

HABERSHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUBJECT: Airport Commission Bylaws

DATE: September 1, 2026

BUDGET INFORMATION:

ANNUAL: No direct budget impact

CAPITAL: No direct budget impact

☒ **RECOMMENDATION**

☐ **POLICY DISCUSSION**

☐ **STATUS REPORT**

☐ **OTHER**

COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED ON: September 21, 2026

PURPOSE

To request approval and adoption of the proposed Bylaws of the Habersham County Airport Commission, as approved and recommended by the Airport Commission at its August 11, 2026 meeting.

BACKGROUND / HISTORY

The Habersham County Airport Commission advises the Board of Commissioners and County management regarding the safe, efficient, and effective maintenance, operation, planning, development, and public use of the Habersham County Airport. The Commission has operated without formally adopted bylaws.

The proposed bylaws establish a consistent governance and operating framework for the Airport Commission. They also make clear that the Airport Commission serves solely in an advisory capacity and that no executive, administrative, fiscal, legislative, or operational authority is delegated by the Board. The Airport Commission approved the proposed bylaws on August 11, 2026, and recommends them to the Board of Commissioners for final approval and adoption.

FACTS AND ISSUES

The proposed bylaws establish a five-member Airport Commission appointed by the Board of Commissioners. Members will serve three-year terms, and the Board will retain authority to fill vacancies, remove members, or abolish the Airport Commission. The Airport Commission will elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary each February.

The Airport Commission will meet monthly, with three members constituting a quorum and no proxy voting permitted. Its meetings, minutes, records, and public access must comply with Georgia law and County policy, and written reports must be submitted to the Board at least quarterly. The Commission's advisory work will include FAA compliance guidance, airport policies and procedures, maintenance and safety needs, coordination with any Fixed Base Operator, representation of airport users and tenants, marketing, capital planning, and other matters referred by the Board or County Manager.

Importantly, the bylaws preserve the County's authority over the airport. The Commission will remain advisory and may not direct County employees, contractors, consultants, or airport personnel. The County Manager or designee will serve as the principal administrative liaison. Members must comply with applicable ethics and conflict-of-interest requirements, committees will have no independent authority, and any future amendment to the bylaws will require Board approval.

OPTIONS

1. Approve and adopt the proposed Airport Commission bylaws
2. Deny adoption of the proposed bylaws.
3. Take other Board-defined action.

RECOMMENDED SAMPLE MOTION

Move to approve and adopt the Bylaws of the Habersham County Airport Commission, as approved and recommended by the Airport Commission on August 11, 2026.

DEPARTMENT

Airport

Prepared by: Bill Harden, Airport Manager

Director: _____

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS

County Manager: _____ Date: _____

**STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF HABERSHAM**

BYLAWS OF THE HABERSHAM COUNTY AIRPORT COMMISSION

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this body shall be the **Habersham County Airport Commission** ("Commission").

ARTICLE II: AUTHORITY

The Commission is established by the Habersham County Board of Commissioners pursuant to the laws of the State of Georgia and the ordinances and resolutions of Habersham County. The Commission serves solely in an advisory capacity to the Habersham County Board of Commissioners ("Board") and the Habersham County Manager or the County Manager's designee. Nothing in these Bylaws shall be construed as delegating executive, administrative, fiscal, or legislative authority to the Commission.

ARTICLE III: PURPOSE AND MISSION

The purpose of the Commission is to promote the safe, efficient, and effective maintenance, operation, planning, and development of the Habersham County Airport for the benefit of Habersham County and the aviation community. The Commission shall advise the County Manager or the County Manager's designee and the Board of Commissioners regarding all aspects of airport maintenance, operations, planning, development, safety, and public use.

ARTICLE IV: POWERS AND DUTIES

The Commission shall perform the duties assigned by the Board of Commissioners and shall include, but not be limited to, the following responsibilities:

1. Educate and advise the County regarding applicable Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, standards, guidance, and airport compliance requirements.

2. Review and recommend proposed rules, regulations, policies, and procedures governing airport operation.
3. Develop and recommend amendments to these Bylaws for approval by the Board of Commissioners.
4. Observe and report airport maintenance needs as they arise.
5. Serve as a liaison between the County and the Fixed Base Operator (FBO), if any.
6. Represent the interests of airport users, pilots, aviation businesses, tenants, and the general public while recognizing that all operational authority remains with Habersham County.
7. Assist the County in developing marketing strategies intended to promote airport utilization and economic development.
8. Assist in the planning and development of airport facilities and capital improvements.
9. Recommend operational and maintenance improvements to the County.
10. Review airport issues referred to the Commission by the Board of Commissioners or the County Manager.
11. Submit written reports to the Board of Commissioners at least quarterly regarding the condition, maintenance, operation, development, and status of the airport, together with any recommendations the Commission considers appropriate.
12. Perform such additional advisory duties as may be assigned by the Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Composition

The Commission shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Habersham County Board of Commissioners.

Section 2. Terms

Members shall serve three-year terms or until their successors are appointed and qualified.

Section 3. Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the Board of Commissioners for the remainder of the unexpired term unless otherwise provided by law or ordinance.

