

County of Marquette, Michigan
Marquette Sawyer Regional Airport
Airport Board of Advisors
Thursday, October 9, 2025 @ 4:00 PM
Minutes/Regular Meeting

Members Present: Robert Muelle, Karl Bohnak, Karen Kovacs, Christopher Germain, Joseph Derocha, Marty Munger
Members Present Virtually: Bradley Stoddard, Charles Holsworth
Staff Present: David Erhart, Airport Manager; Duane DuRay, County Administrator, Brett Hubbard-Stade, County Executive Assistant and Recorder
Public Present: Greg Durand, Bruce McCullough, Jordanne Schwandt, Chad Kubick

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Derocha at 4:04 PM. Bohnak led the Pledge of Allegiance. There were introductions of members, staff and public in attendance.
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Holsworth moved to approve the agenda with the following addition: Asset Management/Inventory/Income/Vendor discussion. Second by Stoddard. Motion carried (8-0).
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Muelle moved to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2025 meeting with the following correction: the freight terminal discussion should have been attributed to McCullough instead of Muelle. Second by Munger. Motion carried (8-0)
4. **Public comment:** Durand thanked the group for the formation of this board.
5. **Items of Discussion:**

A. Actionable Goals for Realizing Goals and Expectations Discussed at September Meeting

There was a round table discussion of actionable goals for the airport, with the main points being:

- Development of West side of the runway.
- Overall expansion of the airport, especially hangars.
- Bringing more businesses and tenants into the area.
- Workforce development.
- Improvement of first impressions for passengers; making the airport and surrounding area more inviting.
- Improvement of transportation to and from airport.
- Continue to support US Military operations at Sawyer.
- Strive to be Best in Class.
- Mitigate leakage of passengers to other airports.
- Recognize airport equipment future.
- Improve communication between the Airport Board of Advisors and the Marquette County Board of Commissioners.
- There were questions and discussion about the Airport Master Plan.
- An Inventory of Assets should be performed. An asset tour was suggested.

B. Asset Management/Finance Discussion: Derocha suggested the creation of a Finance Committee. Motion by Stoddard to create Finance Committee to include Kovacs, Stoddard, Holsworth and Derocha. Support from Holsworth. Motion adopted (8-0).

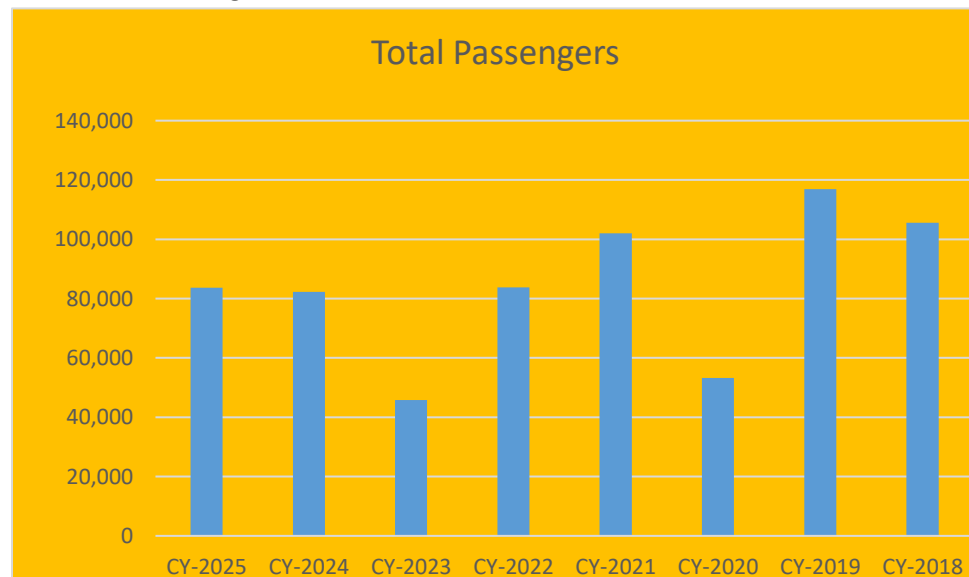
6. **Informational Items and Project Updates:** Erhart provided updates and addressed questions on the following projects.
 - A. **Passenger Boarding Bridges – On track for Spring 2026** – Project will begin in spring.
 - B. **Air Traffic Control Tower Upgrades – On track for Spring 2026** - Project will begin in spring.

