

Minutes

Coastal Carolina Regional Airport Authority

April 21, 2026

Chairman Pope called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

All stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll was taken, and the following Board members were present in person:

Bender, Eckert, Harris, Liner, Morris, and Pope.

Riggle and Frazer attended via Webex.

Jones, Murray and Wood were excused.

Also present in person: Andy Shorter, Airport Director; Ray Dunn, Dunn, Pittman, Skinner, and Ashton; April Hill, Airport Security Coordinator and Board Recorder; Amy Ritchie, Terminal & Facilities Manager; Charlie Dunn, Airport Operations Manager, and John Massey, Talbert, Bright, and Ellington.

Also present via Webex: Edward Carroll, Tidewater Aviation.

Pope commented on an article published on the NCDOT's website recognizing the completion of the terminal expansion project at EWN. He thanked Shorter and his team, including John Massey and other architects and engineers involved with the project, for their efforts on the project.

Secretary's Report

On motion by Liner, seconded by Eckert, the minutes of March 17, 2026, were approved. In favor 6, opposed 0.

Treasurer's Report

Shorter referred to the treasurer's report that was submitted in the monthly packet, noting the total annual operating revenue has a shortfall of \$134,400, but expenditures are also \$92,000 under budget. The parking lot revenue is behind projections but Shorter remains hopeful that the airport will see an uptick as the busy season approaches. Rental car revenue also shows a deficit of \$51,000 but a similar trend from the previous year suggests an increase in the summer to help make up the deficit.

On motion by Harris, second by Liner, the Treasurer's Report was approved. In favor 6, opposed 0.

Commercial Development Committee Report

Harris advised that the committee did not meet this month but that Shorter will discuss a few items in New Business and executive session.

Marketing Committee Report

Riggle advised that the local marketing committee did meet this month with good participation from attendees and a great report given by Brice. She noted that they are seeing a softening in travel interest and tourism activity but does anticipate a strong spring and summer season, despite current economic challenges. Riggle added that the committee also discussed the importance of Google ads and earned local media coverage to boost regional reach. Riggle also gave an update on the real estate market, noting a flat to down trend in pricing and longer market times for houses. The hospitality market is also experiencing a downturn, with forecasts not as strong as the previous year. Riggle mentioned a recent visit from the new marketing firm, Infinitee, expressing the expectation of the firm to enhance the airport's marketing efforts as they have already provided polished deliverables. The committee plans to target key

events like the upcoming air show and the sundowning of the Harrier to boost occupancy and visitation. The focus will be centered on outdoor assets and adventure seekers, with new self-serve kayaks at Creekside Park. Riggle expressed the importance of top-of-mind marketing to remind people of the airport's availability for travel. The committee also plans to use billboards, and the CARTS vans for target marketing. Riggle concluded with a focus on future marketing strategies and events to boost the airport's visibility and revenue.

Director's Update

Air Service Update: Shorter referred to the enplanement/deplanement data that was included in the Board's packet. Shorter commented that he had the opportunity to speak with American recently while attending an air service conference and that American expressed that they remain pleased with the data out of EWN. Unfortunately, American, and other airlines, are planning on trimming additional seats in the fall as a strategy to increase their revenue per available seat mile (RASM) figures. Breeze Airways also remains pleased with their service out of EWN. Shorter noted that the Orlando flight has been profitable while Hartford has seen a flatter demand curve recently. However, he added that with recent published data, the Hartford flight is picking back up with Spring break travel. Shorter also mentioned other airlines that he met with while at the air service conference. He said that Delta has no immediate plans to return to New Bern, but that they may consider seasonal service within a few years. United Airlines is interested and sees potential for New Bern as a growth area by providing service out of Dulles. Shorter also mentioned Sky West interest, operating as a commuter for a major airline. Shorter also mentioned a meeting that he had with a USDOT representative while at the conference. He said that the conversation was productive and that the representative provided critical requirement updates for the Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP) grant application. The representative confirmed that there

are no penalties for applying for a back-to-back SCASDP grant. Shorter stated that a new criterion this year is the requirement for a letter of interest from an airline, which is a significant discriminator.

