

**Westmoreland County Airport Authority  
Regularly Scheduled Meeting  
December 9, 2025**

# Regular Meeting

The Regularly Scheduled July meeting of the Westmoreland County Airport Authority was held at 11 a.m. Tuesday, December 9, 2025, in the Authority Conference Room at Arnold Palmer Regional Airport in Unity Township, Pennsylvania, in accordance with notice given.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Whittaker, who led the Pledge of Allegiance and directed that the following members be recorded as present:

Paul Whittaker - Chairman  
Vincent Finoli - Treasurer  
Edward Kilkeary, Sr. - Secretary  
Gary Beck Sr.  
Mark Gera  
Richard Pologruto

Also present were: Executive Director Gabe Monzo; attorney Amber Leechalk of Avolio Law, authority solicitor; Raena Lindemuth of McFarland-Johnson, authority engineers; Westmoreland County Commissioner Doug Chew; Rich Cholodofsky of the Tribune Review; Ollie Gratzinger of the Latrobe Bulletin; Paul Gough of the Pittsburgh Business Times; pilot Valetta Mowry, Anthony DeNunzio of DeNunzio's; Bill Gallagher; Airport Manager Moe Haas and Grants Director Dwayne Pickels.

*An executive session was held from 11:01 to 11:22 a.m. to discuss personnel matters.*

**Public Comments** - None

## Approval of Minutes

Upon the motion of Mr. Kilkeary, seconded by Mr. Beck, minutes of the November 11, 2025, regular meeting were unanimously approved.

## Arnold Palmer Regional Airport and Rostraver Treasurer's Reports -

Mr. Finoli reviewed treasurers reports for November, 2025.

Upon the motion of Mr. Pologruto, seconded by Mr. Gera, November, 2025, treasurer's report for Arnold Palmer Regional Airport was unanimously approved.

Upon the motion of Mr. Kilkeary, seconded by Mr. Gera, the November, 2025, treasurer's report for Rostraver Airport was unanimously approved.

**Rostraver Committee Report** - Mr. Beck reported that longtime Rostraver Airport employee Don Rechichar has recovered from his kidney transplant and is now back at work. "He is doing well," Mr. Beck said.

Mr. Monzo added that he has received a request from Nick Shilatz for ground lease to construct a 70' by 100' hangar in the corporate hangar area at Rostraver Airport. The site is located behind the Blackwell Aviation hangar inside Gate 1.

Upon the motion of Mr. Beck, seconded by Mr. Kilkeary, preliminary approval to initiate lease procedures was granted unanimously.

**Engineer's Update Report - by Raena Lindemuth of McFarland-Johnson**

**ARNOLD PALMER REGIONAL AIRPORT**

**Relocate Taxiways D and E**

This project is to remove and reconstruct two stub taxiways to meet current FAA safety guidance. Construction began in April, 2025. Taxiway E is substantially complete and Taxiway D is substantially complete except for seeding and new sign installation. Final seeding of TW D will finish in the spring. Both taxiways will receive final markings in the spring. Final inspection was held Nov. 20, 2025.

**Terminal Addition & Improvements/Apron Equipment Storage Building Design**

This project is to design and bid an addition and improvements for the terminal. Construction of the first phase began October, 28, 2024. All four Phase II agreements have been executed. A pre-construction meeting was held Nov. 5, 2025.

**Snow removal Vehicle and Equipment**

This project was to acquire a 20 ft. broom, carrier vehicle, and equipment for snow removal through the Costars program using a BIL grant from the FAA to replace an existing obsolete vehicle. The vehicle was delivered on May 30, 2024. A final inspection was held with FAA on June 27, 2024. Punch list items have been addressed. It was determined that a dump hood is needed for the broom. A quote from M-B Companies, Inc. was received. FAA approval has been granted and the supplier has been notified to initiate the order, Mrs. Lindemuth said.

