

**MACON COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY**  
**Minutes of the Regular Meeting Held on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

The Macon County Airport Authority holds its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at the Macon County Airport. All members are present. Also present are Gary Shields, County Commissioner; Stuart Sloan, Legal Counsel; Greg Kershaw, Project Engineer; Jim Crowell, Jackson County Airport; and Teresa McDowell, Clerk. Chair Schmitt welcomes all attendees and calls the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING HELD JULY 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2023:** After a brief discussion, Member Rhodes makes a motion to approve the minutes as forwarded. Member Shuler seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent.

**PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION:** NONE

**REVIEW OF VIRTOWER SYSTEM:** Jim Crowell, the manager of the Jackson County Airport is present and presents a demonstration of the VIRTOWER system which Jackson County utilizes. The Macon County Airport Authority is interested in acquiring the system. The VIRTOWER system is a counting system for aircraft which is very useful for keeping accurate records of activities, including plane landings and take-offs. Mr. Crowell demonstrates the capabilities of this system, including developing reports, statistics, based and visiting aircraft, and parameters for busiest days at the airport, among other things. This is a software system that the FAA and Division of Aviation is supporting, with 50% of the cost being provided by them. The system costs six-thousand (\$6,000.00) dollars, but will only cost the authority three-thousand (\$3,000.00) for installing and maintaining the system. It is agreed by the authority that this system provides great data reports that can be provided to the Macon County Commissioners and the Economic Director, among other interested parties. There are four (4) approved vendors who provide the system, and Mr. Crowell suggests the VirTower system, with the system contract being annually approved. Using the same system as Jackson County will help in triangulating the data, which is necessary for some information. When the year's contract is up, another vendor can be chosen if the initial vendor is not satisfactory. There is no monthly fee involved. This is a proprietary system which contains data that can be limited to specific users. The set-up usually takes about two (2) weeks, and a small amount of equipment is involved. The authority is interested in this system, and will continue to research this matter.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**ENGINEERS REPORT:** Greg Kershaw, Project Engineer, reports that the fuel farm project is closed out.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**DISCUSSION OF ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** Currently, the officers of the Macon County Airport Authority are Gary Schmitt, Chairman; Jack Horton, Vice-Chairman; and Pete Haithcock, Secretary-Treasurer. After a discussion, Member Rhodes nominates Gary Schmitt as Chairman for the upcoming term. After a discussion, Member Shuler makes a motion to re-appoint Chair Schmitt. Member Rhodes seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent. Member Rhodes then nominates Jack Horton as Vice-

Chairman for the upcoming term. After a discussion, Member Shuler makes a motion to re-appoint Mr. Horton. Member Rhodes seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent. After a discussion, Member Rhodes makes a motion to nominate Pete Haithcock for the position of Secretary-Treasurer for the upcoming term. Member Shuler seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent. The terms are for two (2) years each. Member Rhodes expresses his appreciation for the officers and the work they do for the authority.

**REVIEW OF 5010 INSPECTION REPORT AS SUBMITTED BY JIMMY CAPPS:** Mr. Capps has presented an inspection report of the airport, with several items targeted including beacons lights being non-operative, and the mid-field wind-sock tower needing to be repaired/replaced. Chair Schmitt asked Airport Manager, Sabrina Crone, to write a letter addressing the repairs needed and return it to the Division of Aviation. The complete report is on file in the office of the authority.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

The authority addresses the **AWOS system**, which is currently non-operative in regard to providing weather reports to the FAA automatically. The reports can still be accessed via a dedicated phone number and through a pilot's radio system. There is some confusion as to who is responsible for the repairs, since the system is not carried on the FBO's insurance, or through the liability insurance provided through Macon County. Although the Division of Aviation provides normal repairs and upkeep of the system, the airport and authority is responsible for site-maintenance and protection of equipment against lightning strikes. The authority has provided an individual insurance policy for the system in the past, and it is determined that the policy should be reinstated. After further discussion, Member Horton makes a motion to renew the insurance policy for coverage of the AWOS system. Member Rhodes seconds the motion and it passes by unanimous consent. Ms. McDowell will contact Mike Woods at Wayah Insurance to provide an insurance policy through Alexander Aviation for protection of the AWOS system. A "quick fix" repair should be done this week, but if lightning has struck the system, a new hard-drive may be necessary. The estimated cost is eight thousand (\$8,000.00) dollars.

Member Horton reports that the **hangar building** adjacent to the terminal building can be repaired for first floor access only. The upstairs is not accessible, and cannot be repaired at this point. Member Horton continues by stating that Representative Kevin Corbin has stated that he may be able to access funds in the amount of sixty-thousand (\$60,000) for needed repairs. The authority will continue to research this matter.

Ms. Crone presents a **financial report** for January through June of 2022 and reports that the authority will be owed twenty-three thousand, one hundred twenty -six dollars and ninety-four cents (\$23,126.94) in rent per this report. This amount is based on sales and rent less any deferred maintenance costs.

The authority members set a date of **October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 for the ZOOM** meeting with Emily Ferreira and team at the Division of Aviation to discuss the TIP report for future projects and the status of the MOA with the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians. A time is yet to be determined.

There being no further business to discuss, Member Rhodes makes a motion to adjourn. Member Haithcock seconds the motion, which passes by unanimous consent. The meeting is adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Pete Haithcock, Secretary