

PUBLIC SERVICE MEETING MINUTES

12 January 2026

Chair Commissioner Evan Baddour noting prayer and pledge given previously in same day meeting. The Minutes of 5 May 2025 were moved for approval by Commissioner Terry Jones, seconded by Commissioner Gayle Jones, and were approved unanimously.

Resolution to establish an Airport Authority (handout provided) – A motion by Commissioner Carman Brown, seconded by Commissioner Evan Baddour, was made to approve the resolution. Chair Commissioner Evan Baddour noted the city of Pulaski has approved the concept of establishing the Abernathy Field Airport Authority. County Executive (CE) Graham Stowe said the proposed resolution is not personality driven, rather it is to provide accountability. Further he said he had researched the past actions noting in 1987 the county voted to have such an authority but the city of Pulaski voted no, and the management of the co-owned airport was ~~advocated~~ adibicated to the city. He said advisory boards are in existence across many of the Tennessee counties. He said he had researched committee minutes where information had been asked for in areas such as income, but was not given. He mentioned the OODA Loop which is a four-step process for making effective decisions in high-stakes situations (generally look at facts, observe, act) as a guide in this situation. He said the County should have responsibility to make happen (Advisory Board) which would be accountable to the Commission, monthly. The Chair said the Board would rely heavily on the airport manager. Commissioner Gayle Jones said she did not support the resolution, and questioned the motive behind the resolution given previous statements on doing such a resolution to support a successor to the current manager. Re the potential staffing of such a board, why was the current airport manager not on the board. The Chair said his responsibility would be to advise and recommend. Commissioner James Lathrop said the resolution is so that the county can co-manage the airport, where now only the city does. Further he said currently there is no transparency, problem with getting sufficient data on reports, and noting other examples, not usual for an owner to sit in on an advisory board.

The Chair said there is no question on the current manager given that the current airport manager has done a good job. The Chair in talking to the airport manager's son, said the manager is totally willing to help with a long-term plan. Commissioner Terry Jones asked if the manager was notified of this meeting and the Chair said yes. Member of the public Bruce ~~Heast~~Heath said as a tax payer there is a lot of misinformation out there. And he would like this type meeting held in the evening. He said he had talked to the manager who is 79 years old, and currently receives a salary + benefits plus other income, i.e., hangar rental profits and profits from selling fuel. Commissioner James Lathrop said the county has asked for all income information from the airport and the information received is insufficient. Mr. Heast commented on the cost to hire a new airport manager and expected cost, e.g., \$65K salary plus benefits, and hire more individuals to support, with an estimate of \$200K just for labor. The CE gave some information on the current budget for the airport, time involved in hiring a new manager (upon current airport manager retirement), and the authority within an airport authority, i.e., two representatives from county and two from city with another elected by that group. Commissioner Annelle Guthrie said she hated the way this was framed; that the county is not trying to fire anyone; that with airport manager being 79 years old you have to plan for the future; and how much the county currently pays (Chair said one-half of \$75K); and when asked for funds the county did provide those funds. Member of the Public Catherine Bailey asked why not having any say; why have an airport authority to help with that. The CE said the authority will have statutory authority to ask and also the county will be liable if anything happens. He said currently the county has no idea of the airport revenue. The CE said he had done a comparison with other airports and all were managed by boards which has an electronic audit and can see where the county spends taxpayers' dollars. Ms. Bailey asks who appoints with the CE saying there will be five, with two from the commission, two from the city, and one selected by those 4. Ms. Bailey said she was against unelected boards. Ms. Leah Bailey asked with co-managing who makes the final 51% decision. Commissioner James Lathrop noted the members were elected, as commissioners, city alderman. Ms. Bailey asked if the concerns couldn't be addressed in the airport manager's

contract with the CE saying the county has not been a party to that contract. Commissioner Joyce Woodard asked if the Authority's representation would change with the CE saying every year 1 -2 members would be replaced, noting before election and before operational. Commissioner Gayle Jones said this would be more expensive cost to operate the airport, noting the number of hours the current manager does for management of the airport. Commissioner James Lathrop said we can't know how much is collected from the hangar rentals or the profit from selling fuel and although the manager works for the city he also works other activities such as flight training. Public asked how other airports manage in particular Maury County with Commissioner Gayle Jones saying she didn't know but she would look into that. She said further the city had looked into the possibility of changing the method of management years before but decided it was more feasible to stay as is. She said she didn't like the board not being an elected board and not accountable to the people. A motion to call for the question was made by Commissioner Caleb Savage, seconded by Commissioner Carman Brown and passed 4-3 with Commissioner Gayle Jones, Evan Baddour, and Annelle Guthrie voting no. Roll call on original motion resulted in a 3 – 3 tie with one abstaining. Those voting no were Commissioner Terry Jones, Gayle Jones, Annelle Guthrie and Commissioner Joyce Woodard voted to abstain. The Chair commented this would go to the full legislative committee.

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Terry Jones, seconded by Commissioner Carman Brown, and was approved unanimously.

ATTENDEES: Chair Commissioner Evan Baddour, Commissioners Joyce Woodard, Terry Jones, Annelle Guthrie, Roger Reedy, Gayle Jones, Carman Brown Other Commissioners in attendance James Lathrop, David Adams, Matthew Hopkins, Matt Rubelsky, Shelly Goolsby, David Wamble, Roger Reedy, Erin Curry, Rickie Carpenter, Tracy Wilburn, Judy Pruett, Caleb Savage Others in attendance Joseph Purvis, Sheriff, Road Superintendent Gene Barnickle, Josh Young – EMA Chief, Phil Reese – Economic Development Director, Knox Vanderpool – School Board Chair, and members of the public

