

NOTICE AND AGENDA

AIRPORT COMMISSION
TUESDAY
AUGUST 18, 2026

FLAGSTAFF AIRPORT
6200 S. PULLIAM DRIVE
AIRPORT CONFERENCE ROOM
1:00 P.M.

To participate in the meeting click the following link

[Join the Meeting Online](#)

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **ROLL CALL**

NOTE: One or more Commission Members may be in attendance telephonically or by other technological means.

THOMAS WADDELL, CHAIR
NICHOLAS BARRAZA
ROBERT CARPENTER

ROBERT HANOVICH
ANDREW SHOUSE
CHRIS SPELKE
KOLBY WHITE

City Staff: Lori Matthews, Council Member; Heidi Hansen, Economic Vitality Director; Brian Gall, Airport Director; Adam Miele, Programs Manager; Claire Harper, Airport Communications Manager; Tim Skinner, ARFF/Ops Manager; Miciela Sahner, Administrative Specialist/Recording Secretary

3. **PRELIMINARY BUSINESS**

- A. Public Comment/Participation/Input
Items presented during the Public Participation/Input portion of the agenda cannot be acted upon by the Commission. Individual members of the Commission may ask questions of the public but are prohibited by the Open Meeting Law from discussion or considering the item among themselves until the item has been officially placed on the agenda.
- B. Announcements
Reconsiderations, Changes to the Agenda, and other Preliminary Announcements.
- C. Approval of Minutes
Approve the minutes as submitted.
- D. City Council Updates

4. **STAFF REPORTS**

- A. Airport Operation Updates
- B. FBO Updates
- C. Project and Grant Updates
- D. Communication and Business Updates

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting

6. TO/FROM AIRPORT COMMISSION MEMBERS

7. ADJOURNMENT

CERTIFICATE OF POSTING OF NOTICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at Flagstaff City Hall on _____, at _____ a.m./p.m in accordance with the statement filed by the Airport Commission with the City Clerk.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Miciela A. Sahner, Administrative Specialist

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Miciela Sahner at 928-213-2930 (or 774-5281 TDD). Notification at least 48 hours in advance will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements.



Airport Commission

3. C.

From: Miciela Sahner, Administrative Specialist

DATE: 08/13/2026

SUBJECT: Approval of Minutes

STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve the minutes as submitted.

Executive Summary:

Attachments

2026 July Draft Minutes

DRAFT

MINUTES

AIRPORT COMMISSION
THURSDAY
JULY 9, 2026

FLAGSTAFF AIRPORT
6200 S. PULLIAM DRIVE
VIRTUAL ONLY
1:00 P.M.

To participate in the meeting click the following link

[Join the Meeting Online](#)

1.

CALL TO ORDER

Call to order July 9th at 1:00 PM by Commissioner Spelke.

2.

ROLL CALL

NOTE: One or more Commission Members may be in attendance telephonically or by other technological means.

THOMAS WADDELL, CHAIR, ABSENT
NICHOLAS BARRAZA, PRESENT
ROBERT CARPENTER, PRESENT

ROBERT HANOVICH, PRESENT
ANDREW SHOUSE, PRESENT
CHRIS SPELKE, PRESENT
KOLBY WHITE, PRESENT

City Staff: Lori Matthews, Council Member; Heidi Hansen, Economic Vitality Director; Brian Gall, Airport Director; Adam Miele, Programs Manager; Claire Harper, Airport Communications Manager; Tim Skinner, ARFF/Ops Manager; Miciela Sahner, Administrative Specialist/Recording Secretary

3.

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

A. Public Comment/Participation/Input

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None

B. Announcements

Reconsiderations, Changes to the Agenda, and other Preliminary Announcements.

None

C. Approval of Minutes

Approve the minutes as submitted.

Moved by Kolby White, **seconded by** Robert Carpenter

Vote: 6 - 0 - Unanimously

D. City Council Updates

No updates this month; Councilmember Matthews was happy to see the airspace back operational after the issues caused by the Pocket Fire which will be discussed later on as part of the agenda.

