

COLES COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2026
COLES COUNTY MEMORIAL AIRPORT
COLES COUNTY, ILLINOIS
8:00 A.M.

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Coles County Airport Authority was convened at Coles County Memorial Airport, Coles County, Illinois, on Wednesday, August 12, 2026. Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order at the hour of 8:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Commissioners Campbell, Sauget, Zimmer, Nelson, and Schaefer. Manager Fearn, Administrative Assistant Little, and Attorney Smallhorn. Doug Paige of Coles County Aviation, Mike Lindenmeyer of Lindenmeyer Insurance, and Rick Reed were also present.

Open

The following members of the public were present: hangar tenants Kushagra Mittal, Robert Leonard, Hank Bauer, Aubrey Youakim, and Dom Youakim. Chairman Nelson addressed the public and asked if they had a statement to present or if they would like to request to address the board. The public replied that they did not have anything at this time. With no further questions or comments from the public, Chairman Nelson moved the meeting forward.

Mike Lindenmeyer-Insurance Renewal Information

Lindenmeyer Insurance Agent. Mike Lindenmeyer addressed the Board with an overview of Policy Changes for the proposed renewal of the Commercial Auto and Fleet Policy and the Inland Marine Insurance Policy.

Hangar tenant Kushagra Mittal inquired if there would be a possibility of Reducing coverage on individual hangars if it would reduce the premiums. Mike explained that it is not possible to separate the buildings by the Standards of the insurance carrier. He said he researched extensively to get multiple comparables but unfortunately the Airport is very limited by the fact that there is so much widespread exposure most carriers will not

take the airport on as a client. Chairman Nelson stated that the 4.6% increase we are seeing this year is much lower than the increase that we saw in 2025. Attorney Smallhorn asked why there was a significant change in the coverage on the JO Marks Barn. Lindenmeyer explained that it now reflects an 80% Value of the building because it will not be rebuilt should damage be sustained.

Commercial Auto/Fleet Insurance Renewal

The motion to approve the Auto and Fleet Insurance was made by Commissioner Sauget and seconded by Commissioner Schaefer. The motion was approved on a roll call vote. The results are as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

Property and Inland Marine Insurance Renewal

The motion to approve the Property and Inland Marine Insurance was made by Commissioner Sauget and seconded by Commissioner Schaefer. The motion was approved on a roll call vote. The results are as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

Rick Reed- Discussion on Hot Loading Minutes

The Board was addressed by Rick Reed, former owner and operator of the Commercial Applicator Business Reed's Fly-On. Rick has 40+ years in the Aviation Field, serving the Illinois Agricultural Aviation Association, National Agricultural Aviation Association, National Agricultural Aviation Association, National Pesticide User's Research and Regulatory Forum, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and is a recognized expert on aerial applications for Illinois agriculture. Reed provided his professional opinion on the minimum standards that he feels would best protect the Airport from liability exposure.

He recommended that the Airport should not permit ground applicators to operate at the airport unless they are loading fertilizer or seed as they do not meet the requirements of having an aerial application agricultural facility permit. His opinion is that "Hot Loading" has too many variables and a vast liability exposure. He suggested to the board that all Commercial Application Operators that would like to work at the Airport be held to the same standards as our current on-field operator, Aerinova. Operators would have to be in compliance with the Minimum Standards and have a Commercial Service Agreement with a \$100 monthly service fee.

Commissioner Zimmer asked Reed what his view was on fungicides. Reed explained that it is a chemical, and there is no other way to view it; it is a chemical. Zimmer stated that he felt that if we did not allow ground operators to operate at MTO, it would not allow us to be competitive in sales and especially with the advancement of drone technology.

Reed stated that while drones have a place in agriculture and are very useful in small areas and for scouting and observation tactics, it will be very hard for them to compete with AG Applicators due to the sheer size factor alone. They cannot carry the chemical that is needed for large farms. And he believes they will be banned because there is no way to monitor them with budget restrictions from state and government departments, and the Drone Operators are not following regulations.

The number one concern is always safety and liability, not competition.

Attorney Smallhorn asked if containment is addressed in the Code Rules?

Reed again noted that the liability is too great and the Airport is used for public events, and that is a lot of exposure.

Smallhorn then asked if he thought a clause should be added to the minimum standards that would require the use of a "dry-break" system.

Rick responded that that is the standard amongst Commercial Application Operators and does not feel that the clause is necessary.

Kushagra Mittal asked for further explanation of how the hopper used in Commercial Application works. Reed and Dom Youakim explained that with the hopper, chemical is added first, followed by water; water flushes the system last. Air Tractors have a series of instruments, and the amount of chemicals and water is very precise down to the last gallon.

Chairman Nelson asked if drones are being policed in any form?

Reed and Youakim explained that there is not a budget to monitor drones and they are not following regulations, as less than 5% are registered with the FAA.

Reed ended by stating there are still a lot of variables to be considered, such as a location at the airport to allow these operations. Manager Fearn agreed and added that considerations need to be made that include contacting the FAA and EPA before a location can be decided.

Chairman Nelson asked the board if they would consider tabling the topic and bringing this back to the agenda for future discussion before a decision is made.

The Board agreed that this was a good idea and tabled the topic.

Approval of July 2026 Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes for July 2026. Commissioner Sauget made a motion to approve; Commissioner Zimmer seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

The results are as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

Financial Report

The Board reviewed the Financial Report. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Sauget and seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, the financial report for July 2026 was approved on a roll call vote.

The results are as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

FBO Ops Report

FBO Manager, Doug Paige, gave the monthly Ops Report.

