

The regular monthly meeting of the Gallatin Airport Authority was held September 11, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference Room at the Airport Customs and Operations Building. Board members present were Carl Lehrkind, Ted Mathis, Karen Stelmak, and Kendall Switzer. Also, present were Brian Sprenger - CEO, Aaron Collins – CCO, Chris Pomeroy - COO, and Troy Watling - CFO.

Carl Lehrkind, Board Chairman, welcomed everyone to the regular meeting of the Gallatin Airport Authority Board and called the meeting to order.

**1. Review and approve minutes of regular meeting held August 14, 2025**

Mr. Lehrkind asked if everyone had received their copy of the minutes and if they had any corrections or additions. There were none.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mathis moved approval of the amended minutes of the regular meeting held August 14, 2025. Ms. Stelmak seconded the motion, and all board members voted aye. The motion carried.

**2. Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

**3. Consider disposal of surplus property**

Mr. Sprenger said over time we have accumulated property that becomes obsolete and needs to be disposed of. We have a list that can be reviewed and edited as needed. Staff recommends using Ascent Auction Services most likely in November along with a bigger auction.

Mr. Switzer commended Chris Pomeroy and the team for their work on this. It is important to have up to date equipment. Ms. Stelmak agreed and said this is a nice opportunity for smaller airports to make use of the equipment.

**MOTION:** Ms. Stelmak moved to approve disposal of Airport Authority property and equipment identified by staff in the spreadsheet as not necessary to the conduct of Authority business or the preservation of Authority property and to retain Ascent Auction Services to dispose of the personal property and equipment identified by staff at public auction. Mr. Switzer seconded the motion. All board members voted aye. The motion carried.

**4. Consider donation of surplus 1991 Oshkosh Snow Blower and spare head to the Lewistown Municipal Airport**

Mr. Sprenger said we are not in need of this equipment and Lewistown Municipal Airport could use it. We have been blessed here at BZN, and it is nice to be able to do this. Staff members reached out to a couple of different airports in the area and Lewistown Municipal made a request for it.

Mr. Sprenger confirmed for Ms. Stelmak they know the equipment is being donated as is.

**MOTION:** Mr. Switzer moved to approve the donation of a surplus 1991 Oshkosh Snow Blower and spare head to the Lewistown Municipal Airport. Ms. Stelmak seconded the motion, and all board members voted aye. The motion carried.

**5. Consider advertising proposals by Big Sky Resort**

Mr. Sprenger said we were approached by Big Sky Resort about advertising at the airport. Big Sky Resort submitted some proposals. One is inside security. We don't have advertising there currently. We are not in support of a ticket kiosk due to space

considerations at this time. Aesthetics, along with setting a precedent, and revenue are a few considerations.

Ms. Stelmak mentioned that the request allows for a refresh three times per year. Mr. Sprenger said that would have to be approved. We hope that they will not make changes that often so staff would recommend that be reduced.

Mr. Switzer thanked everyone for their work on this. Mr. Switzer said we have a standard to create a travel experience for all the traveling public and to promote all that Montana has to offer. Big Sky is a huge entity, and it is positive for the valley. However, too much advertising cannot be justified only by revenue. We have allowed advertising by Montana State University and Yellowstone National Park, both public institutions. Big sky is not a public institution.

Ms. Stelmak said she has heard many comments on how "Montana" our airport is and we want to be careful not to change that.

Mr. Mathis said he is concerned about putting a huge mural in the hold room concourse area because we currently don't have advertising there. We approved small advertisements in the gate areas. Mr. Mathis is not concerned about the wall by the MSU banner. This is also a moving target with the construction. It doesn't make sense for Big Sky Resort to spend money on something they have to change as construction continues.

Margaret Siberell, a member of the marketing team for Big Sky Resort, said these are initial concepts and they are willing to work with the airport on them. The gondola is a new offering so that anyone can get from the base to the top of the peak without being a skier.

Ms. Siberell said this ad makes sense in the airport to provide the traveling public an opportunity to create a lasting memory in Big Sky.

Mr. Lehrkind said he agrees with the comments made by the other board members and suggested tabling the request until after the expansion when we have a better idea of the spaces available.

Ms. Siberell asked when that could be. Mr. Sprenger said the first potential opportunity would be in the winter of 2026.

Mr. Lehrkind and the board agree that we don't want to diminish our relationship with Big Sky Resort. Mr. Switzer said it makes sense to get some construction done and then make determinations. Mr. Mathis suggested that we have our professional consultants weigh in on a project of this size.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mathis moved to table this agenda item. Mr. Switzer seconded the motion. All board members voted aye. The motion carried.

## **6. Report on East Terminal Expansion Project**

Travis Kabalin with Martel Construction provided an update on the progress of the expansion. The next bid package is coming. We are currently working on Schedule I which is the structure including concrete. We are partially into Schedule II with some initial installation of plumbing and mechanical.

Schedule III is mostly interior finishes. It is out for bid now and is anticipated to be a \$74 million package. Bids will be presented at the November board meeting. We are deferring \$17 million to future schedules due to timing to avoid buying equipment and materials that

would become outdated prior to their use. There has been a lot of interest in the bid for Schedule III which should benefit the airport with more competition amongst bidders.

