

Peninsula Airport Commission

Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2026 – Regular Meeting

Commissioners in Attendance:

Chair, Lindsey Carney Smith
Vice Chair, Tommy Garner
Assistant Secretary, John Lawson
Treasurer, James “Jay” Joseph
Assistant Treasurer, McKinley Price, DDS

Staff Members in Attendance:

Executive Director, Chris Morello
Deputy Executive Director, John Borden
Director of Operations, Rob Gay
Office Manager, Barbara Harris
Executive Assistant, Jenna Coyle
Director of Finance, Mark Adams

Public Officials Present:

Jim Brigham, Chief of Staff – Office of the Mayor
Kim Bracy, Communications Manager, City of Newport News

Counsel:

L. Scott Seymour

Public Attendees:

David Hause, Kiln Creek HOA
Dave Dober, ATAC
Mark Lee, Atlantic Aviation
Brian Fenelon, CAF B-29/B-24 Squadron

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. She began by thanking everyone in attendance.

Approval of Minutes from March 19, 2026: Chair Smith asked if there were any comments or edits to the Minutes. Dr. Price made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented and Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by voice vote, **5-0**.

Public Comment: Chair Smith asked if any speakers had signed in for Public Comment and Mrs. Harris stated that there were none.

Special Reports: Mr. Morello reported that Kimley-Horn, the consultant for the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP) due diligence grant, had completed all items required for the application for Tier 4 certification except the Preliminary Engineering Reports (PERs) for ACP West, which is more complicated than ACP East. He stated that the full application will be submitted to Virginia Economic Development Partnership by EDA staff within the next few weeks for review. Mr. Morello reported that the next phase will involve preparing to submit an application in May for a new round of VBRSP grant funding. He said that he and EDA staff have been considering several AirCommerce Park items, including funding for developing detailed site plans and obtaining permitting for a 250,000-square-foot facility on ACP East which would demonstrate feasibility and immediate readiness to prospective manufacturers, for example. He stated that additional readiness efforts may include completing traffic impact analyses and developing traffic signalization and infrastructure plans in advance, and that these proactive steps would be intended to reduce uncertainty, clarify development costs, and improve competitiveness for attracting prospective industry. Mr. Morello reported that obtaining this grant funding is a competitive process and limited, with applications evaluated against other localities' applications from around the state.

Master Plan Update: Mr. Morello reported that Chair Smith and airport staff, along with representatives from the FAA and the Department of Aviation, continue to review draft sections of the Airport Master Plan, including existing and future airport facilities over the near and long-term planning horizon, landside and airside development, alternative development scenarios, and environmental review components. Mr. Morello reported that the team will continue reviewing these components and that the Master Plan consultant, Passero, will present a status update for the Commission at the April PAC meeting.

Partnership Reports:

Mobile Innovation Center (MIC). Mr. Morello reported on the GO Virginia Mobile Innovation Center (MIC) grant, a three-year workforce development and technical R&D initiative focused on beyond visual line-of-sight (BVLOS) capabilities being pursued in partnership with the Hampton Roads Executive Roundtable and the Cities of Newport News and Hampton. He stated that he and Florence Kingston had presented the program proposal to the GO Virginia Technical Review Committee and received positive feedback, advancing the proposal to the GO Virginia State Board for final review on March 24th in Richmond, where it will be one of 12 applications considered. Mr. Morello reported that the total project budget is approximately \$4.8 million, with a request for just over \$3 million in GO Virginia funding. He said that he will attend the state board meeting in an observational role and that GOVA Region 5 Board representatives will be there to respond to questions in accordance with State Board protocol. He expressed satisfaction with progress made in coordination with the Department of Housing and Community Development which administers the GO Virginia program. He said that if the grant is awarded, funding would be available beginning July 1st. Chair Smith noted that it would be important for the Commissioners to receive a brief presentation from the MIC team on program elements and timeline in the near future, and Mr. Morello said that he would make the application team aware of the request.

