



Airport Commission

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South
Forest Lake, MN 55025
www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

6:00 PM

City Center - Council Chambers

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Don Stehler	Chair	Present	
Mark Lynch	Commissioner	Absent	
Curtis Monson	Vice Chair	Present	
Joe Gallmeier	Commissioner	Absent	
Mara Bain	Commissioner	Present	

2. Approve the Agenda (Action)

Motion: Commissioner Bain made a Motion to Approve the Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Monson. Motion carried 3-0.

3. Open Forum

The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions on any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.

Comments:

Corey Capra, Aerotech Companies, stated he was here to get an update on future plans and offered additional help in the future.

4. Approve Minutes – December 3, 2025

Motion: Chair Stehler made a Motion to Approve the December 3, 2025, Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Bain. Motion carried 3-0.

5. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

a. Financials and Claims List (11/24/25-1/26/26)

City Administrator Statz reviewed the quarterly financials. He reviewed the claims list approved at various City Council meetings since the last Airport Commission meeting. He provided an update on the Airport Fund balance at the end of 2025.

Commissioner Bain asked about the long-term allocation for the salary and benefits for the Airport Manager role. City Administrator Statz responded that they had good data for Public Works employees at the airport. He said that he would continue to serve as the Airport Manager, and it was logical to keep the budget at ten percent of his salary.



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Chair Stehler asked about the City's six-stall t-hangar. City Administrator Statz answered that they were renting out one stall of the t-hangar.

Chair Stehler said there should be dollars to rent the space if it were being used by another City department. City Administrator Statz answered that the current lease rate from the one tenant showed up in the lease-line item. He understood that they were planning to divest the building at some point.

Chair Stehler commented that there should be a footnote about property taxes on hangars not being included in the budget, so other individuals reading the document understand that hangar owners pay property taxes.

Motion: Chair Stehler made a Motion to Recommend the City Council approve the financials of the airport and the claims as stated in the agenda.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Monson. Motion carried 3-0.

b. Engineer's Report

City Administrator Statz summarized the grant funding received for the runway and taxiway 300-foot extension and apron expansion. He said that the City Council approved funds for the runway and taxiway project. He said that they were getting close to finalizing the Airport Rules and Regulations with the City Attorney.

Chair Stehler asked about the total MnDOT funding. City Administrator Statz answered that the total cost that MnDOT was funding was 90 percent of \$1.77 million.

c. Internet Service at A/D Building

City Administrator Statz reviewed the internet service provided at the arrival and departure building. He contacted Midco about other options and suggested moving to 100 megabytes and locking into a 36-month contract to save funds.

Motion: Commissioner Bain made a Motion to Recommend that the City downgrade the internet service at the A/D building to 100 MB, engage in a 3-year contract, purchase their own modem, and move to 1 static IP address, if feasible, for a savings of roughly \$75/month.

Motion seconded by Chair Stehler. Motion carried 3-0.

d. Set Officers for 2026

- i. **Chair**
- ii. **Vice Chair**
- iii. **Treasurer**

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iv. Secretary

City Administrator Statz said that the City Code required a chairperson, vice chair, and secretary.

Motion: Chair Stehler made a Motion to Recommend that the City Council review the City Code to determine if a secretary was still needed for the Airport Commission.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Bain. Motion carried 3-0.

Chair Stehler asked if they should move forward with voting on the positions, since only three members were present. Mayor Roberts suggested that the Airport Commission determine the roles.

Commissioner Bain suggested postponing the item until there were more commissioners in attendance.

e. Declaring default of Land Leases on Vacant Lots

City Administrator Statz summarized the three vacant commercial lots that were under a lease agreement. The lease agreement requires a hangar to be built within a two-year time frame. He stated that they had a waiting list for vacant lots. He said he reached out to the leaseholders. The City Attorney drafted a memo with a suggestion that all three leases must contact the Airport Manager within thirty days to establish an agreement on a date that they would build a hangar on the lot. He requested feedback on the letter and parameters to negotiate the agreements. He stated he would like to see a completion date in an agreement with the leaseholders.

Motion: Chair Stehler made a Motion to Approve the proposed letter from the City Attorney with a timeframe to pull a building permit by February 1, 2027, and a completion date one year from the pulling of the building permit.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Monson. Motion carried 3-0.

f. Land Lease Rates for 2026 & 2027

City Administrator Statz reviewed the lease rates, since they could be reviewed every two years. He summarized the consumer price index chart for the rates and noted that they did not increase rates for five years. He suggested a 2.5 percent increase over 2026 rates.

Commissioner Monson reviewed the previous rate increases in 2022 and 2024. He thought the proposed increase was a large jump.

Chair Stehler said that if the City approved the lease rate by the CPI, it would be reasonable. He stated that they could increase it by 4.8 percent, and that would be the rate for the next two years. He voiced opposition to any catch-up, as the City approved previous increases. He commented that the City acquired the airport for the benefit of Forest Lake. The City knew there



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would be operational costs. He said that his lease did not require him to be responsible for the capital improvement costs or the operational costs.

Commissioner Bain stated that rent calculations included the operational costs. She stated that she could not fully support the rents, not including the operational costs. She discussed the totality of the facts that need to be incorporated into the decisions. She said that the leaseholders were the primary users of the airport.

Chair Stehler said that the airport was used by more than just leaseholders.

City Administrator Statz stated that there was a partnership with the lake and the homeowner's association to provide services to improve the water quality.

Chair Stehler commented that pure access to public space was the runway.

Commissioner Bain asked how they got out of sync, and there was a foundational need for a catch-up. City Administrator Statz answered that they had a zero percent increase from 2009 to 2014.

Commissioner Bain said that municipalities were under pressure to have a user-based structure fee, so the amenities were self-supporting. She said the City contribution was sizeable for the project, even with the MnDOT fees.

Chair Stehler stated that the City acquired a large amount of land associated with the airport and was able to sell off portions of the land for large proceeds. He stated the City should have set aside a portion of those dollars for operational costs at the airport. He said he would support moving forward with the 4.8 percent increase for two years.

Motion: Chair Stehler made a Motion to Recommend to the City Council to increase the ground lease rent by 4.8 percent, effective for 2026 and 2027. Thus, for the non-commercial hangar lots, the ground lease rate would increase from 0.1170 dollars per square foot to 0.1226 dollars per square foot. A similar rate increase would apply to commercial lots.

Commissioner Bain requested additional discussion to understand the math.

Chair Stehler withdrew the motion.

Commissioner Bain said she was uncomfortable with the staff's proposed number because it was based on a catch-up. She stated that if they were deviating from CPI, she would prefer them to call it a deviation. She encouraged additional discussion if they were deviating from CPI, and there would need to be guardrails. There needed to be a provision given to leaseholders.



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City Administrator Statz said that the amount was a difference of \$2000 between all leaseholders. Commissioner Bain responded that the difference might not be worth the ill will.

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Motion seconded by Commissioner Monson. Motion carried 3-0.

6. Discussion

- a. None

7. Staff Updates

- a. **Airport Manager's Report**

City Administrator Statz provided an update on the credit card charges for the fuel dispensing system. He stated that there was a hold put on credit cards when utilizing the fuel dispensing system, and it would be removed after a few days. They installed a placard that explained the process. They completed updated information on the airport on the website. He called all of those on the waiting list without an email address to get updated contact information. He discussed interest in the commercial lots and potential new tenants.

8. Adjourn

Motion: Commissioner Monson made a Motion to Adjourn the Regularly Scheduled Airport Commission Meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Bain. Motion carried 3-0.