Drone footage of the project was played. Images and plans for the concrete sequencing were displayed. 40% of the concrete has been poured since May. The first 220-ton crane will arrive onsite tomorrow. This is a unique project with 800 feet of linear work. Mr. Kabalin reviewed the sequence of the project and displayed plan images. Mr. Kabalin said this has been a team effort and all have been working together well. Mr. Kabalin offered tours to board members and suggested that Friday afternoons are a good time.

Ben Lloyd with Hennebery Eddy Architects provided some updates on the project. Scheduled III contains 668 pages of documents that represent the interior tasks. A lot of decisions were made in those 668 pages. There was a photograph of Three Dollar Bridge near Ennis, Montana. The image had to be reshot to be used on the glass near the new checkpoint. The location for the image was displayed and the design concept was explained.

The new images were presented for review. Each shot has different color profiles, but they are essentially the same. The glass will have two-sided glazing. The same image will be on each side of the glass wall, but it will not be backwards. The glass being used reduces smudges significantly.

Mr. Lloyd said overall their team prefers the middle image. All agreed image B was the right choice. Mr. Mathis said this is a prime example of why we want to be careful with big advertising.

## **7. Airport Business Report – Aaron Collins**

Total operations for August were 11,451, down .2% for the month and down for the year by 4.6%. Rolling 12-month operations are 117,325 which is below the record by 10%. The tower being closed during certain times is a contributing factor. There were nearly 1,000 corporate landings over 12,500 lbs., up 11.2% compared to last August and up 13.4% for the year. There were 1,207 corporate landings over 9,000 lbs. which is up 14.7% and up 13.5% YTD. There were 39 customs clearances this August. Total revenue enplanements were 175,866 which is up 10% for the month and up 5.6% YTD. Rolling 12-month enplanements were 1,373,495 which is a new record by about 16,000 enplanements. Total deplanements were 169,667 which is a 9.8% increase and a 5.4% increase YTD. Commercial airline landings were 1,440, up 21% for the month and 6.8% year over year. The load factor was 86.5%, which is very healthy, although down 4.1% from last year and up .5% YTD. Fuel dispensed for July was over 3 million gallons, which is a 25% increase for the month and a 7.3% increase year over year.

We have met with the credit rating company. They have finished their review. We can expect our rating to be similar to what it was in the past. Our Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan application should be competitive.

Our Chief Information Officer, Bob Edgar, worked on our Cyber Security Incident Response Plan. The plan was reviewed by a member of the TSA cyber security division. He was very impressed by the plan and the implementations.

#### **8. Airport Operations Report – Chris Pomeroy**

We have a fully staffed operations and maintenance team. On August 27, we had CPR training that was well attended and went smoothly. Staff did a great job and we received good feedback from the attendees.

Mr. Pomeroy provided some updates on airfield projects. Our Navigation Aid project is behind schedule by about 2 weeks. The completion is planned for around October 2 when our ILS will come back online. The MALSR will come online on May 14 along with new flight procedures. The RVR and Category II are expected to come online around January 22, after the burn in of the facilities.

We have made some adjustments to the water application on the turf runway. We have had some good growth from the seed that was put down. That area should be operational towards the end of the season.

The next big project we are planning for is the Taxiway Bravo extension. We attended a pre-design meeting with the FAA on August 26. That project will be out for bid in February.

The ARFF/SRE building has received temporary occupancy, but there is more work to be done. We are hoping for substantial completion by the end of the month.

We have been working on the Aircraft Deicing Facility (ADF). A temporary facility and permanent facility are planned. The permanent facility will be located west of the Signature fuel farm. It will have 4 tanks for type I fluid and 4 tanks for type III fluid. An image of the islands and the tank structure was presented. The masonry of the facility will match as much as possible to the Signature building. We are working with LAZ.

Menzies has been contracted by the airlines and will work on their behalf to manage the facility. The maintenance of the facility will be handled by LAZ and local providers.

Mr. Pomeroy has been pleased with the responsiveness of our FAA contact for the Tower transition. The draft pilot program is currently being reviewed by the FAA risk management team. The plan is on schedule to be presented to Congress in November.

On August 18 Serco hired a new controller who is currently training. Serco brought in a temporary controller from Sun Valley. The new controller should be on board November 17. Senator Sheehy is asking the FAA a lot of questions about this project. That will help us to get 2 more controllers. Ms. Stelmak requested updates throughout the project.

#### **9. Airport CEO Report – Brian Sprenger**

Mr. Sprenger reported that we had nearly double the number of passengers this summer compared to the summer in 2019. The number of passengers this summer was the equivalent of an entire year in 2015. In 3 months, we handled the number of passengers that Missoula, Kalispell or Billings handle individually for the entire year.

Overnight cars for August were 98% of the previous year and 103% month to date. August concessions were 115% and month to date are 111%. Month to date for September passengers is up 8%. September growth started strong but now we are seeing slower growth.

We expect to receive the \$800,000 supplemental grant next week from the FAA. That should fully fund our 2024-2025 AIP projects.

Mr. Sprenger complimented the entire team for all the work and planning for this past summer. Considering the construction and passenger records, things went much more smoothly than expected. That was due to extra planning and cooperation. Mr. Sprenger has never seen the airlines work better together than they did this summer

#### **10. Consider bills and approve for payment**



Standard bills for the month were sent in advance of the meeting. The additional bills were reviewed and detailed by Mr. Sprenger.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mathis moved to approve the bills for payment. Mr. Switzer seconded the motion. All board members voted aye. The motion carried.

**11. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.



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Carl Lehrkind, IV, Board Chairman