



Bentonville Municipal Airport  
Airport Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, February 5, 2026 – 3:00 pm  
Bentonville City Hall – 305 SW “A” Street  
Bentonville, AR 72712  
**(& VIA ZOOM WEBINAR)**

**I. Call to Order, Welcome & Pledge of Allegiance – *Brian Baldwin, Chairman***

Brian Baldwin opened the meeting and led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Brian Baldwin – Chairman, Bonnie Bridges(Zoom), Daniel Hughes, Chris Isbell and Maverick, Patrick Johndrow (Zoom), Ginny Lantz, Chris Maestri, Tanner Martin, Ellen Norvell (Zoom), Beckie Seba, Beverly Shepherd (Admin), Mark Slaughter, Wade Hayes, Dan Weese, Craig Gourley, and Chad Cox - Visitors. Cara Osborne and Beau Walker were absent.

**II. Approval of Minutes:**

- January 8, 2026

There was a motion to table the approval of the minutes from January to our next meeting on March 5, 2026. There was a second to the motion.

**III. Geese Control Report – *Chris Isbell and Maverick***

- Status Report

Chris Isbell (& Maverick) appeared before the board. They have seen and/or chased off about 225 birds. Thursday is the only day he is at the airport full-time. He has canine training on Monday and half day at the airport. Tuesday is half day of court and half day at airport. Thursday is a full day and half of canine maintenance time. If we have an emergency call, I will come. We will probably adjust our hours in the summer. He keeps a daily log about what he sees each day. Chris reported that we have had three instances where we had homeless people at the airport, which includes on the grounds of the airport. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of January a female individual that was mentally challenged had been run off from several businesses on the highway and made her way to the runway and laid down on the edge of the runway. She told him that she needed to lay there to warm up. The next day there was a person (unable to locate) a person hanging around the hangars. Then there was a person the next day that was in the hangar and would not identify himself. He was arrested for obstruction. No criminal mischief has been reported, just mainly trespassing. He said he would advocate for a fence being put up, as the board has discussed previously. He is going to be showing more of a presence on the west side of the airport. He has asked the Police Department if they hear of anyone or a problem around the airport to call him so that he can have good information about what is going on. This is all about life, safety, and protecting property. When dealing with these people, he gives them one chance, then it is a zero-tolerance policy. As always, if anyone has a problem of any kind, please report it to him and he will be happy to address it.

**IV. New Business:**

**A. Engineering and Construction Updates – *Chris Maestri – Garver USA***

- Current Airport Projects

**VBT E. Taxiway Extension (Phase II) (FAA Grant)**

As was stated last month, we had one item of work left that needed to be completed and that was sign panels. When we added that taxiway, all the naming conventions for existing connectors shifted down and made the furthest south connector be one instead of the previously furthest south connector. We have met with the panel manufacturer many times to make sure that they create the right size panels. Incorrect panel sizes were provided. So, they went back to a different supplier and there has been a lot of back and forth with that supplier to make sure they are right the first time. So, after this meeting, I am going to take a picture of every single sign that is on the airport and send

that to the manufacturer so that they are comfortable checking yes on putting those into production. They said that it will put us at the front of the line since we have been waiting for a long time. Once they arrive at the contractor's facility, there is about a day worth of installation, so it will just be a matter of timing once they are there. We do have NOTAMs in place currently to clarify what the taxiway naming conventions are, since the chart has updated, but the signs themselves have not. Once they are installed, we will step through the grant closeout process with the FAA and get our final reimbursement.

#### **VBT Hangar Access Road (ADA Grant)**

In blue on the west side of the picture on the screen, this is a reminder that the two goal posts have been paved and those are ready. The north-south stretch that parallels "I" Street has not been paved yet, and that was put on hold for a period to let the hangar developers get in and complete their heavy construction. Driving there today, it looks like they are still making good progress. Garver is not personally involved in that project, so I can speak on the actual schedule, but as soon as we are informed that they are done with heavy construction, we can get with Mark Slaughter and Dan Weese to coordinate the Street Department based on their availability to get out there and finish.

