JIA AIRPORT BOARD MINUTES

July 10, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Airport Alaska Room/Zoom

https://juneau.zoom.us/j/81320381493
Or join via audio: 1-253-215-8782 Webinar ID: 813 2038 1493

TO TESTIFY: CONTACT SHANNON VAN VALIN, 907-586-0962

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Chair Eve Soutiere called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**
Members Present:

Dennis Bedford	David Epstein
Jerry Godkin	Chris Peloso
Eve Soutiere	Charlie Williams

Member Absent: Angela Rodell

Staff Present:
David Palmer, Airport Manager
Andres Delgado, Airport Superintendent
Angelica Lopez-Campos, Airport Business Manager
Ke Mell, Airport Architect
Dallas Hargrave, Human Resources and Risk Management Director
Sherri Layne, Deputy Municipal Attorney
Nathan Reddekopp, Airfield Maintenance
Mike Greene, Airport Project Manager

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
Mr. Bedford moved to approve minutes of July 10, 2025 Airport Board Regular Meeting as presented. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
Mr. Epstein moved to approved agenda as presented. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**
None.

6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
Airport Manager hiring progress report from Dallas Hargrave
Mr. Hargrave reported on the status of the Airport Manager recruitment. He explained that he had hoped to bring forward a proposed finalist process for Board consideration at this meeting, but the recruitment had not progressed to that stage. He stated that

the applicant pool did not yet contain enough qualified candidates to move to final interviews. He expressed optimism that the process would be further along by the next Board meeting, or possibly sooner, but emphasized that the recruitment needed more time.

Board members received the update for information. No motion was made, and no action was taken.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Approve the increase of FTE funds for Construction Inspector

Mr. Palmer presented his recommendations regarding the Construction Inspector position and related staffing needs. He explained that the position formerly held by Mr. Greg Jerue was funded at 0.38 full-time equivalent. He recommended increasing this position to 1.0 FTE and using it substantially as a building and facility maintenance position, with work divided between the terminal and airfield facilities.

Mr. Palmer reported that he had met earlier in the week with CBJ Finance staff to discuss the proposal. He stated that the tentative plan had been to fund the position initially from airport reserves, with the intent to address ongoing funding through future rates and fees adjustments. Finance staff indicated that if the Board approved motions to fund this position from reserves, they would oppose the funding when the appropriation came before the Assembly, because they did not support using reserves to fund recurring operating costs. Mr. Palmer clarified that his intent was not to rely on reserves permanently but to allow the airport to fill the position and begin addressing deferred work while a rates and fees proposal was developed.

Mr. Palmer noted that the airport's budget for the new fiscal year, which began July 1, was already projected to be in deficit, potentially even before accounting for approximately one million dollars needed for an ARFF vehicle. He referenced analysis prepared by Ms. Lopez-Campos that illustrated the deficit and the effect of existing and proposed staffing.

During discussion, Mr. Epstein asked why the position was proposed to increase from approximately one third time to full time. Mr. Palmer explained that although the job title was "Construction Inspector," the actual work historically included a wide range of maintenance and carpentry tasks across the airport campus. Rather than pursue a full reclassification at this time, he proposed retaining the title but using the position primarily as a maintenance resource serving both terminal and outlying facilities.

Mr. Williams asked how this proposal related to a prior vacancy that had been converted to a maintenance position. Ms. Lopez Campos clarified that an internal candidate had been promoted into that earlier vacancy, the position had been reclassified as maintenance, and the pay had been adjusted. Mr. Palmer stated that the current recommendation was to increase Mr. Jerue's former 0.38 FTE position to 1.0 FTE, with approximately half of the work assigned to the terminal and half to outlying facilities such as the chemical building, which currently received limited dedicated maintenance attention.

