizon Dreams. The software company is recommending that each user would have their own unique ID code and a fob will be kept in

each aircraft. Airport staff will then have to bill Horizon Dreams for the fuel. The report will be broken down by user and aircraft. Tracy recommends that each user is required to have a credit check. Airport staff would be responsible for on-boarding and off-boarding users and will be responsible for the fob and equipment maintenance. Tracy wants to get more information from the software company before going further with the project. Justin stated this seems like a lot of hassle. D said it isn't as bad as you'd think. He said the main issue is that there is no point-of-sale transaction. So, every transaction will have to be billed by the airport. Josh Hall expressed concern about letting days or weeks of fuel charges add up without charging the customer. D said the airport should bill it out weekly. Kiani suggested billing the fuel at the end of each day. Amanda from Lead Edge said that customers having fobs for our fuel service will keep them coming here to purchase fuel. Tracy wants to test the program for a couple of weeks before going live. Bill shared the sign quotes with the commission. Lawrence asked if signs could be made that just say "Terminal". Tim said the county's sign shop could make those. D asked Bill for an update on the fence repair. He said one company came out to look at it yesterday, but he hasn't received the quote yet. D said approval for that wouldn't need to come from the board. D said he had been at the hangar one day last week and the Air Methods guys came running out to the fence to get it open, and there's no way for Air Methods to open the gate from the inside. D proposed giving Air Methods a gate remote to use when they need it, and he would also like a gate remote put in every ambulance in the county. Bill said that's why we have the Yelp function for the gate. D said that right now the Yelp system doesn't work, so he thinks the remotes will be good for a backup way to open the gate. D said he held the gate open until the ambulance got through there. Lawrence asked if the gate was not operational, what would Air Methods do? Josh explained that they have given Air Methods permission to go through the lower gate and drive up the taxiway in case of emergency. Amanda shared that some airports have a Knox box, which will allow them to open any gate in the county if necessary. Lawrence asked if we could spray all the kudzu this spring. Bill said we could do that.

Airport Update: Lead Edge Design Group – Amanda Rostin gave the update. Lead Edge is awaiting comments from GDOT on the lighting project any day now. They will have more information at the March meeting. The two ground leases that were awarded are out for execution. We do not currently have anyone interested in the other two ground leases. Lawrence Bridges asked Amanda about the timeline for the lighting project. Once the project is properly advertised and goes to bid for 30 days, then Lead Edge will bring the bids back to the Airport Commission for approval, then the Board of Commissioners will need to approve it. Then the contract would be executed (45-60 days), and once all materials are on site, it will be a 21-30 day closure time. Amanda said there should be no weather relayed delays like there might be on paving projects. We should have the project completed a year from now.

Old Business: None

New Business:

- Discuss/Recommend Agreement between Airport and Don and Julie Fraser regarding memorabilia display – Don and Julie Fraser requested a legal document stating that the helicopter memorabilia display of Harold Symes at the airport is their property and would be returned to them if the airport no longer wants to display the items. Motion by Lawrence Bridges, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and approved 3-0 to recommend the agreement to the Board of Commissioners.

Other Reports:

- Bill Dillashaw – Aviation Explorers Update – The monthly Explorers meeting was held last night and is held the second Monday of each month. They typically have 10-12 kids come to the meetings, with many different kids attending when they can, so it's never the same group twice. Bill said they are changing the meeting times from 6-8 to 6:30-8:30, since the majority of the kids do not live in Habersham County and have to drive a long way to get here. Andrew Wall and Bill Harden are helping him put together the event. The Fly-In is scheduled for April 26th. Mr. Dillashaw asked if his insurance certificate would also cover the

make-up day of May 3rd? Patti said she would look at the certificate but that he may need to contact the insurance company. Bill said we have a great and enthusiastic group of kids this year. He said that three of our former participants have gone on to receive college scholarships. The group generally meets at Michelle Curcio's hangar, weather permitting. Mr. Dillashaw asked if anyone had any suggestions of alternative meeting places they could use for larger groups or during bad weather. They have purchased hand-held radios to use during the fly-in. He asked if we would have enough room on our ramp to accommodate the airplanes. Andrew said you'll typically see 20 to 30 planes at a local fly-in at a time. D asked how we are advertising the event? Bill Dillashaw will work with the county PIO to help advertise it. Bill said several mothers asked about putting out flyers at their kids' schools. Bill is working on a flyer. Some of the parents are helping with the food preparation. Bill invited the Airport Commission to attend one of their meetings and to become involved. Bill passed around a design for a t-shirt the explorer group is designing. Kiani Holden informed Mr. Dillashaw that the Explorers donation account shows \$4,858.08 in revenue, \$1,498.93 in expenses, for a balance of \$3,359.15.

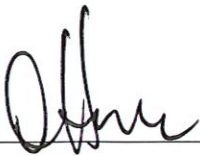
- GDOT Statewide Report – D brought a copy of the 2024 GDOT Statewide Report and pointed out that our fees are much lower than average. For example, the state average for tie-downs is \$44.15 per month and we are only charging \$25 per month. D wants us to look into charging for uncovered parking, and to make sure all our fees are in line and comparable for our region.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting is Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 9 a.m. in the Executive Conference Room at the Habersham County Administration Building located at 130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523.

Adjournment:

Motion by Lawrence Bridges, seconded by Justin Schapansky, and voted 3-0 to adjourn the meeting at 10:32 a.m.



Chairman – D. Higgins



Secretary – ~~Andy Anderson~~