#### **VBT Taxiway A Pavement Rehabilitation (ADA Grant)**

We got all our construction contract documents back from Custom Pavement who was awarded that project, and they have been submitted to the City for execution. That is our last step to get Custom Pavement officially awarded and executed. Then we will start looking at pre-construction timeline and when they plan to get out here. Right now, Chris said that he had some assumptions of mid-April for a pre-con and late April for construction. Based on the nature of that work, it needs to warm up a little bit and be consistently warmer than what it is for us to perform that work. There are closures that are happening. We phased it in a way to minimize impacts to everyone on the west side. Chris says that the Charlie/Delta area around the circular apron is split into two different phases with two days each, so there will be a two-day period where the cluster of hangars where Brian Baldwin's hangar sits, we either need to relocate or they won't have access for a two-day period. As far as Game goes on the far south side, kind of phased it to where we could split their taxiway so that they could go either direction. We do have a single night closure to do some of the work inside of the runway safety area. That will minimize the impactful pieces to a night closure where people normally aren't operating.

#### **VBT West Turf Apron (ADA Grant)**

Last month, the direction was to make sure we get the letter over to the ADA. We did that. The ADA discussed that at their February Commission meeting. We did not know that it was going to be on that agenda or we probably would have been there. Normally, they don't discuss random letters like that to move grant funds around but they discussed it and everyone was in favor of it, so we are cleared to use those funds on the west turf apron in lieu of the east apron. As a reminder, that is a \$200,000.00 grant that we have from them that we can use to reinforce the grass over there for full year use, not just seasonal use. Where we stand on that project right now is that we have drafted a formal task order to put a bid package together and to do construction phase services like we do on most projects out there. That is in Mark's inbox to review and approve. As soon as he is good with it, I assume it will have to go to counsel to get approved. We have estimated a timeline for when we can turn around design and when we could start construction, that construction date, assuming we got approval of the work order within the next week or so, is in the August-September time. By the end of this year, we will have a reinforced turf apron that could serve six to seven light single engine aircraft year-round. Chad Cox asked if this project came in under budget, could it be used for the middle section. Mark Slaughter said it was already on their plan. If there is extra money, we will do it now while we have everybody there. If it is going to be more than \$200,000.00, we don't think it will be, we will do the inside of the donut later.

#### **VBT East Parking Apron (FAA/BIL Grant)**

There have been some developments since we talked last time. As a reminder from our CIP discussion in the fall, we had originally shown this as a design and construction grant from the FAA in fiscal year 2026, which runs from October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2026. Due to funding availability, i.e. the city cash flowing design on the front end and getting reimbursed for it later is not a feasible mechanism currently. We have discussed with the FAA to get a design only grant in fiscal year 2026, which would allow the city to get reimbursed as we do the design and as they accrue costs associated with it, you would get reimbursed at 95% every month that we submit a drawn down to the FAA, and then we would approve a fiscal year 2027 construction grant for the same project in pink that you see on the map on the east side. The benefit that we have with the split into fiscal years 2026 and 2027 is mainly cashflow related is what happens to the construction timeline if we wait to get a fiscal year 2027 grant. I have talked

through that with Kathy Franklin, our program manager with the FAA, and since we are planning to use AIG money from the BIL program, all that money is available now and you can do pre-work with AIG funds, i.e., you could award and begin construction on a project before you have a grant. If we got bids that we knew fit within the money that we already have in the bank, we could award a project and begin said project and get a grant on October 1, 2026. You could still start construction this year. Brian Baldwin asked Chad to come to the podium to speak to the board. He said that Anchor went through the RFP to have the ground lease for that one part. Part of that we committed to moving the fuel farm for you guys and putting it somewhere else. And there were a couple of other parties that said they want to participate in somehow improving our fuel farm at the airport. His question is that if it is a cashflow problem, if any one of those parties were willing to step up and say that they will float this...my question is with the BIL money could there be a mechanism to aid the airport in design right into build because it is pretty much a cashflow problem? Discussion followed.

