



3300 Airport Road
Escanaba, MI 49829
Administration: (906)786-4902;

Brian Herioux, Chair Airpt. Brd. Dee Dee Anderson-Skradski, V-Chair Airpt. Brd. Will Carne, Airpt. Brd.
Matthew Jensen, Cty Brd Rep Kelli van Ginhoven, Cty Brd Rep Brad Reed, Airpt. Brd. Jay Bostwick, Airpt. Brd

**DELTA COUNTY AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD
DECEMBER 9, 2024, 8:30 a.m.
REGULAR MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting of the Delta County Airport Advisory Board was held this date pursuant to the Delta County Airport Advisory Board Schedule for 2024 at **8:33 a.m.** Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: *Brian Herioux, Chair; DeeDee Anderson-Skradski, Vice Chair; Commissioner Jensen; Commissioner Van Ginhoven; Will Carne; Brad Reed; Robert Ranstadler, Airport Manager; and Robyn Morrison, Assistant Airport Manager.*

ABSENT: *Jay Bostwick (resigned)*

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT (INCLUDING ANY OFFICIALS EXTERIOR TO THE AIRPORT BOARD OR AIRPORT MANAGEMENT): Kylie Degenaer, Unifi Station Manager; Jenna Nelson, Unifi Ramp and Service Agent; Lily Simmons, WZMQ-19; Andrea Nummilien, former Delta County Airport Manager; Ashleigh Young, Delta County Administrator; Phillip Trissell, retired airport manager, Rapid River; and Dennis Hopkins, private pilot and airport tenant at large.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 11/18/2024. Motion to approve minutes from previous meetings by Vice Chair Anderson-Skradski, supported by Mr. Carne. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: 12/9/2024. Motion to approve agenda by Mr. Carne, supported by Commissioner Jensen. MOTION CARRIED.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT (ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY): None

VI. AIRPORT TENANT ISSUES: None

VII. REPORTS

A. Management Report: Attached

B. Annual Financial Report: Due September 2025

C. PFC Account/Project Update: See Management Report (attached)

D. Commercial Air Service: November MTD: 1,483 (+15 from November 2023); YTD: 15,137 (+1,075 from YTD 2023)

E. **Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP):** Attached

VIII. GENERAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS

A. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Overdue Airport Administration Personnel Reviews

Commissioner Jensen motioned to continue with administrative reviews in conjunction with employees' exit interviews. Supported by Vice Chair Anderson-Skradski. Unanimously CARRIED.

Mr. Carne motioned that at least one Airport Operations employee be involved in the administrative management review process. Supported by Commissioner Jensen. Unanimously CARRIED.

2. Letter of Support for Additional Full-Time Airport Administrative Staff

Commissioner Jensen motioned to send the Letter of Support, to the County Board of Commissioners. Supported by Mr. Carne.

[Commissioner Van Ginhoven left the meeting at 10:00 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 10:03 a.m.].

Following discussion, Commissioner Jensen moved to withdraw his previous motion to send the Letter of Support directly to the County Board of Commissioners. Supported by Commissioner Van Ginhoven.

Commissioner Jensen motioned to send the Letter of Support, including the two created job descriptions (full-time Airfield Operations Manager and full-time Land/Business Development Officer), to the County Personnel Committee. Supported by Mr. Carne.

Chair Herioux added that he would like to see the letter carry forward to the County Board then called for a vote. Motion unanimously CARRIED.

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. Expiration of Temporary Airport Clerk Appointment, Corinne Way (12/2/24)

Chair Herioux motioned for the Airport Manager draft a Letter of Appreciation, on behalf of the Delta County Board of Commissioners and Airport Advisory Board, in recognition of Mrs. Corinne Way. Supported by Vice Chair Anderson-Skradski. Motion unanimously CARRIED.

2. Resignation of Board Member Mr. Jay Bostwick (effective 12/4/25)

This item was for informational and documentation purposes only.

3. Resignation of Assistant Airport Manager Robyn Morrison (effective 12/17/24)

This item was for informational and documentation purposes only.

4. Resignation of Airport Manager Robert Ranstadler (effective 2/7/25)

This item was for informational documentation purposes only.

5. Proposal for Formation of Airport Board By-Law Subcommittee

Chair Herioux motioned to form a two-person Airport Board By-Law Subcommittee, consisting of Mr. Carne and Mr. Reed, to perform a “first pass” [initial review] of the current by-laws, due no later than the next regular meeting of the Airport Advisory Board. Supported by Vice Chair Anderson-Skradski. Motion unanimously CARRIED.

6. Tentative Joint Meeting with Delta County Board of Commissioners

This item was for informational documentation purposes only.

IX. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT (OTHER THAN AGENDA):

Ms. Andrea Nummilien asked if there would be an opportunity for public comment at the Joint Meeting, which was scheduled to follow the Airport Board meeting. After receiving an affirmation, she said she would reserve her comments until that meeting. Ms. Nummilien additionally reminded the Board that the Airport would be due for its upcoming triennial FAA live drill this year. She stated that Paul Geyer ran this last year and that he was extremely knowledgeable of the requirements for this event. She emphasized the importance of planning in advance for this training event and recommended that action be taken immediately. The Board and Airport Manager acknowledged her recommendation.