Mr. Bedford commented that he had understood that Mr. Smiley's position was primarily janitorial, while Mr. Jerue's work focused on building maintenance. Ms. Lopez Campos explained that Mr. Smiley's position had been moved one step above custodial so that he could provide limited support to Mr. Bobby on certain tasks. Mr. Jerue's position had been more construction and carpentry oriented, including full building maintenance responsibilities. Mr. Palmer noted that the chemical building boiler alone

was costing approximately one hundred thousand dollars per year to heat the building and that he hoped to address that issue before the next winter. While he could not identify a single critical task that needed immediate action, he emphasized that Mr. Bobby was being called in for a wide range of systems issues and that the airport had added substantial square footage with no parallel increase in maintenance staffing.
Several Board members raised questions about timing. Mr. Bedford and others asked whether the position could wait until a new Airport Manager was hired. Mr. Palmer replied that some tasks might be deferred for a few months, but he preferred to secure authorization for the position so that the new manager would not need to wait for Assembly approval before proceeding with recruitment.

Ms. Mell strongly supported funding the position. She stated that no one had the time to create a comprehensive list of deferred work items because staff were continually moving from one urgent task to the next, especially after the departure of key administrative staff. She noted that the buildings were now several years old and beyond the initial "honeymoon period," and that systems such as the heat pumps were not functioning as intended. Ms. Mell believed the additional position would relieve pressure on Mr. Bobby and allow him to focus on higher-level issues that only he could handle.

Mr. Williams expressed concern about the sufficiency of the proposed salary level. He observed that the position appeared to require a high skill set and questioned whether a roughly seventy-seven-thousand-dollar increase, with total compensation around one hundred eight thousand dollars, would attract the necessary expertise. He also expressed doubt that the additional position alone would resolve outstanding issues with heat pumps and the boiler without adequate management support and resources. Mr. Williams further recalled that a previous administration had eliminated the Deputy Airport Manager position in favor of a Security Manager, and he found it confusing that the airport might now consider spending roughly one hundred fifty thousand dollars per year to reestablish a deputy position.

Serving on the Finance Committee, Mr. Williams also commented that fund balance figures presented at different times had varied significantly, ranging from approximately two hundred thirty-three thousand dollars to about 1.1 million dollars above reserves. He was uncomfortable approving new spending without reconciling those discrepancies.
Mr. Epstein added that the proposed duties sounded more like a maintenance position and questioned whether using the Construction Inspector title and classification was consistent with CBJ personnel rules.

In response, Mr. Hargrave explained the process used by Human Resources. When a position is funded and a position description is updated, HR reviews the revised description and assigns it an appropriate classification. Reclassification authority lies with HR, and that process is separate from the Board's decision to authorize or fund a position. He stated that the immediate need was to secure the FTE and funding, after which the position description could be updated and routed for classification.

Mr. Peloso stated that the airport had grown substantially and that additional staffing was inevitable, which in turn implied a need for adjusted rates and fees to provide long-term funding. In his view, approving the position and forwarding it to the Assembly would demonstrate that the position was a legitimate operational need and help provide context for future rate and fee changes. Chair Soutiere agreed that supporting the position would put the need clearly on the record and reinforce the message that rates and fee adjustments were likely necessary.

Mr. Williams emphasized that he did not want to send a request to the Assembly that was likely to be rejected. Given the projected deficit, he preferred to explore options for reallocation and cost control in combination with any new staffing. He stated that he supported the concepts behind both the proposed Construction Inspector position and the Deputy Airport Manager position, but he did not want to aggravate the deficit. Mr. Godkin expressed concern that Finance had described the budget as being in deficit shortly after the Assembly approved a balanced budget. He stated that he wanted a more comprehensive review with Finance and Budget staff to fully understand the numbers.

Mr. Williams suggested convening a Finance Committee meeting as soon as possible to reconcile the differing fund balance reports and examine the broader financial context. Mr. Palmer responded that he had already requested a meeting with Finance and would welcome Board participation.