**ARFF Vehicle and Equipment**

This project is to acquire a new B-IV Airport Rescue & Fire Fighting vehicle and equipment. The existing vehicle was acquired in 2010 and is deemed obsolete by NFPA and FAA Part 139. Bids were opened on April 17, 2025, for a new vehicle and replacement equipment. No responsive bids were received for the ARFF equipment. A grant has been offered by FAA and accepted. The agreement has been executed with the supplier (Oshkosh) and a pre-construction meeting was held on Oct. 9, 2025. No responsive bids were received for the ARFF equipment. The engineer is proceeding with exploring purchasing the equipment through eligible Costars suppliers or rebidding for next grant season. Truck information was received 10/14/25 for review by airport staff.

**ATCT Improvements PH II**

This project will consist of accessibility improvements of the Air Traffic Control Tower, which was originally built in 1981. The project is 100% FAA funded, Mr. Kunselman said. Final inspection for Phase I was held on June 27, 2024, with all punch list items addressed.

**GA Corporate Hangar Entrance**

This project would include access and parking improvements to the corporate hangar area. Preliminary plans and renderings have been prepared and funding is being sought. Due to compliance issues with TSA regulations, it is proposed to move forward with modifications proposed by the Engineer in the near future with Authority funds to improve security and safety, and seeking reimbursement of those costs when the larger project is funded.

**ROSTRAVER AIRPORT:**

**AWOS Replacement**

The project is to replace the existing AWOS, which was installed in 2000 and is now obsolete, Mr. Kunselman said. Bids for a replacement system were opened April 17, 2025. A grant has been offered by FAA and accepted. The agreement has been executed with the contractor (Bronder) and a pre-construction meeting was held on Oct. 9, 2025. Mrs. Lindemuth said the contractor would like to begin work in December, but FAA has pushed the project to January until January to meet inspectors schedules.

**PROMOTIONS** - Mr. Monzo reported that, "usually this time of year we make our decision on airshow." However, "we have not received any notifications on a jet team," he said. "It's your call, but, with the

## Westmoreland County Airport Authority

(terminal) construction going on, it is my recommendation that we take a year off and let it go this year. We have a lot of irons in the fire right now.” He noted that Mr. Haas is in agreement.

### REQUISITIONS - Mr. Pickels reviewed the requisitions for December, 2025

Latrobe 69-24 Terminal Addition PH I (FAA PH II) Requisition No. 13, totaling \$251,043.24 (Allegheny Constr)  
Latrobe 70-24 (Terminal Addition PH I, III) Requisition No. 14, totaling \$264,399.38 (A-1/Allegheny/Hranec/Wheels)  
Latrobe 71-24 (Remove/Reconstruct TW D CA) Requisition No. 14, totaling \$421,090.77 (A. Liberoni)  
Latrobe 72-24 (Remove/Reconstruct TW E CA) Requisition No. 13, totaling \$98,290.48 (A. Liberoni)  
Latrobe 77-25 (Construction Observation/Admin Services Terminal PH II) Req. No. 1, totaling \$4,555.18 (MJ)  
Latrobe WCIDC Requisition No. 22, totaling \$330,821.35 (A-1/Allegheny/Wheels/Hranec)  
Latrobe ESA-2024-1022-4615 Requisition No. 4, totaling \$132,672.40 (Dabico A-Bridge)  
Rostraver ESA-2024-1206-1108 (Equipment Purchase) Req. No. 3, totaling \$161,292.97 (Golden Eagle)  
Special Projects Account 7110075814 Requisition No. 269, totaling \$125,657.23

Upon the motion of Mr. Pologruto, seconded by Mr. Kilkeary, requisitions for December, 2025, were unanimously approved as presented.

### Solicitor’s Report - Amber Leechalk

Mrs. Leechalk reported that a loan is being negotiated with First Commonwealth Bank for a \$2.9 million bridge loan to help cover construction costs until RACP funding is received.

Upon the motion of Mr. Beck, seconded by Mr. Gera, acquisition of the \$2.9 million loan from First Commonwealth Bank was unanimously approved.

Mrs. Leechalk also presented a proposed lease addendum with Blaine Hill Barbeque (Droopy's) restaurant at Rostraver Airport to modify the subsequent renewal terms to two (2) full five-year terms beyond the initial one-year term of the current lease."

Upon the motion of Mr. Beck, seconded by Mr. Finoli, the lease addendum was unanimously approved as presented.