Mr. Dennis Hopkins commented that everything that Commissioner Van Ginhoven and Airport Manager Ranstadler mentioned during the meeting magnified his belief that the Airport Advisory Board was a bureaucratic waste of time. He pointed to comments that a few of the Board members offered during the meeting, such as some Board members not knowing what others were doing or some Board members not making time to complete tasks, as examples of this issue. He additionally mentioned that this was the first Board meeting that he attended in a very long time during which a pair of Board members agreed to take direct action on issues. Mr. Hopkins stated that he did not take personal issue with any members of the Board but that, as a body, it was time to “clean house” and get things done.

Mr. Phil Trissell stated that he had applied for the airport manager position a short while before Mr. Ranstadler had done the same. At the time, Mr. Trissell stated that he realized that the airport manager position was an “impossible job,” due to staffing and material shortages. He commended Mr. Ranstadler for taking on what Mr. Trissell considered an impossible task. He concluded by stating he decided to not pursue the position back in 2023 because he did not want to end up in the shoes of Mr. Ranstadler, who has had to face many overwhelming challenges. He concluded by reemphasizing that he felt that Mr. Ranstadler had done an excellent job, based on his own years of experience as an airport management at several airports, including South Lake Tahoe

Airport. Finally, he added that Mr. Ranstadler's assessments were essentially correct, in that the County would face difficulty in finding a replacement manager with the Airport's current salary and staffing conditions.

Unifi Station Manager Kylie Degenauer stated that she thought that the manager and Assistant Manager had done great jobs at the Airport.

X. AIRPORT BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Carne extended gratitude to the Manager and Assistant Manager for originally stepping up to fill their current positions. He recounted some of steps of the current manager's hiring process and again restated that Mr. Ranstadler had done a good job. He then addressed Mr. Hopkin's comments, defending the validity and relevance of the Airport Board, by citing the Board's involvement in the procurement of new SRE, the ARFF truck, the move to a new Airport Consultant (Mead & Hunt), the Board's push for the Main Terminal Expansion project, and growth in annual enplanements. He additionally acknowledged that former Airport Manager Andrea Nummilien did a good job while also facing serious staffing limitations, especially during the COVID pandemic. Mr. Carne stated that he had also been in contact with a potential applicant, Mr. Christopher Hopkins, but that offered salaries were limited by the current budget. He apologized to the current manager for him having to take over the Airport in the condition which he found it. Mr. Carne additionally stressed the importance of engaging the County Board in keeping and retaining quality managers. He stated that Christopher Hopkins had offered to come speak to the County Board about possible solutions and that Mead & Hunt might also be a resource for hiring a replacement. Mr. Carne concluded by stressing the importance of hiring a replacement airport manager as soon as possible, so the current manager could begin the transition process.

Commissioners Jensen and Van Ginhoven reassured Mr. Carne that all his concerns would be addressed in the upcoming Joint Meeting. Commissioner Van Ginhoven stated that she had also been in contact with Christopher Hopkins and that she had forwarded his written recommendations to the County Board of Commissioners for their review prior to the Joint Meeting.

Mr. Carne added that he knew that the Christopher Hopkins had already contacted Mr. Ranstadler and that the current manager had already made Mead & Hunt aware of his resignation. Mr. Carne added that Stephanie Ward, of Mead & Hunt, would also be a valuable resource in facilitating the upcoming management change at the Airport.

Commissioner Jensen and Chair Herioux discussed the unprecedented nature of the upcoming Joint Meeting and the reasons why Commissioner Jensen opted for a Joint Meeting rather than a Committee of the Whole [i.e., a Joint Meeting has the capacity to vote upon motions and resolutions whereas a Committee of the Whole does not].

Chair Herioux offered his appreciation to the current Manager and Assistant Manager for their work, while also stating that he wished they weren't leaving. He concluded by stating he would reserve the rest of his comments for the Joint Meeting.

Vice Chair Anderson-Skradski said she wanted to reiterate the Chair's comments by thanking the current management team for their service to the Airport. She also said that

she thought former Airport Manager Andrea Nummilien had done a great job too and was sorry to have seen her leave. The Vice Chair also stated that she was not the appropriate decisionmaker to determine the Airport Board's overall relevance, but that the decision was the starting point from which everything else should be considered. She emphasized the importance of mutual respect and avoiding public rhetoric in moving forward in working with the County to decide upon the relevance of the Airport Board. The Vice Chair also said that the community and public would have to consider the relevance and future of the Airport as a whole. She thanked everyone for their time and efforts, including the community, which has been very vocal about the Airport over the past few days. Vice Chair Anderson-Skradski concluded by again thanking everyone and wishing everybody happy holidays.

- XI. ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn at **10:35 a.m.** made by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Mr. Reed. Motion CARRIED.

Next Board Meeting (Reorganizational) January 13, 2025 @ 8:30 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

Robert C. Ranstadler
Airport Manager

Brian Herioux
Airport Board Chair