SOUTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL AIRPORT
ALBANY DOUGHERTY COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION
APRIL 16, 2026
TEAMS VIDEO CONFERENCE

TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR: DAVID HAMILTON, Present

CHAIRMAN: BART HILLSMAN, Present

VICE CHAIRMAN: KEN HODGES, Present

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: DOUG FAIRCLOTH, DONTRAVIOUS SIMMONS, PAMELA GREEN JACKSON, ORSON BURTON JR.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: WILLIE WEAVER JR.

THIS MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:00 P.M.

- **Approvals –** Chairman Hillsman called for a motion to approve the agenda for this evening's meeting and the minutes from the January meeting. The minutes and agenda were approved as distributed.

- **Bart Hillsman –** Chairman Hillsman asked if there were any additions or questions regarding the financial reports. No questions or comments were made.

- **Brandon Taylor –** Attorney Taylor, who was hired to represent the Airport in regard to any potential PFAS contamination, introduced himself and gave a brief presentation on the firm and what they do. They have been working with several other attorneys on PFAS cases since 2018. They represent between 350 to 400 public entities over 6 different states on PFAS litigation.

  Taylor explained that PFAS stems largely from the use of AFFF foam which has been required for decades to be used at Airports such as ours. PFAS causes health concerns when it contaminates drinking water and soil. So many lawsuits have been filed against the manufacturers of AFFF foam for the use of PFAS chemicals that all of the lawsuits have been rerouted to one specific courtroom. Since the Airport is an individual claimant involved in this multi-district litigation, the mechanism of filing the lawsuit is much simpler and much less strenuous if we do happen to find contamination.

  Taylor said they know that the Airport has had these products on site, and more than likely they have been used. If this is the case, it is highly possible the PFAS chemicals would be in the soil. The firm would hire professional testing services at their cost to verify this. The firm works on a

contingency fee basis, so if there is no settlement or recovery, there is no cost or fee to the firm at all. The burden falls on the firm, not the Airport.

Chairman Hillsman asked if there were any questions for Attorney Taylor. Commissioner Faircloth verified with Taylor that there was no cost for the testing. Faircloth also asked if there was any obligation to the firm if the Airport does test. Taylor explained that in order to move forward with the testing, the Airport will have to have an executed contract with the firm. If the findings are positive, the Airport will have a choice on whether or not to pursue litigation with the firm.

Director Hamilton elaborated that the Airport would meet with the City Attorney and the City Manager before we take any action with the firm. He confirmed that we are not asking for any recommendations at this time.

- **Kyle Jackson** – Delta Manager Jackson recapped the 1st quarter and how operations were impacted. Seasonal demands, specifically Spring Break travel, had a large hand in this. Passenger volume through Spring Break of this year was up 8% from last year. Jackson said there have been larger groups of families traveling this year from last year. The TSA lines in Atlanta due to the 2026 partial shutdown drove a lot of new passengers to ABY.

  Fleet adjustments will be made June 1st by moving from CRJ700 aircrafts to exclusively CRJ900. The operator is still Endeavor Air. The summer schedule will move through September, so between Delta and Endeavor, they believe that the CRJ900 will provide more reliability than the CRJ700, as well as providing up to 76 seats per aircraft. There has also been a baggage fee increase. As of April 8th, all first checked bags are $45, and second checked bags are $55. Customers who have booked prior to April 8th will not be subject to the increase. Jackson said the surge in fuel prices are partly to blame for this bag increase. He assured the Commission that, as of right now, customers have not complained.

  Chairman Hillsman asked if there were any questions for Delta Manager Jackson. Commissioner Simmons asked if Delta was running any summer specials. Jackson clarified that if any specials were to be upcoming, they would likely run towards Labor Day rather than during the summer, but no specials have been confirmed as of now.

- **Chris Lowery –** Holt Consultant Lowery provided updates for the construction projects going on at the Airport. The C Apron S Project is currently in phase 2, with apron C being closed at this time. He anticipated phase 2 to be completed by the first week of May, as long as weather permits. Phase 3 will begin at the time of phase 2's completion, which will reopen C and close S.

The next project, the Crack Seal Rejuvenation project, will start work on Monday, April 20th. They will utilize the closure of apron C to complete work on it, then will move on to other portions of the Airport.

As far as projects in the design phase, Lowery said they have turned in 90% plans for the North Hangar Project, which are currently being reviewed by the City of Albany. They are still waiting to hear back from GDOT on whether or not they will fund any part of the project with state funds. They expect to hear back in the next couple of months on this. The Runway 23 Object Free Area Project is still in the environmental phase. They are trying to get the environmental approved so that they can move on to review by FAA. Once that is approved, they can proceed with getting the design grant for that project.

Chairman Hillsman asked if there were any questions for Holt Consultant Lowery, and there were none.

- **Pope Langdale –** Albany Jet Center Owner Langdale and Manager Kent Stevens provided updates on the FBO. Langdale expressed excitement about the improvements at the Airport. He explains that they originally thought the construction would cause some difficulty for operations at AJC but they have navigated it very well with the help of Superintendent of Operations, Roberto Pagan. Langdale says also that the quail hunting season went well. They have also had survey planes that have stuck around and have flown every day, which benefits the fuel flowage fees.

  Langdale explained that they were approached by the CEO of the Albany Convention and Visitors Bureau, Kasey Summerville, who would like to have an event at the FBO for National Tourism Day. He says they are happy to host within the FBO building or in one of the corporate hangars, but that he would like the Aviation Commission to provide input on the direction they should go in. Chairman Hillsman explained that the Langdale can discuss with Superintendent of Operations Pagan at a later time.

  Albany Jet Center Manager Stevens then provided brief updates on operations. He noted that they have seen a slight decrease in traffic after quail hunting season ended. He explained that they are being creative with ways to drive some summer traffic, such as summer incentives for military aircraft and providing free grilled lunch and discounted fuel in an event they call "Sun and Fun." Stevens said that they are still fully staffed and that everything is going smoothly.

  Chairman Hillsman asked Stevens to refer to the fuel price comparison that was provided to the Commission. Stevens explained that the comparison sheet showed various airports in our area that are comparable to our airport as well as smaller airports in the area. He said that they take the average of the comparable and smaller airports and that is what Albany Jet Center bases their fuel prices on, aiming to price about $0.20 under that average.

Chairman Hillsman asked if there were any questions regarding the fuel price comparison. Commissioner Green Jackson asked for clarity on the military incentive. Stevens explained that since the contract with the military ended last fall, they have seen a small decrease in military traffic so they are trying to build that clientele back up by providing lunch and exemplary service.

Owner Langdale noted that the war in Iran is feeding the chaos with the fuel prices. Their cost of Jet-A fuel has almost doubled and they continue to receive more price increase notifications. Langdale assured the Commission that they are trying to manage those prices the best they can.

- **Roberto Pagan –** Superintendent of Operations Pagan provided a brief update on the concessions in the airport. He said that the owner of Bee Smoothie, who presented at the last meeting, has sent over her plans for the restaurant. Pagan said that what they are trying to do at this moment is solicit bids. Once Pagan has the necessary bids, estimates, and documentation, they will present to the City Manager to see if this is something the City of Albany wants to move forward with.

- **Bart Hillsman –** Chairman Hillsman brought up the Special Call for May 7th about Landing Fees. Director Hamilton explained that the date has changed, and he will have the new date sent out via email. Chairman Hillsman asked if there were any items to add to the future agenda. There were not. The date for the next Aviation Commission Meeting was confirmed to be July 16, 2026.

Respectfully,

David Hamilton
Transportation Director