Foothills Regional Airport Authority
Minutes
Stated Meeting
January 28, 2026
Airport Terminal Building

PRESENT: Those members present were: Joe Gibbons, Chairman; and Board members: Jeff Branch, Tommy Fraley, Tom Smith, Randy Burns, Butch McSwain, Lewis Carswell and Bruce Roberts. Also present were: Brent Brinkley, Airport Manager; Derek Brown, Assistant Manager; Norm Sherwood, Accountant; Pat Turney, Engineer; Keith Rigsbee, City Attorney; Jessica Lowman, Clerk; and members of the public.

McSwain and Lowman attended remotely due to inclement weather.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gibbons at 12:16 p.m. A quorum was present.

AGENDA: Upon motion by Burns, and seconded by Fraley, the Agenda was adopted as presented.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Upon motion by Burns, seconded by Smith and passed unanimously, Chairman Gibbons was reappointed Chairman and Jeff Branch was reappointed Vice Chairman for the coming year and continuing until new officers are elected for 2027.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon motion by Burns, seconded by Fraley, and passed unanimously, the Minutes of the regularly scheduled September 24, 2025 meeting were approved as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: Mr. Sherwood reviewed the cash balances report and provided a quarterly summary for the period beginning October 1. He reported that total cash across all accounts increased during the quarter, with most of the change attributable to activity in the North Carolina Capital Management Trust accounts. He reviewed the check register and noted several larger disbursements during the quarter, including multiple fuel purchases and project-related payments. Significant payments included approximately $138,000 to Mountaineer Contractors in October, approximately $74,000 to Talbert, Bright & Ellington for engineering services, and additional

project-related payments in December, including another $180,000 payment to Mountaineer Contractors.

Mr. Sherwood reported that as of late January, the reconciled total cash balance was approximately $8.63 million, with approximately $110,000–$115,000 held in the operating account. He also noted routine maintenance expenditures during the quarter, including electrical and equipment-related work.

A motion to approve the financial report as presented was made by Smith, seconded by Carswell, and approved unanimously.

FBO REPORT: Mr. Brown presented the FBO report and advised that accounts receivable remain in good standing, with 94% of all outstanding balances within the current billing cycle. He noted that a small portion of past-due balances was related to expired payment cards, which have since been updated.

Payroll expenses remained consistent with prior months, including some call-out hours. Hangar occupancy remains strong at approximately 89% overall, with lower tie-down utilization accounting for most of the vacancy.

Fuel sales continue to reflect the impact of reduced activity compared to the prior year, with avgas sales down approximately 14% year-to-date and jet fuel sales down approximately 35%, largely attributable to last year's unusually high sales volumes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ashley Bolick, Director of Caldwell County Economic Development, provided an update on efforts to pursue a federal EDA disaster recovery grant application to support potential sewer extension to the airport. She reported that six firms submitted qualifications for a preliminary engineering report, and McGill & Associates was selected; a proposal is pending. She also reported $50,000 in grant funding from North Carolina Railroad to support the engineering work and noted a UNC/Chapel Hill partner study evaluating the regional benefit/ROI of extending sewer service.

OLD BUSINESS:

a. Parallel Taxiway–
Engineer Pat Turney provided an update on the parallel taxiway project and explained that formal grant agreements have been delayed, but bid timeframes require action to keep the project moving. He

recommended the Board accept grant award amounts now so contracts can be executed as soon as agreements are received.

Grant amounts stated:

- FAA grant (federal share): $5,306,272, with local match $589,586
- State grant: $1,800,000, with local match $200,000

Upon motion by Fraley, seconded by Burns, and approved unanimously, the Board accepted the FAA and State grant awards for the parallel taxiway project.

Turney then summarized the bids received and recommended award to Mountaineer Contractors:

- Schedule 1 (Parallel Taxiway): $6,648,617
- Schedule 2 (Taxi lane serving new hangar sites; TRDF-funded) $1,021,882.50

Upon motion by Burns, seconded by Roberts, the Board unanimously approved awarding the Schedule 1 construction contract to Mountaineer Contractors in the amount of $6,648,617 and Schedule 2 to Mountaineer Contractors in the amount of $1,021,882.50.

b. New T-Hangar/NC Grant

Pat Turney reported the T-hangar site preparation project is near completion, with limited pavement areas holding water. The contractor agreed to remove and replace affected areas when temperatures are favorable for asphalt work and plant availability permits, with completion anticipated in late winter/early spring.

Turney reported that sealed bids were opened on December 12, 2025, (second bid opening) with four bids received. The apparent low bidder (Garanco, Inc.) was determined to be irregular and non-responsive due to DOT prequalification/work code requirements, missing or “N/A” unit pricing for certain bid items, and subcontracting percentages exceeding contract limits.

Upon motion by Carswell and seconded by Fraley, the Board unanimously voted to reject Garanco’s bid as irregular/non-responsive.

Turney advised the Board that the next lowest bid was from DDI of Hickory, LLC in the amount of $710,000 and that this bid did not have

any irregular or non-responsive items. Turney reported that his review found that DDI of Hickory, LLC was the apparent lowest responsive and responsible bidder, and he recommended award of the contract to DDI of Hickory, LLC.

Upon a subsequent motion by Fraley and seconded by Carswell, the Board unanimously awarded the construction contract to DDI of Hickory, LLC (next lowest bidder) in the amount of $710,000. *(Bid amounts reported: Garanco, Inc. $696,700; DDI of Hickory, LLC $710,000; J.D. Goodrum, Inc. $715,038.96.)*

Turney presented a delayed internal work authorization for design-through-bidding professional services from his firm for the new 8-unit T-hangar building in the amount of $76,688.24 (lump sum), to be funded through applicable grant funding. Upon motion by Fraley and seconded by Smith, the Board unanimously authorized the Chairman to sign the work authorization as presented.

c. Maintenance Hangar Lease

Airport Manager Brinkley reported the current maintenance tenant is expected to vacate by late February. Brinkley presented a lease agreement with PF Flyers (service center) to occupy the maintenance hangar, with a one-year incentive consisting of waived hangar rent and utilities, followed by standard rent in years two and three. The lease includes a 90-day termination provision by either party.

Upon motion by Burns and seconded by Fraley, the Board unanimously approved the lease agreement, provided that there are no further changes to the Draft presented today.

d. Runway 3 Localizer

Brinkley requested authorization to begin the process of decommissioning the localizer due to age, reliability concerns, and ongoing monthly maintenance costs.

Upon motion by Burns and seconded by Fraley, the Board unanimously approved proceeding, as proposed by Brinkley.

e. Airport Maintenance Items

Brinkley reported quotes for vegetation work along the fence line ($4,500) and a corporate hangar insulation/wall panel project ($26,400) both funded in the current budget; no action was requested.

Staff reported that the Division of Aviation is initiating an Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) equipment and installation project, which will be added as a recurring Old Business update on future Agendas, with the goal of improving system reliability by replacing the existing landline connection with a radio link. Estimated installation costs depend on whether the existing site can be reused.

f. There was discussion by Tommy Fraley, Tom Smith, and others regarding residential and fly-in airpark communities. It was suggested that the Board explore the feasibility of such a community on Foothills Regional Airport property. Board members agreed to add further discussion of this subject matter as an Agenda item at the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING:

The Chairman stated the next meeting would be set for noon on Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at the Airport Terminal.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 2:02 p.m.

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Joe Gibbons, Chairman Jessica Lowman, Clerk