After discussion, Mr. Godkin moved to approve an increase of seventy-seven thousand dollars in personnel funding to convert the existing 0.38 FTE Construction Inspector position to a 1.0 FTE position. During debate on the motion, Mr. Williams suggested reclassifying the position as a maintenance position rather than a Construction Inspector position. Mr. Epstein asked whether reclassification would jeopardize the ability to fill the position. Mr. Hargrave reiterated that the Board's action was to authorize funding and FTE, and that HR would address classification after the position description was updated. Based on that explanation, Mr. Williams withdrew his suggestion to alter the classification at this time.

Following discussion, the motion to increase funding to establish the Construction Inspector position at 1.0 FTE passed by unanimous consent.

Staff were directed to update the position description and work with Human Resources to ensure appropriate classification and recruitment. Board members also expressed interest in meeting with Finance staff, potentially through the Finance Committee, to reconcile fund balance figures and discuss options for addressing the projected deficit and rates and fees.

8. STAFF REPORTS

A. Airport Manager's Report

Mr. Palmer presented his report on several items.

He first discussed a proposal to purchase a 1,500-gallon Rosenbauer ARFF vehicle using airport reserves. The proposal contemplated asking the CBJ Assembly to de appropriate FAA Grant No. 3-02-0133-101-2024 in the amount of 1,007,116 dollars and to appropriate 1,007,116 dollars from the airport's operational reserve to fund the vehicle purchase. Mr. Williams moved to forward this request to the Assembly.

During discussion of the motion, Mr. Epstein expressed dissatisfaction with the procurement process and questioned why noncompliance with FAA AIP procurement requirements had not been identified earlier. He anticipated that the Assembly would ask pointed questions and stressed that the airport needed to be prepared with clear explanations. He also expressed concern about any action that might jeopardize the airport's ARFF Index C status.

Mr. Godkin then raised a point of order, asking whether the Board could act on the ARFF funding proposal at this meeting because it was not clearly described as an action item

on the publicly noticed agenda. Mr. Palmer stated that there was no immediate deadline requiring action at this meeting and that the item could wait for a future agenda. Ms. Layne confirmed that Mr. Godkin's point of order was well taken and that the matter should be included on a future agenda if the Board wished to act.
Mr. Williams withdrew his motion. The Board took no action on the ARFF funding proposal and directed that the item be scheduled on a future agenda for formal consideration.
Mr. Palmer next reported that the airport had received a letter from the FAA referencing an anonymous complaint alleging that Juneau International Airport may not have met ARFF Index C requirements for 292 days between January 1, 2024 and May 10, 2025, due to concerns about equipment functionality. He stated that Mr. Brandon Bagwell had submitted a response on behalf of the airport. Mr. Palmer had also written to the FAA inspector, explaining that an ARFF truck had been ordered and providing additional details about the airport's efforts to maintain compliance.
Mr. Palmer informed the Board that Mr. Bruce Malazarte was scheduled to begin work the following week and that Ms. Kathy Mancini was expected to start in late September. He briefly discussed the runway safety project and associated RSA work, noting that Mr. Greene would provide more detail in his report. Mr. Palmer explained that a Reimbursable Service Agreement with the FAA was being developed and that light poles had been temporarily shortened, resulting in additional costs. Final costs would be reported once the work was complete.
Mr. Palmer reported that an airfield lease with Alaska Seaplanes for their cargo area was in progress. Under the proposed arrangement, Alaska Seaplanes would lease additional space and access the area via the curb cut used during prior parking lot construction, which would improve traffic flow and provide more operational space.
Mr. Williams asked how the airport intended to recover the cost of a sewer extension for Temsco that had been paid approximately six weeks earlier. Mr. Palmer responded that, as far as he knew, the cost had been incurred and was not currently being recovered. He recalled that there had been discussion about recouping costs by charging new users tapping into the line. Mr. Williams expressed concern that it was not equitable for other airport users to effectively subsidize Temsco's sewer costs. Mr. Palmer stated that he had been informed that the Board had previously approved the expenditure. Mr. Godkin referenced an email dated May 16, 2023 that discussed the original agreement and related correspondence from downtown, and he suggested that Board members review that email for background.

