



County of Marquette, Michigan
Marquette Sawyer Regional Airport
Airport Board of Advisors
Thursday, June 11, 2026 @ 4:00 PM
Minutes/Regular Meeting

Members Present: Charles Holsworth, Fred Benzie, Marty Munger, Bruce McCollough
Members Present Virtually: Bradley Stoddard
Members Not Present: Joseph Derocha, Christopher Germain, Karen Kovacs
Staff Present: David Erhart, Airport Manager
Public Present: Greg Durand, Natalie Chmiko, Evan Wendzel
Public Present Virtually: "Guest Guest"

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Stoddard at 4:18 PM. Stoddard led the Pledge of Allegiance. Erhart took Roll call.
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Stoddard presented agenda to Board for approval. Motion by Holsworth to approve the agenda. Support by McCollough. Motion carried (5-0).
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the March 12, 2026 meeting approved. Motion by Holsworth. Support by McCollough. Motion carried (5-0).
4. **Public comment:** No public comment

5. **Goals and Objectives:**

Review of agreed upon main goals:

- Strive for economic sustainability
- Enhance airport services in Marquette County
- Best in class experience - strive to offer competitive fares

6. **Action Items**

At the direction provided at the previous board meeting, Erhart provided a list of prioritized equipment and infrastructure needs. The board requested that fleet items that are in critical enough need, should they fail, would operationally hinder the airport. Erhart provided a list in the packet material and spoke about the items. An airfield snowblower or loader with a snowblower head, a pick-up truck, and an airfield tractor for mowing were highlighted as most practical needs. An airfield snowblower was also listed but Erhart explained that it was a more expensive piece of equipment than the loader and snowblower attachment combination, and that can serve in a similar capacity while providing additional ability to function more effectively between T-hangars and in the parking lot.

Erhart also detailed the pavement infrastructure component of the list stating that the upcoming GA Apron reconstruction/rehabilitation had originally planned for the local funding portion to utilize future Airport Improvement Plan (AIP) entitlements, but after higher than forecasted bids, this method of funding would constrain future airport projects.

Finally, Erhart explained that funding was also needed to professionally evaluate and repair the T-hangars which appear to have a structural racking issue that is affecting many tenants. Erhart explained that the scope of repair work is beyond maintenance personnel's purview.

Benzie asked if the GA Apron project would address the area that was possibly going to be used for future T-hangar development. Erhart explained the scope of the project would address pavement further South. McCollough asked the depth of the concrete, to which Erhart informed of a depth of 11 inches currently.

Benzie asked about the total of all items presented. Erhart explained that the items with values added up to approximately 2.9 million dollars but that the T-hangars would need to be evaluated to learn the cost and that the grant could be amended if plans needed to be adjusted.

Benzie mentioned that improved cell service is still something he would like to see and that Wi-Fi being available on the GA apron would also be helpful to allow pilots to access information needed for flying. He questioned if the former beacon tower could be used to broadcast a signal. Stoddard said he could work with his partners to evaluate the feasibility of adding additional cell service to this tower if airport staff can provide location, height, and ownership information. Holsworth explained that there are many constraints such as desire for exclusive access by cell carriers that could conflict with airport needs. Stoddard mentioned that airports themselves would have restrictions related to heights around the airfield surface. Munger pointed out that Aymium has large smoke stacks near the airport. Erhart explained that the biggest limiting factor for structure heights is in the approach of a runway more so than laterally away from the side of a runway.

Stoddard clarified that all items listed were intended to be funded with the 3 million dollars in state funding. Erhart confirmed.

Stoddard asked if there were additional needs in regards to pick-up trucks, to have more than one or two pick-up trucks that were in road-safe condition. Erhart explained that additional vehicles would be eventually needed and that the current main pick-up truck (2022 model) was heavily used, so it would be appropriate to include an additional truck in the planning for grant funds.

Erhart deferred to Natalie Chmiko, Lake Superior Community Partnership (LSCP) CEO, in attendance in the audience, to speak to what is needed for the application to the state. Chmiko explained the airport needs to get under contract with the Department of Labor and Economic Development (LEO) by September 15, 2026 in order to secure funding and that the plan put forward to LEO can be broad and can be changes as needed if quotes vary from plan or different equipment is decided to be needed. She also explained that the airport would have until 2030 to spend the funds, provided

they were under contract in time. Chmiko expected that what would be needed next would staff would work with LSCP to prepare an application to LEO for state.

Munger confirmed with Erhart that pursuing projects related to airfield navigational aids was ruled out due to cost.

Stoddard confirmed with Chmiko that quotes were not needed for application to LEO. Chmiko confirmed and also asked if there is a need for funding to go to strategic planning for the airport. Stoddard reiterated that his main concern is addressing equipment concerns that could operationally hinder the airport and allocate strategic planning to a different avenue. Munger concurred.