Mrs. Leechalk also presented a proposed five-year extension of the authority’s lease with Enterprise Car Rental for its operation at the airport.

Upon the motion of Mr. Kilkeary, seconded by Mr. Pologruto, the lease extension with Enterprise was unanimously approved.

### Executive Director’s Report

Mr. Monzo presented a resolution of appreciation for William Hobaugh of the Westmoreland County Department of Public Safety for his years of dedicated service. Hobaugh has worked on the airport since the completion of the public safety building near the south hangars.

Upon the motion of Mr. Pologruto, seconded by Mr. Kilkeary, the resolution was approved unanimously.

A copy of the resolution will be attached to these minutes.

In other business, Mr. Monzo presented his retirement announcement to the authority board, effective April 30, 2026

*“Dear friends, I am here before you today to announce my retirement after 43 years in the aviation industry, effective April 30th, 2026. As I share this news, I am filled with gratitude, pride and a touch of nostalgia. This moment represents both the culmination of a long journey and the beginning of a new chapter in my life — a time to reflect on the path that began over four decades ago and to look forward to whatever adventures may lie ahead.*

## Westmoreland County Airport Authority

*When I first set foot in this industry, I could not have imagined the profound impact aviation would have on my life. As a young firefighter, I was captivated by the marvel of flight — to roar of engines and the wonder of takeoff. While the responsibility I was undertaking seemed daunting, the vast network of dedicated professionals working behind the scenes made it enjoyable. Over the years, I have had the privilege to witness and contribute to remarkable transformations at these airports, from the advent of new aircraft technologies and the evolution of safety standards to the globalization of air travel and the rise of a more connected world — not to mention the excitement of airshows.*

*I have been fortunate to work alongside some of the finest minds and kindest souls in the industry. Together, we have weathered storms — both literal and metaphorical — celebrated countless successes and learned valuable lessons from our challenges. Each year, each flight and each project has left its mark, shaping not only my career, but also the person I have become. I am especially proud of our shared commitment to safety, innovation and service values that have formed the foundation of our work, which has been key to our many achievements.*

*Our maintenance department is second to none, and their determination to make this the best airport anywhere is truly admirable. Our award-winning airline staff continues to shine even in the most challenging conditions, and our office staff simply never quits. Alongside our ancillary employees, who make every part of this operation special, and the airport authority, which enables all of us to do our best by providing the support and energy we need to excel, we have created something remarkable together.*

*No one completes a 43-year journey alone. I owe a debt of gratitude to all of you who guided me, my colleagues who inspired and supported me, and the teams who made our ambitions possible. I wish to thank you for their unwavering support and patience — their sacrifices have enabled me to pursue my passion and purpose. To everyone who has walked this path with me, whether for decades or just a short leg of the journey, I extend my deepest appreciation.*

*Aviation is more than a career; it is a calling. Though I am retiring from my formal role, my passion of flight, discovery and the people of this industry remains undiminished. I look forward to seeing how the next generation will soar to new heights, building on the legacy we have created together. I am excited to embrace new experiences, to spend cherished time with family and friends and to continue supporting this industry that means so much to me — albeit from a different vantage point.*

*As I taxi down the runway for the final time, I do so with a full heart and a spirit of optimism. Thank you all for making this incredible journey possible. I wish you blue skies, smooth landings and the courage to always reach for the stars.”*

*With deepest gratitude,  
Gabe*

Mr. Monzo said that after his retirement, he will continue to work “a couple of days a week in a semi-retirement...I’m just going to be more of a consultant, at a reduced wage.”

Mr. Whittaker thanked Mr. Monzo for his years of effort, dedication and service. “He has been a class act the whole way.”

### **Chairman’s Report**

Mr. Whittaker directed Solicitor Leechalk to advertise the schedule for next year’s (2026) authority meetings.

Mr. Whittaker also called for the nominations of officers for next year.

Mr. Pologruto provided the slate, which included Mr. Whittaker as chairman, Mr. Finoli as vice chairman, Mr. Kilkeary as secretary and Mr. Pologruto as treasurer. The appointments will be voted on at the January, 2026, meeting.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the authority will be held **Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2026, at 9 a.m.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Dwayne Pickels, Grants Director