



**METROPOLITAN AIRPORTS COMMISSION
LAKE ELMO AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, May 11, 2026; 4:00 p.m.
Baytown Township Hall
4020 McDonald Drive North, Stillwater, MN 55082

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m. with 17 participants. A quorum of at least three User Representatives (Evenson, Flint, Gunderson, Mueller, Olson, Peterson) and three Public Representatives (Bliss, Cox, Kragness) was established. In attendance were:

Representatives: C. Bliss, Bayport; B. Cox, Washington County; D. Elder, Washington County (Alternate); P. Evenson, Airport User (EAA Chapter 54); J. Flint, Airport User (At-Large); M. Gunderson, Airport User (EAA Chapter 54); N. Kragness, City of Lake Elmo; C. Mueller, Airport User (At-Large); M. Olson, Airport User (Lake Elmo Aero); L. Peterson, Airport User (At-Large);

MAC Staff: D. Lafferty; J. Lewis; R. Skoog; P. Tiedeman;

Other: P. Hendrickson; G. Kinney; R. Ziegler.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Co-Chair Cox introduced herself. She reviewed the goals and purpose of the Commission as well as the meeting agenda. It was confirmed that a quorum was established.

2. Consent Items

2.1 Approval of Meeting Minutes 2-9-2026

2.2 Aircraft Operations & Noise Complaints Quarterly Report

Co-Chair Cox introduced the consent agenda items, which were also provided via the meeting packet.

Representative Mueller motioned and **Representative Gunderson** seconded to approve the consent agenda items. There was an opportunity for further discussion. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment Period

Co-Chair Cox introduced the public comment period. It was confirmed that no public comment cards had been received. There were no public comments at this time.

4. Business

4.1 Youth Engagement

Co-Chair Peterson updated the group on efforts to engage youth with aviation. His report specifically focused on three groups: National Honor Society, a potential aviation club at Stillwater High School, and 4-H, including possible connections with homeschooled youth. He discussed potential tours and field trips to the airport and interest from students in a possible meet-and-greet.

Approved 8-24-2026

3275 Manning Avenue, Box 2, Lake Elmo, Minnesota 55042

Philip Tiedeman, MAC Airport Manager • Philip.Tiedeman@mspmac.org • 763-717-0001



Representative Gunderson said EAA is involved with youth engagement events and opportunities.

Co-Chair Cox asked how young volunteers could be.

Representative Gunderson stated younger volunteers could help at the pancake breakfast.

Co-Chair Peterson discussed additional opportunities for volunteers of any age. He also noted that high school volunteers could assist with managing younger volunteers. He added that EAA hosted the Young Eagles flights last weekend.

Representative Mueller asked how many people were at the event.

Representative Gunderson said they had five pilots and 36 kids and that they flew until the wind prevented further flights.

Representative Mueller expressed appreciation for the Young Eagles flights and for the volunteers who make it possible to give the opportunity to so many kids.

5. Information

5.1 Stakeholder Spotlight

- **EAA Article**
- **Washington County Fair**

Co-Chair Cox remarked that there are two people in the stakeholder spotlight and first introduced **Representative Gunderson** to speak about the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) article.

Representative Gunderson said, nationally, EAA has approximately 300,000 members. He also briefly discussed their mission as well as their monthly publication and national convention. He highlighted an article he submitted to the magazine focusing on community engagement. The article focused on EAA's outreach to new neighbors in Lake Elmo, especially with their pancake breakfast and inviting many new neighbors who could learn about the airport and have a positive experience with it. He complimented the City of Lake Elmo on a good job in zoning and working to support the airport and local neighbors to reduce the impact of noise on residential areas.

He gave further information about plans for this year's pancake breakfast, including promotional flyers and other efforts to boost turnout. They served about 600 people last year, which allowed them to provide three scholarships for summer camp at the EAA Air Academy in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. This year the event will be on August 9, and all are invited. He discussed ways they promote the fundraiser and locations at the airport for where exactly it may be held.

Representative Mueller thanked MAC for their assistance with the event and indicated that, even with marginal weather last year, they had a great turnout. He talked about activities at the 2025 event, including Bayport Fire and the Washington County Sheriff's Department with their canine, as well as helicopters and other aircraft flying in. He then discussed plans for this year's breakfast.

Representative Gunderson said a Huey flew in last year, but that due to tragic circumstances of its crew chief passing away, the Huey was sold and will not be there this year.