B. Airport Project Manager's Report

Ms. Mell reported on the Mendenhall Riverbank Stabilization Project. She stated that a preconstruction meeting had been held on site on July 7. Island Contractors anticipated that construction would take between two and four weeks, which she and the engineer believed was a conservative schedule. Work was expected to occur Monday through Saturday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., beginning around July 14. Some work near low tides might require Sunday work during minus tides. The emergency vehicle access road would be closed when work was underway and open at other times, with appropriate notifications provided by Island Contractors.
Ms. Mell also reported that comments on the Master Plan Update had been submitted. She noted that additional comments from Board members were still welcome.

C. Airport Project Manager's Report

Mr. Greene reported on several projects.

He first addressed the terminal surge protection study being conducted by RESPEC. The airport had received a draft report recommending that secondary surge protection be provided through additional circuit breakers both where power enters the building and where it exits the primary distribution panels. The recommendation called for a total of forty-nine additional breakers. Mr. Greene noted that he had follow-up questions about the methodology used in the study, but he expected the report to be finalized soon. The overall goal was to reduce equipment damage caused by power groundouts and surges.

Mr. Greene then reported on the Runway Safety Area shoulder grading and NAVAIDs project. He stated that the airport was working with the FAA on a reimbursable agreement and reviewing comparable agreements. The draft Reimbursable Agreement indicated that the engineering review costs fronted by the airport would not be AIP eligible, even though RA costs for AIP eligible projects are generally subject to reimbursement. The FAA had indicated that the airport would need to advance approximately seventy-eight thousand dollars for design review and an additional amount, yet to be determined, for the construction Reimbursable Agreement. Design for the project was at one hundred percent and ready to bid, but the designer was on standby pending resolution of the RA issues. The project had received a Corps of Engineers permit, and a floodplain development permit application had been submitted. Mr. Greene noted that what had initially been expected to be a relatively straightforward project had become considerably more complex.

In response to questions, Mr. Epstein asked for clarification about the FAA's position that RA costs were not AIP eligible. Mr. Palmer stated that the FAA had indicated in the draft RA that the engineering review costs would not be AIP eligible, but in later discussions suggested that they might be eligible without providing a firm commitment. Drawing on his experience with AIP projects, Mr. Epstein questioned why such costs would be eligible for other jurisdictions but not for the City and Borough of Juneau. He observed that FAA staff typically consulted with sponsors several years in advance on projects and noted that such advance coordination had not occurred here. Mr. Greene explained that the project originated as a follow-up requirement to complete RSA grading that should have been addressed in prior projects. Mr. Epstein stated that this was the second example discussed at the meeting where FAA decisions appeared to shift late in the process, and he expressed concern that the FAA needed to be held accountable to its own procedures.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

11. ASSEMBLY LIAISON

None.

12. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Epstein asked whether there had been any applicants for Airport Board positions. Chair Soutiere replied that she had not yet received any information on that question but would follow up.

Mr. Godkin stated that he felt as though he were in limbo. He explained that he had agreed to serve until July 1 and that the current meeting was being held on July 10. He wanted to ensure that his continued service on the Board was appropriate and that Board actions remained valid. Chair Soutiere stated that she would follow up with Ms. Lopez Campos and others to clarify Board appointment status.

Mr. Epstein stated his understanding that, under CBJ practice, when a member's term expired and no replacement had yet been appointed, the member was authorized to continue serving and Board actions remained valid. Mr. Godkin stated that he accepted that understanding and was willing to continue serving until successor appointments were confirmed.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

14. NEXT MEETING DATE August 14 at 6:00 p.m.

16. ADJOURNMENT Ms. Soutiere called to adjourn at 7:45 p.m.