

MINUTES

Beaufort County Airports Board

July 17, 2025 | 10:00 am | Meeting called to order by Chairman Chris Butler
[Video and Transcript](#)

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chris Butler, Howard Ackerman, Brian Turrisi, David Nelems, Thomas Sheahan, Rich Sells, Jim Starnes and Nick Mesenburg

Absent: Leslie Adlam Flory, and Mark Bailey

County Staff: Stephen Parry, Deputy Airports Director; and Rocio Rexrode, Airports Senior Administrative Specialist.

Beaufort County Council Liaison: Thomas Reitz

Hilton Head Island Town Council Liaison:

Public: Judy Elder, Talbert, Bright, and Ellington, Inc., and Derek Roth, Signature Aviation

AGENDA ADOPTION

The July 17, 2025, BCAB meeting agenda was adopted with unanimous consent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

James Starnes made a motion to approve the June 12, 2025, meeting minutes. Rich Sells seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no Public Comments.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **TERMINAL UPDATE:**

Steve Parry reported that major exterior progress at the terminal includes completion of the silver roof and installation of a black rubberized sealing material, officially making the building “dried in.” New asphalt has been added to previously closed parking areas, and future EV charging spots have been designated. Additional paving has created a total of four new lanes, improving access and parking. Inside the terminal, approximately 85% of drywall and mudding is complete, with bathrooms nearing full completion and ceiling framing in place for final fixtures. Interior finish selections, such as colors, tiles, fans, and door hardware, are underway as the team pushes toward a Spring 2026 opening target for Phase One.

Rich Sell reported that John is actively working on securing funding for Phase Two of the terminal project. He noted ongoing weekly conversations with Rep. Jeff Bradley, who is advocating on the project’s behalf at the state level. Due to recent changes in the state budget process, funding may become available again, though the situation remains fluid.

- **ARW UPDATE:**

Steve Parry reported that the runway rehabilitation project at Beaufort Executive is largely complete. The overlay ranged from 1.75 inches to 4 inches in various areas, depending on the condition of the pavement. Temporary markings are currently in place, and the runway is now open and performing well—Steve noted it's extremely smooth based on his own flight shortly after reopening. A final closure is planned for September to allow for permanent glass bead markings after the asphalt has fully cured. A successful final inspection and punch list walkthrough was completed, with all items passing. The contractor may be able to complete the final work during nighttime hours, minimizing disruption, but that plan is still pending confirmation. A five-day closure window is anticipated, with dates to be determined.

- **AIRPORTS' BUSINESS UPDATE:**

Signing Authority Memo: Steve Parry informed the committee that a new signing authority memo has been finalized and signed by the current County Administrator. This memo, similar to one previously in place, authorizes the Airport Director to sign hangar and operating agreements for both airports within the boundaries of the airport security fences. This authority helps streamline operations and ensures timely execution of agreements without needing County Council approval for each one.

SCAC Meeting 07/22/25: Steve Parry reported that he will be traveling to the SC Aeronautics Commission on the 22nd to present a briefing on securing state funding. The request will focus on several items previously approved by the committee during the last meeting. He expressed appreciation for the committee's prior support, which strengthens the case for state-level assistance.

ARFF Chief: Steve Parry shared that an offer has been extended and accepted by a new candidate. While details are limited until the individual is officially on board, the position has been successfully filled, and more information will be provided soon.

Air Show Meet & Greet: Steve Parry announced that Beaufort Executive will host a special meet-and-greet event in conjunction with the ongoing Water Festival and upcoming air show. Three air show pilots are scheduled to arrive at 1:00 PM tomorrow, followed by a community outreach session at 1:30 PM. The event will welcome children from DSN (Disabilities and Special Needs) and COPPA (Child Abuse Prevention Association) to meet the pilots, who will be signing hero cards and providing autographs. The goal is to give these children a unique and inspiring experience. Steve encouraged anyone available to stop by and take part in this special moment.