Representative Mueller indicated State Patrol, DNR, and Life Link will be there, as well as various members with impressive and interesting aircraft.

3275 Manning Avenue, Box 2, Lake Elmo, Minnesota 55042

Philip Tiedeman, MAC Airport Manager • Philip.Tiedeman@mspmac.org • 763-717-0001



Co-Chair Peterson inquired as to how many people could be served at a maximum.

Representative Gunderson said they have planned for up to 800 people.

Representative Mueller discussed air traffic control during the breakfast. A trailer will be set up in the airfield, and FAA controllers will have their own discrete frequency. He added that the controllers really enjoy coming to control traffic during the breakfast.

Representative Gunderson reiterated his understanding that they enjoyed it and thought it was fun.

Co-Chair Peterson asked if anyone from Lake Elmo Aero was present and if they might like to be involved in the breakfast.

Marc Olson confirmed that they plan to provide volunteers for the event.

Representative Mueller asked if they might display their Cirrus or other aircraft at the event.

Representative Olson agreed that might be a good idea.

Representative Gunderson discussed optimal airport configuration for the events and displays for traffic and event management.

Co-Chair Cox thanked **Representative Gunderson** for the information and asked him to email **Jennifer Lewis**, Community Relations Manager, if anything further was needed to support the event.

Co-Chair Cox then introduced **Paul Hendrickson**, Washington County Fair manager.

Mr. Hendrickson explained his work experience running companies and managing events all across the country. He started as fair manager in mid-January 2026. He discussed the Washington County Fair and other events at the fairgrounds and highlighted his focus on safety, security, and communication. He thanked **Co-Chair Cox** for reaching out and making the connection. He said the fairgrounds are privately owned, although it is open 24 hours a day from May 1 through October 1.

He expressed his main mission is to expand the fairgrounds. He reviewed the history of the fair's location and stated he was unaware of any involvement of Lake Elmo Airport in the fair historically. He extended an invitation to be involved at the fair, especially as a way to engage youth. He talked about plans for the 2026 fair. The 2025 fair drew approximately 55,000 to 60,000 people in five days. He hopes to double that attendance over the next three years. He discussed ideas for parking, signage, and other possibilities for future collaboration.

Co-Chair Cox indicated she had reached out to check the status of helicopter rides and other activities at the fair and asked for an update on those plans.

Mr. Hendrickson talked about the land used last year for the helicopter flights, as well as complaints received and finances involved, and said they will not be doing them this year. The National Guard will bring Humvees and tanks and possibly a helicopter for display. A flyover was discussed but decided against due to potential effects on livestock at the fair. He also mentioned safety considerations and emergency preparedness.



Co-Chair Cox thanked **Mr. Hendrickson** for his presentation and for connecting with the Commission.

Representative Mueller discussed issues of safety and training and recommended **Mr. Hendrickson** coordinate with the sheriff's office.

Mr. Hendrickson thanked **Representative Mueller** for the suggestion and said he's been in contact with the sheriff's department many times this year. They have instituted an emergency operations plan. He noted that sheriff's deputies often use the fairgrounds for training.

Representative Bliss expressed high expectations for fair entertainment this year.

Mr. Hendrickson said he is new this year and does not have a lot of interjection into 2026 events, but they have land that can be used for tractor pulls, demolition derbies, rodeos, and other larger events, and he hopes to expand event offerings. Volunteers are key to accomplishing those goals.

5.2 MAC Update

- Special Olympics
- Fly Neighborly

Co-Chair Cox introduced **Mr. Lafferty** for the MAC update.

Mr. Lafferty reviewed operations and complaint details for the first quarter. He went over operations numbers, complaints received, and ops-to-complaints ratios. He discussed new households complaining in 2026, noting that two of those households were in Shakopee and Brooklyn Park but tied to Lake Elmo operations. He indicated operations and complaint numbers for the first quarter are typical for Lake Elmo and that noise complaints tend to rise with nice weather as people are outside more. He then asked if there were any questions on the operations and complaint numbers.

Mr. Hendrickson asked how complaints are submitted.

Mr. Lafferty stated they can be received in many ways, including online or via telephone call. He added that all complaints are tracked and reported by MAC.