- C. **Hangar 663 Concrete Replacement – Completed.** Erhart added that the Kubick concrete steps are being re-done to improve appearance and safety.
 - D. **2023 FAA Supplementary Discretionary Funding ZEV – FAA Approval Withdrawn.** Erhart noted that priorities of the current Administration have changed.
 - E. **\$3 Million State Funding Appropriation –** Derocha thanked Rep. Bohnak and Germain for their efforts in obtaining this funding for the Airport. Bohnak added that Rep. Greg Markkonen, Rep. Dave Preston, and Senator Ed McBroom were also instrumental in this effort.
 - F. **Hangar Occupancy Update**
 - a. **T-Hangars: full capacity.** There is a waiting list currently.
 - b. **Air Traffic Control Tower Upgrades – On Track for Spring 2026**
 - c. **Hangar 663 – Army RTC/Bell Helicopter – Testing until May, occupation began September 30.**
 - d. **400 series: 2 bays available.**
 - e. **Kubick (423 E/W, 424, 425): Space available, contact FBO Staff for details.**
 - G. **Manager’s Report –** Erhart provided and reviewed the Manager’s Report, which is attached to these minutes, and addressed questions.
- 7. **Late Additions:** None.
 - 8. **Public Comment:** Durand raised the following issues: the ramp area by the T-Hangars needs to be swept; Uber would be a solution to transportation problems; grass-cutting needs to improve; there would be benefits to becoming an airport authority; providing one weekly direct flight to and from Florida (example) would be beneficial. McCullough pointed out that most of the airport’s concrete is over thirty years old, which should be considered during asset evaluation.
 - 9. **Staff and Committee Member Comment:** Derocha requested that each Board member write down three changes they would like to see at the airport with the \$3 Million in State appropriations, and bring to the next Board meeting. Holsworth appreciates getting the fixed asset report. Stoddard would like to see an overlay map of the whole facility. Muelle requested the definition of an asset, and Derocha clarified that it is any property of the airport. Kovacs is happy to be a part of this Board and excited to get to work. Germain pointed out that only a small percentage of state budget requests were appropriated, which emphasizes the great work of the area representatives who worked together on the appropriations request; the economic development summit takes place on Oct. 10, 2025 – contact Germain if interested. Derocha thanked everyone for their work, and thanked Germain and Bohnak for their work on the appropriations request. Munger inquired if there are openings for more Board members and suggested that Durand would be an excellent addition; Derocha suggested adding the creation of a process for adding Board members to the next agenda. Erhart is grateful for the input of this Board.
 - 10. **Adjournment:** Stoddard made a motion for adjournment at 5:28 PM. Support by Muelle. Motion carried (8-0).

Manager's Report

Airline Activity Summary

1. Current Flight Schedule
 - a. American, two round trip flights to Chicago seven days per week
 - i. Departures
 1. Chicago 7:00 AM
 2. Chicago 6:51 PM
 - ii. Arrivals
 1. Chicago 6:20 PM
 2. Chicago 9:53 PM
 - b. Delta, provides two round trip flights to Minneapolis and Detroit
 - i. Departures:
 1. Minneapolis 7:30 AM
 2. Detroit 1:25 PM
 - ii. Arrivals
 1. Minneapolis 12:23 PM
 2. Detroit 9:52 PM
 - c. November flight schedule shows a reduction of flights to Chicago through American. Appears to be the standard winter schedule with a decline in passenger traffic.
2. Passenger numbers continue to see recovery from post Covid numbers
 - a. 2019 passenger count 116,856, through September was 89,024.
 - b. 2025 passenger count through September is 83,636.
 - c. 6% down from pre-Covid, this can be attributed to Covid impacts, poor flight schedules and a decline in flight schedules.



d.

CY-2025	83,636
CY-2024	82,280
CY-2023	45,832
CY-2022	83,776
CY-2021	101,991
CY-2020	53,262
CY-2019	116,856
CY-2018	105,525

3. Minneapolis flight finances

a. Providing a revenue guarantee Grant \$750,000

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Totals
Total Cost	\$ 424,109.00	\$ 372,580.00	\$ 358,693.00	\$ 415,531.00	\$ 416,693.00	\$ 1,987,606.00
Subsidy	\$ 253,250.00	\$ 166,891.00	\$ 131,632.00	\$ 189,377.00	\$ 8,848.01	\$ 749,998.01

4. Marketing Grant

a. MDOT marketing Grant of \$325,000

Marquette Sawyer Regional Airport		
	Pd Advertising	In- Kind
TV 6		
Digital	\$ 100,000.00	
tv Ads	\$ 50,000.00	
Digital		\$ 100,000.00
Broadcast match		\$ 150,000.00
Media Brew		
	\$10,000	
		\$ 4,400.00
Eagle Radio		
	\$ 10,000.00	
		\$5,000
Travel Marquette		
Search Engine Marketing	\$ 9,900.00	
Targeted Displays	\$ 23,808.00	
Sponsored Content Article with Promotion	\$ 3,500.00	
Spotify	\$ 12,000.00	
Remessaging	\$ 595.20	
Radio Advertising		\$ 17,500.00
Event flight Promotion		\$ 2,500.00
Destination		\$ 6,000.00
		\$ 4,000.00
RRN		
Local Radio	\$ 10,000.00	
		\$ 8,785.33
LaDolce		
Website/Video Production/Branding	\$30,000	
		\$ 15,000.00
LSCP		
	\$ 25,000.00	
		\$ 3,000.00
Administration		
Marketing Materials	\$ 15,196.80	
Air Service Development Consulting		
Passenger Dmand Analysis		
Airline Headquarter Meetings		
Air Service Conferences		
Community Meetings		
Performance Monitoring		
	\$ 25,000.00	
Local fundraising for \$40,000		
	Grant Amount	Local Investment
Total Amounts	\$ 325,000.00	\$ 316,185.33

5. Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP)

a. Current Funding Sources

- i. Airport Entitlements (AIP) \$1.3 mil
- ii. Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation (BIL) Airport Infrastructure Grant (AIG) \$1 mil