Brian Baldwin said it feels like a gesture looking into and if we find there is a significant gap between the design is done and we are actually able to go to bid and start work, if that gap is too big where it's going to roll into March of 2027, or a year off, then maybe it is worth pursuing and saying has the city done anything like this. Mark said he will look at this. He is not sure how much faster we can go. Also, with it being a FAA grant being a 95%/5%, that 5% is always covered by the ADA, so I'm not sure how it would work. However, Mark said he will have it investigated.

At this time, Chris said there was some discussion with the Game Aerospace Hangar that is now the NWA Maintenance Hangar, LLC, or the NWA, LLC, is who will be the entity that handles this property that you have seen in the past, regarding the door. Previously we talked about the interest in expanding this hangar from 30,000 sq ft to 40,000 sq ft. As part of that the site will be adjusted a little bit to add some apron in the blue area that you see on the map. This will effectively give us the same apron space we had in the original design, but because we are expanding the building we are taking away some apron. In addition to the 40,000 sq ft that we talked about last time that the board was okay with, there has been a lot of discussion about the door sizes and the layout. He showed the exhibit and showed the changes they want to make. Chris said this new design has not been submitted to Planning and that they will require a formal revision with these changes, as expected. Brian Baldwin said that from an aviation safety perspective, it's in better shape and he will defer to the city Planning group if it meets building design standards. This is private property, not city property. We agreed on the expansion a couple of months ago. Mark said and the board agreed that they liked the design, and it falls within all the guidelines. Brian Baldwin asked Chris Maestri to keep them posted and updated on the progress.

#### **B. Updates from the Field – Adam Jones – Manager - *Legends Air Center***

- Status Report

Adam was not present at the meeting today.

#### **C. City of Bentonville Updates – Mark Slaughter, *Airport Manager***

- Neighborhood One – Mark reported that weather was a little bit of a factor. They were able to work and do things, but not big things. All six slabs have been poured and five (5) have verticality. The last one will probably be next week. They have been laying base to be able to pave all the areas they need paved. There is not going to be any grass like you might see on the east side. Mark talked to Alex today and he is concerned that the taxiway that runs through the middle is kind of rounded on the edges and may have to cut them to get it squared up to help with drainage. He showed slides of all the hangars and how they are progressing.

- Fuel Farm RFP – Mark said they are polishing the final draft right now and he will have it to Purchasing next week and should be available for bid well before the end of the month.

- AWOS Relocation – Mark reported that they had meeting with Mesotech on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January. On January 29<sup>th</sup>, they had a meeting with the FAA and Garver and we had meaningful discussions. We have a path forward on how to go and where to go, which we haven't had before. So, we know what we need to do and we are doing those things.

In addition, Mark said that his information on the Game Aerospace hangar will revert to the original 30,000 sq ft footprint and reorient the roof to 90 degrees. There are no additional impervious areas that are going to be exposed. They are consolidating and removing some of the hangar doors and there will no longer be a door on "I" Street, so we don't that have that problem. That was the loading/dock door. Mark said he had a conversation with a couple of guys. One is local and one is from Erie, Colorado. Both started Surveillance One about 25 years ago. Their first

