

COLES COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 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, June 17, 2026. Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Commissioners Campbell, Sauget, Nelson, Zimmer, and Schaefer. Attorney Smallhorn, Manager Fearn, and Admin. Asst. Little. Also present were Doug Paige of Coles County Aviation, Dom and Aubrey Youakim of Aerinova Aviation.

Open

Hangar tenants Kushagra Mittal and Bob Leonard were present. Commissioner Mark Nelson asked if they would like to address the board. Kushagra Mittal addressed the Board and extended an apology for his disruption of the June 10, 2026, meeting. He went on to explain that the intent was not meant to come across as abrasive to the Board, rather to become an instrument to bridge the gap between the Airport Authority, the Hangar Tenant community, and the public. As we advance, Mittal would like to offer his time and passion for flying to educate and campaign for the greater good of the Airport to broaden the exposure and expansion efforts at Coles County Memorial Airport. Commissioner Zimmer went on record to say that he would dismiss himself at 8:45, as he had other business to attend to. No other member of the public chose to address the Board.

Attorney Smallhorn addressed the Board Room. Smallhorn began by outlining the processes and statutes that the Authority must uphold to follow OMA (Open Meetings Act) and FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) regulations.

He also reminded the Board that transparency is key for public entities, and any conversation held by board members should be held to the standards of the OMA. If board members have concerns or prospects that they would like to explore, the proper avenues should be adhered to. These matters should be brought to the attention of the Airport Manager. It should be decided if the discussion warrants being placed on the next upcoming meeting agenda, or if it would be deemed necessary to call an additional meeting to discuss the matter at hand. The Authority can hold a public meeting on any given Wednesday, so long as a Public Agenda is posted within the mandated 48-hour notice time frame.

At approximately 8:15, Commissioner Zimmer excused himself and made a request to Commissioner Sauget that she call him on his cell phone and stated that he would take the remainder of the meeting on his cell phone. Zimmer was reminded by Chairman Nelson, Manager Fearn, Attorney Smallhorn, and Assistant Little that this was not permitted, that he would not be allowed to vote, and that he would only have the option to listen. Commissioner Sauget and Zimmer made an attempt to dispute, but Commissioner Campbell explained further that it was not allowed. The exception that was made during COVID has been reversed, and you must be present. Attorney Smallhorn confirmed and added that the only time you can actively vote on an agenda over the phone is if you are sick, hospitalized, or there is a qualifying emergency.

Commissioner Sauget requested written documentation of OMA regulations that would verify all the above information regarding OMA and FOIA. Fearn and Smallhorn said they would be happy to provide the information.

With no other public comments necessary, Chairman Nelson moved the meeting forward.

Informational Discussion: Agricultural Hot Loading

In agriculture, a "hot loading" pesticide system refers to a setup where all crop protection chemicals (like herbicides or fungicides) and carrier products are pre-mixed at a central facility. The pre-blended "hot load" is then transferred directly into a sprayer or nurse truck, eliminating the need for farmers to manually mix individual chemicals in the field.

Manager Fearn invited Dom Youakim to address the Board and outline the procedure of the hot loading processes. Youakim took the board through the step-by-step process and explained what equipment and safety measures would be necessary to implement hot loading at Coles County Memorial Airport. He stated that the AG Applicator would be required to provide all necessary equipment and that the Airport would not furnish any chemical or equipment. Zimmer commented on the cellphone that he would like to see this implemented for this farming season to capture revenue for the Airport, and that the liability would fall on the Applicator business. Commissioner Nelson interjected that he would like to make a motion that the Board pause and table any decision on this topic until next month to allow Attorney Smallhorn to research liability to the airport, as well as discuss this matter with our Insurance Agent, and invite Rick Reed to the July Monthly Board Meeting to give his professional opinion so that the board could make an educated decision on this matter. Commissioner Schaefer asked what the current process is that we have in place for AG Operators. Mr. Mittal asked if these regulations are linked to our Grant Assurance from the FAA. Attorney Smallhorn and Manager Fearn addressed Commissioner Schaefer's inquiry and explained that the Authority has a SASO Agreement in place with Dom Youakim for Aerinova Aerial that complies with FAA regulations and CCAA Minimum standards, and that we would honor that and expect any other Aerial Application Providers to have the same SASO agreement in place before they would be allowed to operate at CCAA. Any operator that is interested would need to notify Manager Fearn, and he can provide the application, and the Authority can obtain the required proof of insurance and liability coverage. Attorney Smallhorn addressed Mr. Mittal and explained that our Grant monies are woven into State and FAA projects, and we must be in compliance with regulations for both agencies. Hearing both explanations, Commissioner Schaefer seconded Chairman Nelson's motion to table this discussion until the next meeting.

The motion passed on a roll call vote.

The results were as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	ABS
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

Commissioners' Comments and Questions

Chairman Nelson asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board Members.

Chairman Campbell asked what the expected time frame would be for changes to the Minimum Standards to take place.

Manager Fearn stated that we would begin moving forward after a decision is made at the July Board meeting, and he has the Board's guidance on how they would like to continue.

Commissioner Sauget made an additional request to be provided with information on the current procedures in place regarding recording executive sessions and their release.

Manager Fearn and Attorney Smallhorn said they would be happy to provide the information.

Mr. Mittal passed out a small survey question to all present, asking what changes they would like to see made to the airport over the next four years and by the end of this decade.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Campbell and seconded by Commissioner Schaefer. The motion carried on a roll call vote.

The results were as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	ABS
Campbell	Yes
Nelson	Yes

Recorder