Flying Frog 5K | Registration Open (April 18, 2026): Steve Parry announced that the airport's annual 5K event has been rescheduled to a new date—April 18, 2026—in hopes of increasing participation.

He encouraged everyone to spread the word and invite others to sign up. Registration is already open, and participants are welcome to either run or walk the course.

ARW Site Work Update: Steve Parry provided an update on the ARW hangar construction project, noting that all necessary permits have been secured. He confirmed that the construction company is ready to begin work and has requested a date for the pre-construction meeting. Once that meeting is scheduled and held, he will issue the official Notice to Proceed. Further details will follow as the project progresses.

Tour Planning Discussion: The committee discussed scheduling a guided tour of the Hilton Head Island Airport terminal construction for board members. Steve Parry will coordinate with John Rembold to plan the tour for early September, ideally right after the board meeting. They emphasized grouping all interested parties—airline representatives, county staff, and Hilton Head Council members—into one tour to streamline the process. Invitations will be sent, and details finalized in a memo before the September meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business.

NEW BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS

1. **WORK AUTHORIZATION (HXD) - RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE TALBERT, BRIGHT, AND ELLINGTON WORK AUTHORIZATION 2119-2204 FOR TAXIWAY “F” ROFA EA**

Brian Turrisi made a motion to approve a recommendation to approve TBE WA 2119-2204 for Taxiway “F” ROFA EA. Thomas Sheahan seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

2. **WORK AUTHORIZATION (HXD) - RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE TALBERT, BRIGHT, AND ELLINGTON WORK AUTHORIZATION 2119-2407 FOR AIRFIELD DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS (CONSTRUCTION)**

Howard Ackerman made a motion to approve the recommendation to approve TBE WA 2119-2407 for Airfield Drainage Improvements (Construction). Rich Sells seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

3. **WORK AUTHORIZATION (ARW) - RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE TALBERT, BRIGHT, AND ELLINGTON WORK AUTHORIZATION 2119-2501 FOR PARTIAL PARALLEL TAXIWAY (DESIGN AND BIDDING)**

James Starnes made a motion to approve a recommendation to approve TBE WA 2119-2501 for Partial Parallel Taxiway (Design and Bidding). David Nelems seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

4. **WORK AUTHORIZATION (HXD) - RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE TALBERT, BRIGHT, AND ELLINGTON WORK AUTHORIZATION 2119-2502 FOR PARKING LOT GATES (DESIGN AND**

BIDDING)

James Starnes made a motion to approve the recommendation to approve TBE WA 2119-2502 for Parking Lot Gates (Design and Bidding). Brian Turrisi seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

CHAIRMAN UPDATE

1. Finance Committee

Members: Howard Ackerman (Chair), Chris Butler, Tom Sheahan, Rich Sells and Brian Turrisi.

The Committee had nothing new to report this month. They will keep the board informed of any new developments.

2. Passenger Service Committee

Members: Leslie Adlam Flory (Chair), David Nelems, Jim Starnes, and Tom Sheahan

Although Leslie was not present to provide a formal update, it was mentioned that the Ambassador Program is running smoothly and continues to be effective.

3. ARW Facilities Use and Improvement Committee

Members: Jim Starnes (Chair), Mark Bailey, David Nelems, Chris Butler, and Nick Mesenburg

Updates provided during the Director's Report.

4. HHI Airport Improvement Committee (HXD)

Members: Brian Turrisi (Chair), Howard Ackerman, Rich Sells, Chris Butler, and Anne Esposito

Flight operations have been declining steadily over the past several years, prompting discussion about the airport's growth strategy. Concerns were also raised about local promotional efforts favoring Savannah-Hilton Head Airport over HXD.

5. Government Affairs Committee

Members: Rich Sells (Chair)

Updates provided during the Director's Report.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no Public Comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn was made at 10:46 am. It passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING

August 14, 2025 | 10:00 am

Burton Wells Recreation Center, 1 Middleton Recreation Dr., Beaufort, SC 29906