

**HELENA REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

*LOCATED: 2850 MERCER LOOP, HELENA, MONTANA 59602, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR, BOARD ROOM  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2025, CALLED TO ORDER AT 11:34 A.M.*

**MEETING**

**In Attendance:**

Bob Heberly, Chair  
Troy McGee, Vice Chair  
Jason Davis, Secretary  
Debbie Havens, Commissioner  
Kendra Lenhardt, Commissioner  
Jim McCormick, Commissioner  
Trever Kirkland, Commissioner  
Jeff Wadekamper, Airport Director

**Others Attending:**

Dan Sorenson, Morrison Maierle Engineers  
Mike Talia, Jackson, Murdo & Grant, P.C.  
Ross Marty, Assistant Airport Director  
Connie Lundin, Financial Manager  
Amber Huggett, Office Manager

**Excused:**

Cory Kesler, Morrison Maierle Engineers

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

➔ No public comments were received.

**MINUTES**

**MOTION** was made by Secretary Davis, **seconded** by Commissioner McCormick to approve the Minutes from August 19, 2025, Airport Authority Meeting.  
**Motion carried unanimously.**

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner Havens, **seconded** by Commissioner Lenhardt to approve the Minutes from September 15, 2025, Airport Authority Special Meeting.  
**Motion carried unanimously.**

**AIP PROJECTS**

AIP-68 - Airport Master Plan – Morrison Maierle continues work on the Master Plan. At the October meeting, they will present various development alternatives, which have been shared publicly via meetings, emails, and website postings. Work is also underway on land use and environmental chapters.

AIP-68 Project Claims

Morrison Maierle (Project Management) \$19,481.00

**MOTION** was made by Secretary Davis, **seconded** by Commissioner Lenhardt to Approve AIP-68 Project Claims in the Amount of **\$19,481.00**.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

AIP-71 - Hangar Area Taxiway and Fire Hydrant Project – The project is near completion. Remaining work includes installation of the final section of waterline to the former Air Ryder hangar (Garber Hangar), with seeding and topsoil work scheduled for October.

AIP-71 Project Claims:

Morrison Maierle (Engineering, Construction Mgmt.) \$20,696.60

TOTAL CLAIM **\$20,696.60**

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner McCormick, **seconded** by Commissioner Havens to Approve AIP-71 Project Claims in the Amount of **\$20,696.60**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

AIP-71 - Change Order #1 with Montana Materials - \$26,055.80

Unforeseen project issues required the following change order items:

1. **CO1-1:** Plan changes per City of Helena & DEQ comments. Resulted in a **credit of \$7,160.00**.
2. **CO1-2:** Additional bid items from city changes, including new gate valves. **Cost: \$21,245.00**
3. **CO1-3:** Extra labor due to unanticipated site conditions related to connecting to a 20" steel water main. **Cost: \$6,075.00**
4. **CO1-4:** Exploratory excavation to locate service line to Garber hangar. **Cost: \$6,123.80**

*Note: FAA has approved this change order.*

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner Havens, **seconded** by Commissioner McCormick to Approve **AIP-71 Change Order #1 with Montana Materials in the Amount of \$26,055.80**.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Non-AIP Project Claim Montana Materials - \$8,349.00

City requested new service line connections at Helena College and Garber hangars. Due to challenges in locating the water line, the Airport Authority partnered with the Garbers to demo an outbuilding to trace the line. Airport agreed to cover half the demolition cost.

- **Project Claim Total:** \$8,349.00 (Airport’s Share: \$4,174.50)

**MOTION** was made by Vice Chair McGee, seconded by Commissioner Lenhardt to Approve a Project Claim with Montana Materials in the Amount of \$8,349.00.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

AIP-74 - Security Access Control System Upgrade Project

Lantek continues to pull wiring and stage equipment. Two systems will run concurrently during transition to maintain security.

