

COLES COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 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, September 9, 2026. Chairman Nelson was absent. Commissioner Campbell called the meeting to order at the hour of 8:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

Commissioners Zimmer, Campbell, Schaefer, and Sauget.
Manager Fearn, Administrative Assistant Little, and Attorney Smallhorn.
FBO Manager Doug Paige of Coles County Aviation, and Logan Carlson of Kemper CPA Group were also present.

Open

There were no other members of the public present, Commissioner Campbell moved the meeting forward.

Annual Audit Report – Kemper CPA

Logan Carlson from Kemper CPA Group addressed the Board, outlining the Auditors report for the 2026 Annual Audit.

Minutes

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Sauget and seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, the minutes for the August 2026 meeting were approved on a roll call vote.

Commissioner Zimmer went on the record to say that while he respects Rick Reed, he feels that his information was outdated and inaccurate, and that he offered a very biased opinion. Commissioner Sauget agreed that Rick Reed's presentation showed major bias, and she feels that Coles County is leading Technology in the area and remains current with technological advancements.

Zimmer also stated that he could save money if he could utilize another Aerial Applicator should Hot Loading be permitted at Coles County Memorial Airport because Aerinova Aerial has overcharged him and he is paying double. He feels that drones are a definite threat to Aerial Applicators.

The results were as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes

Financial Report

The Board reviewed the financial report.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Schaefer and seconded by Commissioner Sauget, the financial report for August 2026 was approved on a roll call vote.

The results were as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes

FBO Ops Report

Doug Paige reviewed the Ops Report with the Board members.

The Flight School is doing well. The Cessna 172 Training Plane just had the 100-Hour Annual. Mya Cobb, our Flight instructor, is attending 4 events between September and October to promote the Flight School. Commissioner Zimmer asked Paige why the Hangar Rent numbers are so low. Paige explained that the Hangar Rent revenue is only for our local tenants and some transient traffic and office rent in Building C. The remaining hangars on the field is revenue that the Airport Authority captures.

TIPS Discussion

Manager Fearn reviewed the TIPS sheet for the upcoming meeting in Springfield, Illinois. Commissioner Zimmer asked why our Top 3 Criteria List for Airport Planning Development was not included on the List? Manager Fearn explained that the TIPS Sheet is a punch list for future Projects at the Airport that is based on The Illinois Department of Transportation State Funding for the Airfield. Landside projects are not

Considered for the TIPS Sheet. Under FAA rules and regulations, there are not many projects that are eligible under the FAA guidelines and regulations. The FAA does not pay for many projects outside the fence; their focus is on the upkeep of the airfield.

Commissioner Sauget asked if we do have a list for our landside criteria list? Manager Fearn explained to the Board that during the August meeting, they were supplied with a spreadsheet for the Airport Capital Plan that he has been working on and compiling with Administrative Assistant Billie Little. The handout included estimates and drawings that have been received.

Minimum Standards -Hot Loading Discussion and Determination

Commissioner Campbell opened the floor for discussion of hot loading and the implementation of any changes to our current minimum standards. Commissioner Zimmer addressed the board, and he said he would like to change the Airport's approach; in his opinion, he feels like we are conveying the wrong attitude and making the topic unapproachable, and people are hearing no... and that we can't, and missing the fact that they can come here...if all criteria are met. He requested that the authority produce a one-sheet document that would bullet point our criteria and expectations. Commissioner Schaefer asked if this would hinder the business for Aerinova Aerial. Commissioner Zimmer said that his position is that competition is good; people would like to have more options. Attorney Smallhorn suggested a meeting with area Field Applicators to gauge interest and develop a standards sheet, Commissioner Schaefer agreed this was a good idea.

The Board asked Manager Fearn to call area airports to see if there is any interest and see what area airports are doing and to compare our Minimum Standards.

FBO Manager Doug Paige expressed his concerns about finding the best location on the ramp and pointed out that there would be additional training that would be required by his team.

