

Grand Haven Airport Board Meeting Minutes September 23rd, 2025

Chairperson Ben Ennenga called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm

Roll Call: Richard Clapp, (board secretary)

Members present: Denny Swartout, Dale Hagenbuch, Richard Clapp, Ben Ennenga, Tricia Harrell

Others Present: Earle Bares- Airport Manager, Tom Mandersheid- Airport Liaison

Guests: Jim Hagen, Jennifer Bares, Tom Howard, Kevin Jarcho

Summary:

This document provides a comprehensive summary of the recent Grand Haven Airport Board meeting. The meeting covered a range of operational, technical, and administrative topics, including weather advisory systems, maintenance updates, financial reviews, and community engagement.

First Call to the Audience:

Jennifer Bares, 14981 Briarwood

Trunk or Treat event, Oct. 25 2-4p

Grand Haven Public Safety has been asked for their presence during the event. Ottawa County Sheriff has been informed for the purpose of traffic control.

Candy donations and gift cards requested.

Minutes:

- Acceptance of 8/26/2025 meeting minutes:
Motion by Clapp, seconded by Swartout, motion carried with unanimous support

New Business:

- **Vote: Recommendation to Grand Haven City Council to approve Prein & Newhof professional engineering services in the amount of \$43,500 for supplemental design services and construction phases for the pavement**

rehabilitation of runway 18/36. Motion to approve/seconded, Swartout/Ennenga, motion carried with unanimous approval.

- Presentation on drone study by MDOT about obstacles to approaches. - Earle Bares (Airport Manager)
- Data shows that there are many trees that need to be trimmed to end obstacles to the approach surfaces per 14 CFR part 77.

Weather Advisory System and Field Instrumentation

The board discussed the configuration and operation of the Grand Haven automated weather advisory system, focusing on the delivery of weather information to pilots. The advisory is designed to be user-friendly, with multiple click options to access varying levels of detail:

- Three clicks: wind speed, direction, and gust information.
- Four clicks: comprehensive advisory including density altitude, only if above a 1,000-foot threshold.

The system will not tie up the Unicom frequency excessively and will be linked to Weather Underground for broader access, though the Board opted not to pursue a subscription-based service for advanced features at this time. The equipment setup is flexible, using solar-powered wind instruments and using existing antennas on the building. Installation will position the wind sensors closer to the runway for more accurate readings.

Pilot-Controlled Lighting and Weather System Integration

The airport uses its own system for lighting rather than integrating with the vendor's pilot-controlled system, which provides audio feedback upon activation. Should the current system fail in the future, the vendor's alternative—capable of controlling lighting and providing acknowledgments—is still available as a backup option. The package includes a precision barometric pressure sensor, with optional calibration services not pursued at this time due to cost considerations.

Old Business: (None)

Airport Manager's Report:

Key operational statistics

- Aircraft count: 58 based aircraft, with ongoing changes to hangar assignments.
- Fuel sales: 5,800 gallons in August, including significant Jet A sales.
- Electrical Issues: Repairs and mapping of the hangar electrical system were described, with temporary solutions in place and further work expected.
- Buildings: Ongoing repair and insulation of hangars, replacement of hot water lines to prevent freezing, and continued maintenance of runway lighting.
- Other operational notes included the ongoing management of wildlife and noise abatement, with no recent noise complaints reported. The airport continues to monitor and update NOTAMs as needed.

Facility and Equipment Maintenance

Several infrastructure and maintenance projects were reviewed:

- Fuel System: Despite downtime, fuel sales reached record highs in August, with \$30,000 in sales for July and 5,800 gallons sold in August.
- Pumps: New fuel pumps are faster and more responsive, with nozzle holders installed to improve usability.
- Crack Sealing and Painting: Updated grant requests have been submitted due to increased project costs (\$53,500, up from \$40,000), with funding fully covered by state funds. Project timing may slip to the next fiscal year.
- Hangar Projects: Bids for painting and roof work have been favorable. Other quotes are being gathered for further hangar painting and door replacements. Active tenants remain in some hangars, but there is interest in converting storage hangars back to aircraft use where feasible.
- Tree Trimming: The West approach has been improved, with budget allocated for further trimming as needed.
- Airfield Safety: The Board discussed installing orange safety balls on power lines after reviewing drone survey drawings, with costs estimated at around \$500 each.

Airport Liaison Report:

Operational Updates and Financial Review

- Financials: The airport reported a cash balance of \$441,348.53; receivables of \$36,060; with \$42,987.24 in hanger billings for the fourth quarter. \$64,750 is the cash that has come in from MDOT. Fuel costs and revenues are tracking positively, with full tanks on hand.

The north-south runway rehabilitation project is delayed until spring due to contractor workload, but project prices will be honored, and contracts are being finalized.

Second Call to audience:

Community Engagement and Solar Project Discussion

During the public comment period, community member, Jim Hagen, inquired about potential solar energy projects near the airport. While no formal proposals have been submitted, the Board acknowledged ongoing interest from the city and encouraged a formal review process for any future projects. Jim clarified he is not directly involved in the current proposal but has promoted solar opportunities in Grand Haven for several years.

Conclusion

The Grand Haven Airport Board remains focused on improving operational efficiency, safety, and facility quality while responsibly managing finances and considering community interests. Ongoing projects and proactive maintenance underscore the Board's commitment to the airport's long-term success.

Motion to adjourn, seconded: **Clapp, Hagenbuch**

Adjournment 6:32 pm

Minutes submitted by board secretary, Richard Clapp