AIP-74 Project Claims:

Lantek PCE#1 – Construction	\$131,072.50
<u>1% State of MT Withholding Tax</u>	<u>\$ 1,323.96</u>
<b>TOTAL CLAIM</b>	<b>\$132,396.46</b>

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner Lenhardt, **seconded** by Secretary Davis to Approve AIP – 74 Security Access Control Upgrade Project Claims in the Amount of **\$132,396.46**.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**AIRPORT AUTHORITY ISSUES**

Helena Air Service Alliance Recruitment Update - *Information Only*

The team met with 10 airlines at the Montana Airline Rendezvous in Kalispell. Highlights include:

- **Delta:** Helena-Minneapolis remains a target; constrained by 76-seat jet fleet limits. Likely 2027 before they have available aircraft to consider this route.
- **United:** Positive outlook for Helena; potential future Chicago service discussed.
- **American:** Still interested in Helena; service tied to \$1 Million US DOT Grant in 2027. 90 new E175 jets on order and new gates being constructed at DFW Airport.
- **Alaska:** Satisfied with current performance; Portland flight possible in 2-3 years as aircraft deliveries increase fleet availability. Very tight on aircraft availability currently.
- **Sun Country:** Intrigued by Helena’s potential; limited by aircraft availability due to fleet of Boeing 737’s and this year 8 of them were transitioned to cargo routes for Amazon.
- **Allegiant:** Acknowledged Helena’s central position and outstanding airport low-cost use fee economics; considering further analysis.
- **Cape Air & Southern Airways:** Do not operate suitable aircraft for Helena-Billings route.
- **Southwest & WestJet:** Not pursuing Helena in near-term but open to future opportunities depending on possible business model transitions.

Overall, Helena’s business case and incentive packages were well received, but aircraft availability and infrastructure constraints continue to influence airline decisions.

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

- ➔ General comments and updates provided by Assistant Director Ross Marty.

## LEASES

### Forest Service Lease Amendment

Proposed to add former Federal Motor Carriers space to current lease. Agreement will maintain existing revenue by adjusting rental rate per new GSA standards.

- **New Annual Lease Total: \$643,875.31**

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner McCormick, seconded by Commissioner Kirkland to Approve Amending a Non-Aviation Building Lease with the U.S. Forest Service to Add Leased Space Previously Occupied by Federal Motor Carriers.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### Steve Fulton Hangar Lease Amendment

Request to amend a **non-commercial hangar lease** to a **commercial aviation hangar lease** for the purpose of **flight training**. All **Airport Minimum Standards** for flight training and insurance will be met.

**MOTION** was made by Secretary Davis, seconded by Commissioner McCormick to Approve Amending a Non-Commercial Aviation Hangar Land Lease with Steve Fulton to a Commercial Aviation Hangar Land Lease to Include Flight Training.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### Piedmont Air Inc. Lease Renewal

Renewal of a **5-year Commercial Aviation Lease** renewal for Piedmont Air Inc., which meets all FAA Part 135 and Airport Minimum Standards.

**MOTION** was made by Secretary Davis, seconded by Commissioner Havens to Approve Commercial Aviation Lease Renewal with Piedmont Air Inc.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

## CONSENT AGENDA

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner McCormick, **seconded** by Commissioner Lenhardt to Approve the Consent Agenda.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

## DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

- ➔ General comments and updates provided by Director Jeff Wadekamper.

## ADJOURNMENT

- ➔ There being no further business, the regular meeting adjourned at 12:48 P.M.

**REPORTS PRESENTED FOR REVIEW**

- ➔ Director's Report and Board Report – *Jeff Wadekamper*
- ➔ Assistant Director's Report – *Ross Marty*
- ➔ Fiscal YTD Financials – *Connie Lundin*
- ➔ FAA Funded Airport Improvement Project Report – *Cory Kesler*

*/s/ Robert Heberly*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bob Heberly, Chair

ATTEST:

*/s/ Jason Davis*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jason Davis, Secretary

(SEAL)

Minutes prepared by:  
Amber Huggett, Office Manager  
10/14/2025