Ronda Sauget-Strategic Planning & Airport Planning and Development

Commissioner Sauget addressed the Board. Ronda requested that Andrew Billie focus on the draft application to be submitted to Senator Bost so that We can schedule a review with Rachel Meyers before the deadline arrives. Sauget gave an overview of the feedback received from Curry Construction after their walk-through with Andrew, Bill, and Maintenance Supervisor Bill White. She asked us to invite them to our next meeting if their schedule allows so they can give us some insight as to what options are available to update and renovate the existing Terminal and FBO Buildings.

She asked Manager Fearn to survey area airports to source their funding for major landside projects.

Ronda gave an update on the Enterprise Zone and Developments in Coles County, including John Deere, Coles Moultrie, Rural Development and Housing Development, as well as new Technology Connections that are coming to Coles County.

Commissioner Zimmer said he would like to explore the option of putting housing on Coles County Airport land parcels in order to create capital to build the Airport Infrastructure or the possibilities of borrowing against the Airport's current Capital Resources.

Manager Fearn explained our land was purchased with Grant Funding from the FAA, and they may not allow the Authority to sell the land. The only viable option would be long-term leasing. Attorney Smallhorn agreed with Manager Fearn.

Commissioner Campbell said that he would not be interested in touring the facilities with Curry, but they would certainly be welcome to come to the October meeting with a full presentation with their ideas.

Commissioner Zimmer posed the question to the board: We need \$5 million. How are we getting there?

Commissioner Sauget suggested that everyone should read the Agricul book and see their business approach.

Manager's Report

By-law updates

The Board agreed that the By-Laws will be added to the October Agenda.

Terminal FBO Refurbishment Tour With Curry Construction

Bill White, Billie Little and Manager Fearn met with the Curry Team to discuss renovations for Building A – The Terminal and Building B- the FBO.

State Airfield Inspection

No Discrepancy. Letter issued to Board.

Hangar Pavement Project

Gates repaired, markings applied, punch list items addressed. Seeding will take place as weather permits.

Gas Fryer Installation

Two gas fryers were installed at the Airport Steakhouse. This is the first natural gas equipment installation for the Terminal Building.

REIL

Runway End Indicator Light. Runway 6 REIL was repaired.

Brush cutter/Skid steer Rental

Mowing was completed on waterways, steep slopes, and areas of tall brush. Equipment was rented for 1 week.

Zimmer commented that he would like to see our farm lease operators assume this role and responsibility next year to eliminate the need for rentals and save man-hours.

Young Eagles

Our next Young Eagles event of the year will be held on September 26, 2026.

IAMA- Illinois Maintenance Association Conference

Manager Fearn, Bill White, and Rod Symonds will attend in Springfield, Illinois, on September 16th and 17th.

IPAA Fall Conference

Galena, September 27th-30th. Chairman Mark Nelson and Manager Fearn will attend, along with Commissioners Ronda Sauget, and Curt Schaefer.

Facebook

116,540 views, 9820 engagements, and 1,341 reactions.

Website

704 visits, 1,486 page views, and 44 engagements.

Out of the Office

Manager Fearn will be out of the office September 21st-24th on Vacation.

Vacation

Billie Little will be out on vacation from September 10th – 18th.

Airport Steakhouse Vacation

Close September 14th- 21st.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

October 3rd.

Executive Session

An executive session was not necessary.

Lease Agreements

The Board agreed that there were no changes to be made to the proposed lease agreement for the Aerinova Aerial LLC T-Hangar G lease.

Commissioner Zimmer made a motion to approve the lease for signatures. Commissioner Schaefer seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote. The results were as follows:

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes

Commissioner's Comments & Questions

Commissioner Campbell asked if there were any further comments or questions; there were no further comments or questions. Commissioner Sauget commented that the terminal building presents some big obstacles and it should be considered that it may have to come down, as the roof and plumbing and electrical are definite obstacles. Zimmer said he would be very interested what \$1M could do to the facade of the Terminal building. Manager Fearn outlined the tour with Flightstar out of Savoy. They are considering MTO as a possible opportunity for future collaboration and/or developments. Zimmer and Sauget said it is an avenue worth exploring to see if there is any interest from John Deere to bring maintenance to the Airfield and negotiate a long term lease with possibility of incentives.

Adjournment

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

Sauget	Yes
Schaefer	Yes
Zimmer	Yes
Campbell	Yes

Recorder