He then discussed plans for the Special Olympics being hosted in Minnesota from June 20 through 26 and detailed arrangements for arrivals and departures of athletes, coaches, and chaperones. The main arrival day will be June 19, with 3,000 athletes, as well as approximately 1,500 coaches and chaperones, arriving mostly to St. Paul Downtown Airport with some flights also at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. June 27 is the primary departure day and will also be a very busy airspace day. He highlighted the coordination for the event with MAC, FAA, Special Olympics stakeholders, and other airport users. He expressed excitement and said it will be a great event.

Representative Mueller asked what size aircraft will be used for the transportation.

Mr. Lafferty indicated it will be a variety of private aircraft through Textron Aviation, likely smaller jets.

Mr. Lafferty then updated the Commission on the MAC Community Relations and Stakeholder Engagement Team's work to expand the Fly Neighborly program. An interactive digital guide for pilots will soon be rolled out on the MAC website and be available in ForeFlight with a purpose to encourage pilots to follow voluntary noise abatement best practices and build awareness of neighbors' noise sensitivity. The edits and finishing touches are being worked on, and hopefully it will be ready to



present at the next meeting in August. MAC will continue to update the Commission on any changes. He then asked if there were any questions, and there were none at this time.

5.3 Airport Manager Update

- Aircraft Viewing Area Update
- Construction Update

Co-Chair Cox introduced **Philip Tiedeman**, Airport Manager, for his update.

Mr. Tiedeman updated the Commission on upcoming 2026 construction, including Runway 4/22 reconstruction, Taxiway E edge lighting and signage, and private utilities burial. He noted they took a year off from the construction realigning the airfield and will hopefully close that project out in 2026.

He said 4/22 construction will be similar to what was done on Runway 14/32 but will include lights, signs, and PAPIs. These navigational aids will be a big improvement. Dresel Construction, who did the majority of work in previous phases, has been awarded the project. Construction will start June 1 and occur in two phases. The northeast phase is planned for 24 working construction days, with Monday through Saturday available for the contractor to perform work. Phase 2, to the southwest of 14/32, is scheduled for 12 working days. He expressed excitement to begin the project and noted that, after it is complete, approximately 95% of airport pavement will have been done in the last 3.5 years.

He then talked about the project to add edge lighting and signage to Taxiway E. Taxiway E was previously partially repaved, and conduits and infrastructure were added to prepare for the new lights and signage. Neo Electrical will be the contractor. They have done other conduit and cabling installation at the viewing area. He thanked **Representative Mueller** for the donation to the viewing area improvements. He said, as part of the Fly Neighborly program and other marketing enhancements, signage templates and graphics are being updated to ensure the best end product. He hopes that the open house can be held once all the projects are completed.

Co-Chair Peterson asked if there was a date set for the open house.

Mr. Tiedeman indicated it would be sometime this summer. The taxiway edge lighting is scheduled for July after the runway project is completed. Weather could affect the timelines, so there is no set date for the open house as of yet.

He next discussed burial of private utilities at the airport. Getting the utility lines underground will avoid need for adjustment in the future, as well as ensure they are avoided by aircraft tails, snowplows, and other equipment. They are working with Xcel Energy, and bids will go out on June 14. The project is anticipated to occur in two phases, possibly over two years, depending on bids and timelines received.

He talked about the sustainability project of planting wildflowers and native grasses in strategic areas, in coordination with the USDA, which aims to reduce mowing as well as beautify the airport and support native plants without attracting wildlife. The project is currently in year two of a three-year timeline. This year is a maintenance phase to ensure full establishment of the plants. A strategic mowing will be performed, so plants will not reach full bloom until possibly next year. If the project goes well, it could be expanded to other airports.

He then discussed improvements to crew quarters for the maintenance staff. The design will be done this year in the hope construction could occur next year. Beacon replacement is also occurring this year, with ATC Electric as the contractor. They're working to coordinate a start date. The beacon work should take just a couple days and have minimal impact to airport users.



Co-Chair Cox commented that a lot was going on, and **Mr. Tiedeman** agreed it is a busy year.

Representative Bliss asked about the radio and speakers at the viewing area.

Mr. Tiedeman stated they were graciously donated and that they wanted to get them installed sooner than they were able to, but he expressed excitement about the public being able to hear what pilots are saying. He said other airports have similar radios and that it adds a lot of value to the surrounding community, so he is looking forward to that at Lake Elmo as well.

Representative Mueller noted that placards will be added to explain the radio communications and traffic patterns.

Mr. Hendrickson added that if there is any fill or reclaimed blacktop remaining after the projects to let him know and that he would be happy to take them.