Doug outlined the VFR traffic for July and noted traffic for the Oshkosh event was noticeably down. The FBO had 410 gallons of 100LL fuel sold during the AirVenture Fuel Special, with 11 aircraft stopping in. The smoke from the Wildfires was a contributing factor this year.

July 22nd, the FBO hosted a field trip for the Hope program with 18 children in attendance.

The Flight School numbers were low. Mya Cobb took a vacation from July 24th through August 1st. Mya had 3 new Discovery flights, and student Chris Martin passed his written test. Mya showcased the Cessna 172 Training Plane at the 4th of July Air Show Event.

2nd Reading of the Tax Levy Ordinance

The Board reviewed the Tax Levy as presented at the July Meeting, no changes were necessary. Commissioner Zimmer made a motion to accept the Tax Levy as presented. Commissioner Schaefer seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

The results are as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

Wilson Barn Concrete

Manager Fearn presented information to the board for a project that would install concrete in the front North section of the Wilson Barn.

Two estimates were secured from Bialeschski Concrete and Chancellor Concrete of Mattoon.

Manager Fearn recommended Chancellor Concrete.

Commissioner Schaefer made a motion to approve the estimate from Chancellor Concrete for \$17,935.00. Commissioner Sauget seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

The results are as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

West Gate Concrete

Manager Fearn presented information to the board for a project that would install concrete at the west entry gate. An approach would be poured for the new card reader. Two estimates were secured from Bialeschski Concrete and Chancellor Concrete of Mattoon.

Manager Fearn recommended Chancellor Concrete.

Commissioner Sauget made a motion to approve the estimate from Chancellor Concrete for \$7,230.00. Commissioner Sauget seconded the motion.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote.
The results are as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

Ronda Sauget – Strategic Planning Update

Economic Development in Coles County is moving forward. A new metal manufacturing company has made a commitment to Coles County with a \$100 million dollar project, and Rural King will start their new Corporate Headquarters project that is projected at \$81 million.

Focused on the upcoming application for the April 2027 funding with Senator Bost to fund part of the slated project for an expansion of the frontage access road at MTO. Charleston has appointed Steve Bennett as the City Planner after the announcement of Steve Pamperen's retirement.

McClain Schaefer- Airport Planning Committee Development

The board intended to form committees for Airport Planning Development. Ronda Sauget spoke with McClain Schaefer and inquired whether he would have time to provide the Board with direction and guidance. Mr. Schaefer respectfully declined as he had other commitments.

After some consideration, it was decided that the best approach at this time would be for the Board to handle development planning internally and Planning Development will be added to the monthly board meeting in conjunction with Strategic Planning and Updates.

The Board has been tasked with compiling their top five objectives for development at the Airport that will be discussed during the September 2026 meeting. A punch sheet will be compiled from those objectives to direct focus and intent towards improvements to be made at MTO.

Manager's Report

Hangar Pavement Project

Suspended until September. Punch list items are being worked on by Hanson and McCarthy.

Airfield Marking Project

Will begin this week, weather permitting. Project should take 2-3 days.

Maintenance crew has been prepping the pavement and edges. Will likely work over the weekend to finish the project.

Fence Skirt Project

Scheduled for this fall. Maintenance crew sprayed and mowed along the fenceline in preparation. The perimeter is approximately 6 miles.

Airport Layout Plan and Master Plan Project

Hanson has provided an updated Working Paper to review. The Aviation Forecasting section has started.

Wilson Building

During the quarterly pest control treatment, Terminix detected termites. The building was treated this week.

Jet A Truck

We are working through some engine issues. The Fuel Meter was recalibrated by Pemco. The State of Illinois completed the Annual Weights and Measures inspection.

Coles County Farm Bureau Touch a Truck

4th Annual Event was very well attended. The Airport displayed the Snow Blower, 5085M Tractor with Finish Mower Attachment, the Western Star Snowplow and the Cessna 172. Administrative Assistant Billie Little worked with the Farm Bureau manager to coordinate the participation of both area Air Medivac units.

Football Charters

FBO Manager Doug Paige has been coordinating two football charters for September and October with Allegiant. He is expecting there will be a third this fall.

Hangars

All hangars are currently rented. There was damage to a hangar door over the weekend that is under repair.

IPAA IL Public Airports Association

Fall Conference is scheduled for September 27-29th in Galena, Illinois. The board will attend with Manager Fearn except for Commissioner Zimmer.

Facebook

153,672 views, 7,967 engagements, and 1,535 interactions. Traffic was down after the airshow/fireworks.

Webpage

3,958 visits, 4,485 page views, and 296 engagements.

Vacation

The Airport Steakhouse will close to allow for a vacation from September 14th – 18th.

Airport Authority By-Laws

A review of the By-Laws was included in the Board packet.

Should the board have any additions or changes that are suggested, it will be on the September Agenda for update and review.

Business Park Flyer

A flyer was included in the Board Packet. Administrative Assistant Little created a flyer to advertise and promote land for lease in the Airport Business Park along Rt. 16 that is available for rent. Manager Fearn had two signs made that are on display along Rt. 16.

The flyer has been published on Facebook and on the Website.

Executive Session 2(C)6 Lease Agreements

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Sauget and seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, the Board went into executive session at 9:51 a.m. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

The results are as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

At approximately 10:10, Commissioner Zimmer excused himself from the meeting to take a personal call.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Sauget and seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, the Board came out of executive session at 10:17 a.m. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

The results are as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Absent
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

Lease Agreements

The lease with Aerinova Aerial has been completed; the board will review it over the next few days, and Attorney Smallhorn will proceed with getting the required signatures.

Commissioner Comments & Questions

No further comments or Questions.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Campbell and seconded by Commissioner Sauget. The motion carried on a roll call vote. The results were as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Absent
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

Recorder