4. STAFF REPORTS

A. Airport Operation Updates

Enplanements

Staff reported that enplanements continue to be a positive indicator for the airport in 2026. Enplanements, which represent revenue-generating passengers boarding departing flights, increased 4.4% in May and 9.5% in June compared to the same months in 2025. The significant increase in June was attributed largely to the seasonal use of the Airbus A319, which has substantially greater passenger capacity and allows the airport to accommodate nearly twice as many passengers during the summer months. Overall, enplanements for the first half of 2026 increased 5.7% compared to the first half of 2025, reflecting continued strong passenger growth.

Operations

Staff reported that aircraft operations, which include each takeoff and landing, declined compared to 2025. Operations decreased 14.4% in May and 33.7% in June, resulting in an overall 16.2% decrease for the first half of 2026 compared to the same period in 2025.

The decline was attributed primarily to higher aviation fuel prices, which have reduced activity in general aviation, including flight training and charter operations. Commercial airline operations have been less affected. Staff also noted that June's totals were impacted in part by operational disruptions related to the recent fire, which would be discussed in greater detail later in the meeting.

Parking Revenue

Staff reported that parking revenue declined 12.3% in May and 5.0% in June compared to 2025, following a strong performance during the first three months of the year. Because parking revenue typically trends closely with enplanements, the recent decline is considered unusual.

Staff indicated that no parking rate changes occurred during this period. One possible explanation is a shift in passenger demographics, with a higher proportion of visitors and fewer locally originating travelers, which could reduce parking demand despite increased passenger boardings. Factors such as airfare and other travel costs may also influence traveler behavior.

Despite the recent monthly declines, parking revenue for the first six months of 2026 remained essentially flat compared to 2025, differing by less than \$1,000 year over year. Staff will continue to monitor the trend and evaluate potential contributing factors.

Fuel Flow

Staff reported that fuel flow, which measures the volume of aviation fuel dispensed at the airport, increased 16.7% in May compared to 2025, despite a decline in overall aircraft operations. This trend suggests a shift in the mix of aircraft using the airport, with increased activity from larger aircraft, such as charter jets, military helicopters, and commercial service, and reduced activity from smaller general aviation aircraft and flight training operations.

In June, fuel flow decreased 20.0% compared to 2025, expectedly due to flight restrictions associated with the recent fire. Staff noted that additional information may be provided during the Fixed Base Operator (FBO) report.

Despite the June decline, fuel flow for the first half of 2026 remained up 5.2% compared to the same period in 2025, reflecting overall growth in fuel sales for the year to date.

B. FBO Updates

No one from Wiseman Aviation was in attendance, no FBO update provided.

C. Project and Grant Updates

Director Gall provided an abbreviated update on airport projects in the absence of the Airport Programs Manager, Adam Miele.

Airfield Maintenance Phase 7

The recently completed project included ramp striping to accommodate the Airbus A319 and refreshing airfield pavement markings affected by winter snow removal operations. The remaining phase involves permanent repairs to the airport's Red Gate, which was damaged by a vehicle. Temporary repairs have kept the gate operational and secure while staff await replacement parts. Permanent repairs are expected to begin within the next month.

Snow Removal Equipment Building

Final design work continues; however, the project remains dependent on receipt of the final Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant award before advancing to the next phase.

Airport Sculpture Restoration

Staff highlighted the successful restoration of the Motion sculpture located at the airport entrance. The piece had been part of a rotating exhibit throughout the City of Flagstaff before it landed at the entrance where Pulliam splits into a one-way. The project was completed through a partnership with the City of Flagstaff's Beautification and Public Art Program along with input from the original artist and a conservation team. Restoration work included structural preservation, hardware replacement, and application of a durable exterior coating in a new blue finish approved by the original artist. The project has enhanced the appearance of the airport entrance and includes a long-term preventative maintenance plan to preserve the artwork by the Beautification team.

Commissioner Spelke commented positively on the completed restoration, noting the sculpture's improved appearance.

D. Communication and Business Updates

Airbus A319 Inaugural Service

Staff reported that the airport welcomed its first mainline Airbus A319 on the Dallas/Fort Worth route on May 21, 2026, marking a significant milestone for the airport. The inaugural flight was fully booked and received extensive media attention at the local, statewide, and national levels, generating more than 15 media stories.

The arrival highlighted the increased passenger capacity of the Airbus A319 compared to the previously operated regional aircraft and new features such as a new boarding ramp designed to accommodate the larger aircraft. Staff noted the excitement among passengers, airline personnel, and airport staff during the inaugural operations.