eVTOL Integration Pilot Program (eIPP). Mr. Morello reported that, unfortunately, Virginia's stand-alone application to the U.S. Department of Transportation and the FAA to host an eVTOL Integration Pilot Program (eIPP) R&D demonstration corridor was not one of the selected proposals. He stated that eight geographic areas were selected, amongst them several states' proposals. Mr. Morello explained that Virginia will actually be involved, however, through a multi-state application led by Pennsylvania, which includes 17 other states, and that DOAV contributed to this successful proposal. He stated that Greg Campbell has requested a debrief from the FAA to better understand why Virginia's standalone application was not chosen. Mr. Morello stated that he will seek clarification from DOAV on what participation in the multi-state proposal means for PHF. Mr. Morello emphasized the importance of proactively positioning the airport to be included and plans to dedicate effort toward ensuring representation in the program. He stated that this initiative is not a grant program, but rather requires collaboration with the private sector, and that participants must propose innovative concepts and largely fund or incentivize the projects themselves.

Committee Reports:

Finance & Audit Committee. Mr. Morello reported that there was no additional report, and the financial statements were included in the meeting packet as usual.

Facilities Committee. Mr. Morello stated that there is no committee report, but that Mr. Borden will provide updates on current projects.

Terminal Roof Replacement. Mr. Borden stated that roof work is ongoing and progressing well, with no leaks reported in areas where the new roof has been installed; however, some new leaks have been identified and are believed to be related to roof drains. He stated that a plan will be developed to address them, potentially including sleeving or additional piping adjustments.

Taxiway Delta. Mr. Borden stated that demolition work has begun on the upper portion of Taxiway Delta and the 7460 obstruction approval has been received. He stated that construction of the batch plant is expected to be completed and Runway 7/25 closure begins on May 4th for approximately 30 days; however, the contractor plans to work around the clock to complete the project as quickly as possible.

General Aviation Ramp. Mr. Borden reported that the General Aviation Ramp project remains on schedule, with completion anticipated between April 20th and May 1st.

Jetbridge. Mr. Borden reported that work on the jet bridge is ongoing, including safety planning and metal fabrication, and the project remains on schedule with no delays reported since the anticipated delivery timeframe mentioned in November.

Capital Improvements Plan. Mr. Borden reported that an Airport Capital Improvements Plan meeting with DOAV and FAA representatives and is scheduled for March 24th. He stated that the meeting will include a review of previously presented materials with some additional updates to refine the plan. Mr. Borden reported that following the meeting and refinements, the team plans to submit its official letter request to the FAA on April 1st.

Executive Director Report: Mr. Morello reported that last year's proposed legislation known as the Pilot and Aircraft Privacy Act (PAPA) sought to restrict airports from using FAA Automatic

Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) data for purposes other than safety and security, resulting in significant impacts to airports' ability to assess and collect landing fees. He stated that the bill ultimately died in committee, alleviating immediate concerns, but that the language reappeared this year in the ALERT Act legislation which was introduced in response to the recent collision over the Potomac and focuses on enhancing aviation safety and collision prevention. He stated that airports are concerned that excluding the use of ADS-B data for fee assessment purposes would be incorporated into this or other legislation under consideration. Mr. Morello reported that the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation beneficial to airports regarding entitlement and discretionary funding managed by the Virginia Aviation Board and codifies the funding formula into state law, providing greater predictability and stability for airport financial planning. He stated that the bill is awaiting the Governor's signature and that PHF and a few other similarly-sized airports can expect approximately \$1.1 million annually in entitlement funding upon if becoming law. He stated that the legislation does not eliminate the availability of other discretionary funding, which may still be awarded for specific projects after entitlement funds are utilized, but that discretionary funds are typically prioritized for general aviation airports.

Mr. Morello reported that the airport will host the Space Grant Consortium Technology Exploration Series event on Saturday, March 21st. He stated that the event is expected to welcome over 100 area students, along with their parents and guardians, for a day focused on STEM education and hands-on learning experiences. He stated that nine staff members will be on-site to assist with the event and will feature multiple interactive learning stations, including drone activities such as an obstacle course, airport tours showcasing facilities and equipment, and model airplane building and flying. He stated that the Virginia Department of Aviation will also provide an eVTOL simulator known as "ICON," a full-size, non-flying aircraft with a cockpit interior that allows students to experience flight simulation. Mr. Morello reported that the event is being organized by the Virginia Space Grant Consortium, a NASA-affiliated organization that supports STEM education and workforce development from K-12 through higher education. He expressed enthusiasm about strengthening this partnership and extended appreciation to staff committed to supporting the event on Saturday.