SCASDP Application: Shorter advised that the application for the SCASDP grant is due by May 4th. He said that he has received 15 letters of support from the community and a letter of support from an airline. He added that he has re-connected with the State to ask for their support as they have helped in the past. The airport has also received letters of support from many elected officials.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)-FAA Contract Tower (FCT) Competitive Grant Program: Shorter announced that the Craven County Commissioners approved the \$1.2 million grant for the BIL/FCT Competitive Grant Program. He said that he was able to share with the Commissioners the study that the airport has completed for a new contract tower and the selected location on the airfield. Shorter also expressed his appreciation for Commissioner Jones' comment commending the Airport Authority being able to secure over \$50M from FAA and state funding sources for the last several years of airport capital improvement projects.

FAA Lease Agreement: Shorter advised that Dunn has reviewed a proposed 20-year land lease between the airport and the FAA to allow the FAA to use the airport's land for their electronic navigation facilities such as the VOR, ILS and the Glide Slope. He said that the lease is a "no fee contract" as expected since the airport receives entitlement and discretionary funding through the FAA. Dunn added that the lease would be a continuation of a lease that has been in place for 20 years. He said that it has worked successfully in the past and that the only unique difference in this lease is that the airport must make certifications to ensure that the airport will not use any type of Chinese technology on the airfield. Shorter commented that this requirement is

a similar type of protection that is in the grant agreements and assurances that must be signed every year.

Draft Budget: Shorter advised that after today's meeting a copy of next year's draft budget will be handed out to the Officers of the Executive Committee: The Secretary, the Vice-Chairman and the Chairman of the Authority for review. Everyone else on the Board will receive a copy of the draft budget during the public hearing scheduled for next month.

Project Ordinance and Budget Amendment Updates for Aerospace Development

Shorter submitted the following Budget Amendment and Ordinance for the Boards approval:

**Budget Amendment
Fund 835**

Revenues	Amount	Expenditures	Amount
8357050-33301 State Grant	\$1,276,669.00	8357050-47006 Architectural & Engineering	\$116,980.00
8357050-39808 Transfer Ops Fund 810	(\$799,943.00)	8357050-47600 Construction	\$1,134,351.00
8357050-39813 Transfer State Funds Resr.	\$663,630.00		
8350000-3800 Interest on Investment	\$110,975.00		
8100000-39901 Fund Balance Approp. Current Yr.	(\$799,943.00)	8107050-49730 Transfer FAA AIP Grant Project	(\$799,943.00)
Total:	\$451,388.00	Total:	\$451,388.00

Justification: To increase the budget for the Aerospace Development Area to reflect additional construction and architectural & engineering costs as well as additional sources of revenue.

On motion by Harris, seconded by Morris, the Board approved the budget amendment for Fund 835. In favor 6, opposed 0. A roll call vote was taken; 6 yes, 0 no.

Updated Project Ordinance

Aerospace Development Area - Fund 835

Expenditures:

Architectural & Engineering	\$1,659,154
Construction – Clearing and Grubbing	\$1,360,725
Construction – Water and Sewer	\$2,197,363
Construction - Access Road	\$996,942
Construction – Taxiway and Apron	\$7,742,260
Total	\$13,956,444

Revenues:

FAA Grant Funds	\$3,247,300
State Grant Funds	\$6,307,465
Interest on State Grant Funds	\$110,975
Transfer from State Funds Reserve	\$663,630
Commerce Grant	\$1,436,925

Golden Leaf Foundation Grant	\$753,700
Transfer from Operations Fund 810	\$1,436,449
Total	\$13,956,444

On motion by Morris, seconded by Liner, the Board approved the budget ordinance to update the project for the Aerospace Development Area under Fund 835. In favor 6, opposed 0. A roll call vote was taken: 6 yes, 0 no.

Shorter presented Work Authorization 2208-2503 submitted by Talbert, Bright & Ellington in the amount of \$82,330 for additional construction administration services for the Corporate Aerospace Development Area Taxi Lane and Apron project. The additional service is for the construction of an additional 4,290 sq. ft. of a concrete apron.