To commemorate the event, the airport hosted an in-terminal celebration featuring commemorative items, promotional giveaways, and passenger activities. A reception was also held at Wiseman Aviation, with commissioners in attendance to celebrate the launch and recognize both community and airline partners. Staff expressed appreciation for the collaboration with American Airlines' corporate communications team, which helped promote the event through professional media coverage.

JumpStart Air Service Development Conference

Staff reported on their participation in the JumpStart Air Service Development Conference in Chicago, where meetings were held with several airlines to discuss opportunities for expanding commercial air service at Flagstaff Airport.

Key updates included:

- American Airlines: Staff thanked the airline for introducing Airbus A319 service and reviewed route performance. American reported strong results, with no negative impact on Phoenix service. The Dallas/Fort Worth route is currently operating at approximately 92% load factor, making it one of the airline's highest-performing domestic routes. American also indicated interest in adding another Phoenix flight if aircraft capacity becomes available.
- SkyWest/Delta: Discussions focused on future Salt Lake City service, with follow-up planned after the outcome of the airport's Small Community Air Service Development (SCASD) grant application.
- United Airlines: Staff continued discussions regarding the potential return of Denver service and will revisit those conversations following the SCASD grant decision.
- JSX: Staff presented opportunities for a public charter service which operates out of local FBO's. The airport's pitch included potential routes to Carlsbad or Scottsdale.
- Alaska Airlines: Staff promoted the potential for nonstop service to San Diego to improve access to underserved western markets.

Air Service Marketing and Data

Staff provided the Commission with an overview of the data-driven marketing presentations used during airline business development meetings at the JumpStart Air Service Development Conference. Each airline presentation consists of approximately 15 slides and is tailored to the specific carrier, combining background information about the Flagstaff market with detailed business and passenger demand data designed to demonstrate the viability of new or expanded air service.

For meetings with United Airlines, staff highlighted historical data demonstrating the strong performance of the former Denver route. Staff noted that with current airfares substantially higher than they were during that period, the opportunity for future service is even stronger. Staff also presented Passengers Daily Each Way (PDEW) data, which measures average daily passenger demand between markets. The analysis demonstrated that restoring Denver service would provide passengers with access to a larger number of connecting destinations than the current service through Phoenix or Dallas/Fort Worth.

Presentations to multiple airlines also emphasized Flagstaff's current airfare environment. Staff explained that Flagstaff remains one of the highest average airfare markets in the United States, ranking second highest in Arizona and among the top ten domestic airports for average fares. While high fares present challenges for local travelers, they also demonstrate strong revenue potential for airlines considering new service. Staff noted that increased airline competition would ideally improve service options while helping moderate fares for the traveling public.

Staff also shared data presented to Alaska Airlines supporting the airport's proposal for nonstop service to San Diego. The analysis demonstrated that the western United States is Flagstaff's most underserved travel market. While approximately 23% of local passengers travel to destinations in the West, the airport currently offers no direct service to that region.

Overall, staff explained that these presentations focus on presenting objective market data—including passenger demand, historical route performance, airfare trends, connectivity analyses, and catchment area information—to build a compelling business case for additional commercial air service. Much of this research also supported the airport's Small Community Air Service Development (SCASD) Grant application and has been well received by airline representatives.

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Pocket Fire Airport Operations Update

Staff provided a comprehensive overview of the Pocket Fire and its impacts on airport operations, emergency response, and commercial air service. The presentation highlighted the extensive coordination between airport staff, emergency management agencies, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), airlines, and wildfire incident management personnel to maintain public safety while minimizing disruptions to airport operations.

Pocket Fire Overview

The Pocket Fire ignited on June 19, 2026, between Flagstaff and Sedona along the top of the rim. Initially located closer to Sedona, the fire remained relatively contained until the weekend of June 26–28, which brought in significant wind speeds exceeding 50 mph, causing rapid fire growth. During this time, the fire advanced toward Flagstaff, ultimately approaching within eight miles south of the airport.

As fire activity intensified, airport leadership immediately began coordinating with the City's Emergency Management Division and Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) personnel. Airport staff monitored fire progression, reviewed emergency response procedures, and prepared for the possibility of pre-evacuation measures should conditions worsen. Although an evacuation was ultimately unnecessary, staff emphasized that preparedness activities began well before operational impacts occurred.