Section 4. Removal

The Board of Commissioners may, at any time, with or without cause, remove any member from the Commission or abolish the Commission in its entirety.

Section 5. Compensation

Commission members shall serve without compensation unless otherwise authorized by the Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers

The officers of the Commission shall be:

- Chairman
- Vice-Chairman
- Secretary

Section 2. Election

The Commission shall elect its officers annually during the regular meeting held in February. Officers shall serve until the next annual election or until their successors are elected. A majority vote of the Commission members present shall be required for election.

Section 3. Chairman

The Chairman shall:

1. Preside over all meetings.
2. Approve meeting agendas in consultation with County staff.
3. Preserve order and ensure compliance with these Bylaws.
4. Appoint committees when authorized by the Commission.
5. Serve as the primary spokesperson for the Commission when authorized.

6. Execute correspondence and reports approved by the Commission.
7. Perform other duties customary to the office.

Section 4. Vice-Chairman

The Vice-Chairman shall:

1. Perform the duties of the Chairman during the Chairman's absence or inability to serve.
2. Assist the Chairman as requested.
3. Perform other duties assigned by the Commission.

Section 5. Secretary

The Secretary shall:

1. Ensure that accurate minutes are prepared for all meetings.
2. Review and certify minutes approved by the Commission.
3. Ensure official records are maintained in coordination with County staff.
4. Ensure required reports are transmitted to the Board of Commissioners.
5. Perform other duties assigned by the Commission.

The Commission may rely upon County staff to prepare minutes, maintain records, and perform administrative support functions.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Commission shall meet once each month at a date, time, and location established by the Commission in coordination with County administration. Any regular meeting may be cancelled provided such cancellation is first coordinated between the Commission and the County Manager or his/her designee.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chairman or by a majority of the Commission members.

Section 3. Notice

Notice of meetings shall be provided in accordance with the Georgia Open Meetings Act (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq.) and County policy.

Section 4. Open Meetings

All meetings shall be conducted in compliance with the Georgia Open Meetings Act.

Section 5. Public Participation

The Commission may provide an opportunity for public comment in accordance with procedures adopted by the Commission.

ARTICLE VIII: QUORUM AND VOTING

Section 1. Quorum

Three (3) members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. Voting

Except as otherwise provided by law or these Bylaws, actions of the Commission shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting, provided a quorum exists. Each member shall have one vote. Proxy voting shall not be permitted.

ARTICLE IX: MINUTES AND RECORDS

The Commission shall maintain accurate minutes of all meetings. Minutes shall include:

- Date, time, and location of the meeting;
- Members present and absent;
- Motions and seconds;
- Vote of each motion; and
- Other information required by Georgia law.

Approved minutes and Commission records shall be maintained as public records by Habersham County in accordance with applicable records retention requirements.

ARTICLE X: REPORTS

The Commission shall submit written reports to the Board of Commissioners no less than quarterly. Reports should include, as appropriate:

- Airport operational status;
- Maintenance issues;
- Capital improvement progress;
- FAA compliance matters;
- Safety concerns;
- Airport development activities;
- Recommendations for Board consideration; and
- Other matters deemed significant by the Commission.

The Chairman, or another member designated by the Commission, may present reports to the Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE XI: COMMITTEES

The Commission may establish standing or special committees by majority vote for advisory purposes. Committees shall report recommendations to the full Commission and shall possess no independent authority to act on behalf of the Commission. Committee meetings shall comply with applicable provisions of the Georgia Open Meetings Act whenever required by law.

ARTICLE XII: PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The Chairman shall conduct meetings in an orderly and efficient manner. Unless inconsistent with these Bylaws, County ordinance, or applicable law, the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* may be used as a guide for parliamentary procedure but shall not be mandatory.

ARTICLE XIII: ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Commission members shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local ethics laws and County policies. Any member who has a financial or personal interest in a matter before the Commission shall disclose the nature of the interest prior to discussion and shall comply with applicable conflict-of-interest laws and County policy regarding participation or voting.

ARTICLE XIV: RELATIONSHIP WITH COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

The Commission recognizes that Habersham County owns and operates the airport through the Board of Commissioners and County administration. Recommendations adopted by the Commission shall be advisory only and shall not direct County employees, contractors, consultants, or airport personnel. The County Manager or the County Manager's designee shall serve as the principal administrative liaison between the Commission and County government.

ARTICLE XV: AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Commission at any regular meeting, provided the proposed amendment has been presented in writing at the preceding regular meeting. All amendments adopted by the Commission shall be submitted to the Habersham County Board of Commissioners and shall become effective only upon approval by the Board.

ARTICLE XVI: SEVERABILITY

If any provision of these Bylaws is determined to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

ARTICLE XVII: EFFECTIVE DATE

These Bylaws shall become effective upon approval by the Habersham County Board of Commissioners.

CERTIFICATION

The Bylaws of the Habersham County Airport Authority, to which this Certification is attached, were:

Adopted by the Habersham County Airport Commission on **August 11, 2026**.

Approved by the Habersham County Board of Commissioners on _____.

Commission Chairman

Commission Secretary