Mr. Morello reported on multiple waterline breaks across the airport campus involving 10-inch, unmetered lines dating back to the early 1940s. He stated that these ductile iron lines had failed in various locations, including two lines beneath hard surfaces. Mr. Morello reported that Waterworks crews have responded quickly to repair and, in some cases, reroute the damaged lines, minimizing disruption to airport tenants and operations. He stated that the first major break occurred along the roadway leading to the general aviation area and has since been repaired. This was followed by a second major break near the edge of the ARFF ramp which caused erosion beneath the surface due to the high volume of water in these large lines. He stated that although Waterworks can complete asphalt repairs, they are not equipped to handle the required concrete restoration for the apron. He expressed concern that because the apron was constructed over the waterlines and that Waterworks may not restore or replace concrete in such cases, staff is coordinating with the state to explore potential emergency funding for these repairs. He stated that staff are currently awaiting repair estimates from the apron rehabilitation contractors already working on-site to get an understanding of potential costs. A third break occurred near Gate 2, as well, and has been repaired. Mr. Morello reported that Waterworks says it is experiencing a high

volume of similar infrastructure failures system-wide, with approximately 160 waterline breaks reported this winter.

Mr. Morello reported that the temporary closure of the short-term parking lot is related to issues with the gate control ground loops, which require replacement. Mrs. Harris added that progress has been delayed due to weather conditions preventing start and completion.

Mr. Morello introduced Mrs. Harris for a VITA Grant update presentation to the Commission (Exhibit A). Mrs. Harris reported that the VITA-funded cybersecurity resilience grant has significantly strengthened the organization's cybersecurity posture. She stated that the program has included a comprehensive cybersecurity capability assessment that identified 11 areas of vulnerability. She said that through targeted improvements, this has been reduced to only two remaining items requiring strengthening which are currently being addressed and should be completed by the end of the fiscal year. Mrs. Harris reported that enhancements toward this achievement have included system upgrades, new servers and switches, and the implementation of tools like multifactor authentication, password management, endpoint protection, and security awareness training. Mrs. Harris reported that the initiative was completed in collaboration with state and federal partners and is part of the broader Commonwealth of Virginia cybersecurity framework. She emphasized that the grant has also delivered substantial cost savings, including approximately \$50,000 saved in assessment costs as well as enabling projected savings of \$66,000 over the next three years.

Old Business: Mr. Morello reported that there are two updates with no action required. First, he stated that the easement purchase agreement and special warranty deed for the city's sewer easement request near the city's canine facility have been finalized and are ready for execution by the Chair. Second, Mr. Morello reported that a commercial lease agreement with Coastal Seaplanes was successfully executed on March 3rd, transitioning them from a standard hangar lease to a commercial lease that helps establish the company as an expanding business tenant at the airport.

New Business: Mr. Morello reported on an IT upgrade request from U.S. Customs and Border Protection in connection with a provision in the General Services Administration (GSA) lease agreement in place since 2018 of approximately 10,100 square feet of terminal facility space. He stated that the lease includes a provision allowing for reimbursement requests for IT infrastructure upgrades every three to five years; however, no such requests had been made since the initial setup until a request was submitted late last year. Mr. Morello reported that the initial request has been significantly reduced through the efforts of Mrs. Harris to substantially reduce both the scope and cost to a more reasonable "not-to-exceed" amount under the GSA lease structure. He stated that the proposed upgrade would be formalized through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which is expected to be presented alongside a resolution for Commission approval at the April 2026 regular PAC meeting.

Closed Session: Chair Smith asked Mr. Seymour to read closed session statements for §2.2-3711(A)(1): Personnel, §2.2-3711(A)(3) Acquisition & disposition of real property, and §2.2-3711(A)(5): Prospective Business.

Mr. Garner made a motion to enter into Closed Session and Dr. Price seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote, **5-0, and the PAC entered Closed Session at 8:59am.**

Chair Smith asked Mr. Seymour to read the required certification statement to return to Open Session. Mr. Garner made a motion to return to Open Session and Dr. Price seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote, **5-0, and the PAC returned to Open Session at 9:49 a.m.**

Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 9:49 a.m.

Next Regular Meeting Date: April 16, 2026, at 8:00 a.m.