contract was at an Air Force base. What they are doing is tracking drones. What happened was that somebody flew a drone and sat it down on top of a building on the Air Force base. On top of that drone was something not bigger than a cell phone, but it had a little antenna that stuck up and what that little box did was tell every cell phone in the building to break its connection with whatever tower it was connecting at that time and connect to that little box. They stole everybody's information from them. What they have now is if you are flying into our airport on 18, and you get right over the storage facility there and the drone goes over it, you can broadcast out that there is a drone out here. Technically, the way the law is written, the FAA says it has got to be two sets of eyes on it from two different vantage points before anything can happen. So, what they have done is that they have a triple redundant system that uses radar, ADSB data and something else he couldn't remember. It was wild. What will be is a screen that will pop up and it will show that there is a drone in the area. It will also show where the guy who is controlling that drone is. Then we can dial 911 and report that there is a guy operating a drone in the runway safety area or wherever it is, and the Police Department can go and arrest that guy. This was first installed in Erie, Colorado, and the guy asked them how many incursions they thought they had in a month, and he said, maybe 15 or 20. After a month they had 279 incursions from 127 different drones. There are a lot of drones that fly around now, and it is only going to get worse. The laws are going to change in our favor. They also put their system with Mesotech's system in the same area and they compliment each other. There is a cost to this system, and I know that we can get an ADA grant or something for it, but I want to start looking at it and take the next steps. He showed a roadmap that they laid out for us. We've got 4 more steps to go. Mark would like to pursue this. He said the FBO would have to be on board because they would have the screen that would pop up saying there is a drone in our area. We would probably need to get police, fire, and our IT people involved, maybe even Public Works. Mark said he wanted to give these guys a shot. This company has a lot of installations already and the guy from Erie flies here a lot. Brian Baldwin asked him to socialize his information with the board. Mark said he would. Daniel Hughes asked if they would be able to come down for a month like they did in Colorado and give us the data they found. Mark said they are so hard to see and you can hardly hear them until they get down to about 200 feet. If it is okay with the board, Mark said he would like to pursue this. Mark showed one more slide and said this was from Tuesday when 12 NetJets were at the airport. Colgate was having an event at Walmart. The good thing about this was they bought 6000 gallons of fuel, so Tuesday was a good day.

## **V. Other Business:**

### **A. Projects and Priorities – Brian Baldwin, Chairman - Discussion**

- Fencing the Perimeter of the Airport – Start: South End

We talked a little last month about Mark and I visiting with the State Aeronautics group, they were inclined to help support us financially. That is a project they do invest in periodically and they asked us to put something together and let's see what we can do. It is not a bottomless pit of money, so we need to be selective about what we want to ask their help on. Brian said it just got higher on his list based on what Chris reported today. We saw cars riding around in the dirt and upon the taxiway. We have seen pedestrian traffic, but not frequently. It is inviting as it is off a main thoroughfare, and there is nothing but dirt and weeds until you get to an active runway, so it is a concern. He asked if it would be something that we recommend that the city pursue looking into in terms of what it would cost? Perhaps the Garver team could put together an idea around an estimate on what would design cost, and roughly what would it take to cross all the south end or say to the north/south fence ends on the SE side to the property line on the SW side of the airport property. Call that one segment. And then coming up north, for every few hundred feet what would chunks like that cost? What would it cost to design that, and all the background work? Daniel Hughes said he was highly in favor of progressing that conversation. Hayes Wade was also in favor. Beckie Seba also gave her approval. Brian told Mark that the board was recommending that we place this a little bit higher on our list of things to do at our airport. We are not looking currently for the city to spend money but at least go to other sources of funding that we may have, including the State as they said they would help, even though we don't know how much at this point. Mark said that there is a provision that the ADA put in late in the year last year that if you got a \$300,000.00 grant and you bid it out and you only used \$200,000.00 of it, instead of leaving that \$100K on the table, you can now go back and put in another grant request to use that money. We might think about doing things in increments. He talked with Modern Fence at one time and he worked up the fencing around Neighborhood One for me. I can go back to him and another couple of fencing companies and get quotes. Brian asked Garver what type of fencing we should be looking at for airports of our classification? Garver will investigate this. And the board agreed that Mark Slaughter and Garver would start looking into this. There was no formal vote.

## **VI. Closing:**

**A. Next AAB Meeting Schedule**

- Proposed Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, March 5, 2026 - 3:00 pm  
Location: City Hall – Council Chambers – 305 SW “A” Street, Bentonville, AR

Brian Baldwin, Beckie Seba, Hayes Wade, Mark Slaughter, Garver and Daniel Hughes were all in favor of the March 5, 2026, date at 3:00 pm for the next meeting.

**B. Motion to Adjourn:**

Daniel Hughes made a motion to adjourn. Hayes Wade gave a second. Motion approved.

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