McCollough questioned a fire truck not being listed. Erhart explained that funding was being pursued through a different Federal mechanism, that the Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) also addressed this if federal funding did not work out, and that the current 3000 gallon striker has a backup in the older Oshkosh 1500T that can also fulfill Index B requirements. Munger asked what capability the airport can carry for ARFF Index. Erhart explained that the airport can temporarily meet Index D requirements as needed and can meet Index E requirements if utilizing equipment from mutual aid sources such as Forsyth Township.

Stoddard asked if Benzie was open to amending his motion to clarify what to direct staff to do. Benzie clarified that he recommended adding a second truck and that Munger had begun to form a motion.

Munger motioned to approve the list as presented, with the addition of a second pick-up truck, and direct staff to work with LSCP staff to prepare an application for submittal to the State. Second by Holsworth. Motion carried (5-0)

7. Informational Items and Project Updates:

- A. Air Traffic Control Tower Project update – Erhart explained the project was moving along as planned with chiller work of the HVAC component currently in process. Erhart also announced an additional round of funding for the subsequent year announced by the FAA for 3.8 million dollars. These funds will be used to address the remainder of the modernization needs of the tower including cab windows, roof, consoles, carpeting, generator, and elevator replacement. The project is to go to bid soon in an additive bid form in order to accomplish as many items as possible since the funding is below the 5 million dollars requested.
- B. Hangar Occupancy Update – Full capacity with a waiting list of 15.
 - a. T-Hangars: Full Capacity, 15 on waiting list
 - b. 661: Available recently used for temporary storage with Forest Service
 - c. 663: Available recently used for temporary storage with Forest Service
 - d. 400 series: 1 bay available, equipment

- e. Kubick (423 E/W, 424, 425): Space available, contact FBO staff for details.
- C. Manager's Report – Erhart delivered the manager's report updating on flight schedules for upcoming month and YTD figures for enplanements and deplanements, explaining that figures are still outpacing 2025 and 2019 numbers.

McCollough questioned if United was still coming. Erhart reiterated that United continues to indicate they will be launching in Fall of 2026 with no other information indicating otherwise.

Benzie noted that the Air Traffic Control Tower does track all flight traffic in and out of Marquette Sawyer Regional Airport, including general aviation, air ambulance, and military, in addition to the commercial traffic. Benzie stated he would like to see a report of air traffic control metrics in addition to the airline enplanement data. Erhart will include in Manager's Report going forward.

8. **Late Additions:** None.

9. **Public Comment:** No public comment

10. **Staff and Committee Member Comment:**

McCollough – EAA pilots at last event were discussing how Wi-Fi would be useful at the T-hangars, so McCollough seconds Benzie's comments about Wi-Fi. Stoddard asked Erhart to track Wi-Fi needs among GA pilots to understand reasons/bandwidth need.

11. **Adjournment:** Stoddard adjourned the meeting at 5:11 pm. Motion by Benzie. Support by Holsworth. Motion carried (5-0)



Manager's Report

Airline Activity Summary

1. Current Flight Schedule (June)
 - a. American, provides two round trip flight to Chicago seven days per week.
 - i. Departures
 1. Chicago 8:00 AM (This aircraft comes in the night before and stays at the airport for this departure)
 2. Chicago 4:25 PM
 - ii. Arrivals
 1. Chicago 3:55 PM
 2. Chicago 10:00 PM
 - b. Delta, provides two round trip flights, one to Minneapolis and one to Detroit
 - i. Departures:
 1. Detroit 7:30 AM Every day
 2. Minneapolis 5:14 PM (Does not fly Tuesdays and Saturdays).
 - ii. Arrivals
 1. Minneapolis 4:25 PM (Does not fly Tuesdays and Saturdays).
 2. Detroit 11:14 PM
 - c. United Airlines new planned launch day of October 25, 2026
2. April passenger numbers are included below.
 - a. May Figures
 - i. May 2026 passenger count is 10,957
 - ii. May 2025 passenger count was 9,537
 - iii. May 2019 passenger count was 10,041
 - iv. 2026 YTD numbers are a 14.9% increase from 2025 figures and a 9.1% increase over 2019 figures
 - b. YTD Comparison
 - i. YTD 2026 passenger count is 45,435
 - ii. Jan-Apr 2025 passenger count was 34,910
 - iii. Jan-Apr 2019 passenger count was 42,316

iv. 2026 YTD numbers are a 30.1% increase from 2025 figures and a 7.4% increase over 2019 figures

c. These numbers show us still on track to outperform pre-COVID metrics, even with the delay in United's launch of service.

Total Passengers	
CY 2026 YTD	45435
CY 2025	112076
CY 2024	88456
CY 2023	84059
CY2022	83776
CY 2021	101991
CY 2020	53262
CY 2019	116856
CY 2018	105525