On motion by Liner, seconded by Morris, the Board approved the Chairman to sign the work authorization as submitted by Talbert, Bright, and Ellington for the additional construction administration services for the Corporate Aerospace Development Area Taxi Lane and Apron project. In favor 6, opposed 0.

Change Order for Aerospace Development Apron Expansion

Shorter presented a change order submitted by Talbert, Bright, and Ellington in the amount of \$7,742,259.50. The Board has previously approved an additional 4,290 sq. ft. to the concrete apron. This change order will increase the project by \$1,226,296.25 due to an increasing cost of asphalt since the bidding process. An additional sixty days have also been added with the change order for the additional concrete paving work.

On motion by Liner, seconded by Morris, the Board approved the Chairman to sign the change order as submitted by Talbert, Bright, and Ellington in the amount of \$7,742,259.50. In favor 6, opposed 0.

TBE Work Authorization (Williams Road Design and Bidding)

Shorter presented Work Authorization 26-01 submitted by Talbert, Bright & Ellington in the amount of \$1,059,175.00 for the design and bidding of the Williams Road re-alignment. The project will be part of the FAA FY26 AIP Entitlement grant.

On motion by Liner, seconded by Morris, the Board approved Work Authorization 26-01 as submitted by Talbert, Bright, and Ellington for the design and bidding for the Williams Road re-alignment. In favor 6, opposed 0.

2026 Annual Audit Contract Approval

Shorter advised that the Craven County Commissioners recently approved of the annual audit contract for Craven County. He explained that the contract includes the airport as a part of the audit because it is a component unit of Craven County. Shorter asked for the Board's approval for the Chairman to sign an audit contract through Craven County in the estimated amount of \$17,000.

On motion by Morris, seconded by Eckert, the Board approved the Chairman to sign an audit contract through Craven County in the estimated of \$17,000. In favor 6, opposed 0.

Open Discussion

Liner thanked the staff for organizing the reservations for the 2026 North Carolina Airports Association Conference. He commented that the conference was worth attending and will make a recommendation to the County Commissioners that it be a requirement for any new Board member to attend so that they may see and understand the involvement of aviation within the state. Harris also recommended that the County Manager could consider attending as well. Pope echoed the importance of attending the conference commenting that it is a great way to make a connection face to face with airport representatives, sponsors, and engineering firms.

Eckert commented that as he was driving in for the Authority meeting, he did not see signage at Airport Road and Highway 70 to direct traffic to the airport. Shorter advised that there is signage but that it is a small sign construction related, orange sign, that is posted further down Highway 70 before Airport Road.

Liner asked if the gate arm at the employee parking lot was broken. Ritchie advised that the gate is experiencing some badge reader communication issues and that the airport is waiting for new equipment to come in to resolve the issue. In the meantime, the gate arm has been lifted so that employees do not experience issues getting to work on time. Shorter added that there is also a handful of obsolescence issues with the access gates on the general aviation side, so the decision has been made to upgrade and put in new badge reader communication systems at those gates.

Executive Session

On motion by Liner, seconded by Morris, the Board went into executive session at 3:15 pm in accordance with N.C. General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3)(4) to consult with the attorney retained by the Authority to discuss the handling of

a potential claim and to discuss the matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the Authority. In favor 6, opposed 0. Riggle was then excused for the remaining portion of the meeting.

On motion by Morris, seconded by Liner, the Board came out of executive session.

No action was taken during the executive session.

After the Board resumed the public session, the members of the Authority discussed the PFAS litigation. On motion by Liner, seconded by Eckert, the Authority approved to retain Jim DeMay, Milberg, LLC and Napoli Shkolnik, PLL to represent the Authority in the multidistrict PFAS litigation which has been filed in South Carolina. In favor 5, opposed 0.

On motion by Morris, seconded by Liner, the Board adjourned at 3:50 pm. In favor 5, opposed 0.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Eckert', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with large, looped letters.

Secretary Mark Eckert