Temporary Flight Restrictions and Immediate Operational Response

On June 28, the airport's Air Traffic Control Tower notified staff that the FAA had established a Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) over the wildfire to protect aerial firefighting operations. Because the restricted airspace extended immediately south of the airport and conflicted with normal runway operations, aircraft departures and arrivals using the primary runway direction were significantly impacted. Most aircraft operations were immediately suspended in that direction.

Airport staff immediately notified American Airlines' local station personnel and the airline's Integrated Operations Center as this caused flight disruptions. Additionally, staff issued public notifications through airport communication channels. At the time the restriction was imposed, an American Airlines Airbus A319 was on the ground and staff worked to identify a safe opportunity for the aircraft to depart.

By June 29, the FAA modified the TFR, allowing the airport to operate between 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. while daytime operations remained restricted. Staff explained that the FAA and wildfire incident management adjusted the restricted airspace based on firefighting needs while balancing aviation safety.

Recognizing that the restrictions would likely remain in place for several days, airport staff worked closely with the FAA, City Emergency Management, Air Traffic Control, and wildfire officials to develop procedures allowing critical air medical transport flights to continue operating. Commercial airline operations were also modified during this period. American Airlines generally delayed Airbus A319 flights until nighttime operating windows when the runway reopened, while several SkyWest-operated regional flights were canceled because of differing operational procedures and scheduling limitations. The airport also issued a Notice to Air Missions (NOTAM) to inform transient pilots of the temporary operational restrictions.

Staff noted that flight restrictions were essential because firefighting aircraft, including fixed-wing air tankers, helicopters, and large unmanned aircraft systems, which were operating continuously immediately south of the airport. Public flight-tracking data illustrated the high volume of aerial firefighting activity occurring adjacent to the airport, reinforcing the importance of maintaining protected airspace for wildfire suppression efforts.

Beginning July 6, the FAA revised the TFR, allowing Visual Flight Rules (VFR) operations to resume. However, some commercial airline operations remained restricted because instrument departure procedures still conflicted with portions of the protected airspace, and airline operating policies required use of those procedures regardless of weather conditions. Following additional coordination between FAA personnel in Flagstaff and Phoenix, the TFR was further reduced the following day, eliminating conflicts with published instrument procedures. As a result, full airport operations resumed, allowing commercial airline schedules to return to normal.

Staff outlined the airport's public communication strategy throughout the incident. The airport quickly placed travel advisories on both the homepage and flight status page of its website, informing passengers that wildfire-related airspace restrictions could result in flight delays or cancellations and directing travelers to American Airlines' travel alert for updated flight information and rebooking options. American Airlines also issued a travel waiver allowing passengers to modify travel plans through July 10. Although the airport typically encourages travelers to use Flagstaff Airport whenever possible, staff advised affected passengers to consider alternate travel arrangements through Phoenix when necessary due to the operational restrictions.

The airport maintained active communication through its social media platforms by providing frequent operational updates, links to fire information, and notices regarding the lifting of restrictions. Staff reported that these communications generated significant public engagement and resulted in the airport gaining more than 250 new social media followers during the incident. Social media updates also acknowledged the efforts of firefighters and provided the public with timely information as conditions evolved.

Financial and Operational Impacts

Staff explained that the wildfire affected numerous aspects of airport operations beyond airline schedules. Preliminary impacts included reduced airline revenue and fuel flowage from the lack of commercial flights, logistical challenges caused by an imbalance between rental vehicle returns and incoming passengers, requiring temporary storage solutions for excess rental vehicles and extended work hours for airline and airport personnel to accommodate compressed nighttime flight schedules while daytime operations remained restricted.

Despite these challenges, staff expressed appreciation for the collaborative efforts of airport personnel, the City Emergency Management team, Coconino National Forest, wildfire incident management teams, the FAA, American Airlines, and other aviation partners. Staff concluded that, given the fire's proximity to the airport and the complexity of the operational challenges, the impacts could have been significantly greater. Continued wildfire containment efforts and coordinated decision-making allowed the airport to safely resume normal operations while protecting both aviation and firefighting personnel.

6. TO/FROM AIRPORT COMMISSION MEMBERS

Commissioner Spelke reminded staff about a request for an update on the 32-acre parcel development when one was available.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Andrew Shouse, **seconded by** Kolby White

Vote: 6 - 0 - Unanimously