Mr. Tiedeman indicated he would connect with **Mr. Hendrickson** over that issue after the meeting.

Co-Chair Peterson asked if there had been complaints about wildlife at the airport this year.

Mr. Tiedeman said no, but that there may be more as the migratory birds start to come through.

Co-Chair Peterson asked if the USDA is at the airport on a regular basis.

Mr. Tiedeman stated they are present daily and do mitigation work along with the MAC, as well as give insight on plantings and methods to deter birds and wildlife. He noted good communication with USDA all year, but especially in the winter into spring when research and planting for the year are done.

Representative Mueller said he offices very near the airport and notices the airport crew working every day to deter wildlife but that there has not been as much this year.

Co-Chair Peterson noted he had chased four deer toward the USDA truck.

Co-Chair Cox added the Baytown Township met with quite a lot of deer problems recently and expressed hope those issues would not spread to the airport.

Representative Mueller said they have not had any bird strikes, but that they did have an emergency situation recently involving a cracked piston. Bayport and the sheriff's office stepped in to assist.

Co-Chair Cox thanked **Mr. Tiedeman** for his update and thanked everyone for their comments.

5.4 Upcoming Development and Events Around Airport

- **County Fair (July 29-Aug 2)**
- **Fly-in (Aug 9)**
- **Lake Elmo Aero Open House (Sep 19)**

Co-Chair Cox introduced the topic and stated there are three events she wanted to highlight: the Washington County Fair, the EAA Fly-in Breakfast, and the Lake Elmo Aero Open House. She asked if anyone had another event they wanted to discuss.

Mr. Hendrickson said the Stillwater Food Truck Extravaganza will be June 20 at the fairgrounds.



6. Member Announcements

Co-Chair Cox opened the floor for any announcements.

Representative Bliss stated that Bayport has an 135-year-old volunteer fire department and that they just hired their first full-time fire chief, Gabe Kinney, who he introduced.

Mr. Kinney gave some background information on his history, including experience in the Air Force and the fire service. He worked as a full-time MSP firefighter for many years. He discussed the recent emergency event at the airport and detailed his plans to coordinate with local law enforcement and emergency groups to do training and improve response readiness. He now carries a tower radio so that he can readily assist in any future emergencies.

Representative Mueller said one of the deputies at the scene is retiring in 60 days and said that was the first time he had ever had a callout to the airport.

Mr. Kinney stated the lack of calls to the airport was part of the issue and also that they were not able to respond to an exact location at the airport immediately. He is working to resolve the issues.

Representative Kragness stated he is on the city council for Lake Elmo and asked if it would be beneficial to connect with Lake Elmo Fire.

Mr. Kinney stated he has made contact with them and is coordinating with their organization.

Representative Mueller saw **Mr. Kinney** the day of the emergency and that the emergency had been handled by that time, so that was why he was waved off.

Mr. Kinney said that was fine. He hopes to help everyone be prepared for any future occurrences.

Co-Chair Cox thanked **Mr. Kinney** for attending and asked if there were any other announcements.

Representative Gunderson said a 16-year-old who had received an EAA scholarship for flight training did his first solo this afternoon. He gave further information on the scholarship program and the history of another recipient who was very close to receiving his private pilot's license but was unfortunately unable to continue. They are very excited to see the current scholarship recipient progressing.

Representative Mueller explained that a solo is the first flight by yourself with the instructor watching but not in the aircraft.

Co-Chair Cox stated from a county perspective that there are not a lot of current road projects right in the area of the airport but that construction at the intersection of Highway 36 and Lake Elmo Avenue is set to start on June 1. She stated that this will impact travel for the next two summers. She noted the project will dramatically improve safety. That intersection has very frequent accidents and needs to be addressed. She thanked everyone for their patience in advance.

Representative Evenson asked if the work at the frontage road around Manning Avenue near the Kwik Trip is a county project or a city project.

Co-Chair Cox confirmed it is a county project and that construction has begun there as well. Specifically, she said that just east on Highway 36 at Manning Avenue there is a connection that will go



from Manning over toward the high school. It will be completed this summer. She noted that another Kwik Trip will also be built in that area.

7. Review 2026 Meeting Schedule: August 24 and November 9, 2026

Co-Chair Cox reviewed the remaining meeting schedule for 2026, with meetings set for August 24 and November 9. She thanked MAC staff and asked Commission members to mark their calendars.

Co-Chair Cox adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

