

Airport Management Transitions to Independent Authority

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority (GFIAA) is officially operating. The Authority transition was approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), with support from Kent County Commissioners and government officials.

For 60 years, Kent County owned and operated the Airport, through its Department of Aeronautics, with major policy matters decided by the Kent County Board of Commissioners through the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Board. The transition to an Airport Authority transferred governance to a regional Airport Authority Board, appointed by the County Board of Commissioners.

“This is a historical day for our region, our County, and our Airport,” said Roger Morgan, GFIAA Board Chairman and Kent County Commissioner. “The transfer to an Authority has been a goal of our Board’s for several years, and to see the teamwork, the collaboration of

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Pictured from left are: FAA Representative Susan Mowery-Schalk, GFIAA Board Chair Roger Morgan, former Kent County Commission Chair Dan Koorndyk, and (seated) GFIAA Board member David Slikkers.



Airport Police Begin Bike Patrols

For GFIAA law enforcement, a top priority is to provide the airport with a combination of the best safety, security and customer service possible. One of the newest ways we are achieving these goals is through a bike patrol program, which began this summer.

Bike patrols encourage more frequent personal interaction and make the officers more approachable to children and adults alike. At the same time, the bicycles provide a cost effective way to increase patrols and safety of the airport.

Our initial Bike Patrol group comprises Sergeant Abe DeVries, Officer Grant Reed, and Officer Crystal King. The primary patrol area for these officers will include the terminal curb front, Gateway Drive, and the parking garage, with the potential for their footprint to expand to cover greater territory on the airport campus.

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organizations, and the FAA's support has been truly remarkable. We had a smooth process along the way, and we are grateful to each and every person who assisted us in this transition.”



GFIAA Chair Roger Morgan and State Senator Dave Hildenbrand

The transfer to an Authority creates an independent governing enterprise whose sole purpose is the future development of the Airport, greater levels of economic development and proactive commercial revenue development, a stronger regional focus to respond to air service needs, and a more entrepreneurial, business, and hospitality management focus - driven by customer service.

The Authority Legislation was signed by Governor Rick Snyder on June 30, 2015, the Kent County Board of Commissioners formed the Regional Authority and adopted the Articles of Incorporation on August 27, 2015, and Kent County and the Authority signed final operating and lease agreements on December 17, 2015. The final approval of the Authority came from the FAA, which granted and signed the Authority's operating certificate on July 1, 2016.

The transition came about with full support from the Kent County Board of Commissioners.

“Kent County prides itself on making decisions that are best for the entire community,” said Jim Saalfeld, Chair of the Kent County Board of Commissioners. “The Gerald R. Ford International Airport is a regional asset for all of



State Representative Rob VerHeulen

West Michigan. In that regard, the County knows the best long-term move for the Airport is to be operated by a regional authority that includes representation from outside of the County. This is another great example of collaboration by Kent County at many levels.”

“Kent County Commissioner Dan Koorndyk was instrumental in this transition, and we sincerely appreciate all of his support, along with County Board Chair Jim Saalfeld and the entire commission,” said Morgan. “We also would not have completed this changeover without our amazing employees. Each and every one of them keeps our Airport operating day in and day out, and we have far exceeded expectations in air service, customer service, construction, and safety because of their efforts.”

Presenting...

Is your group looking for a speaker for an upcoming meeting? Would your organization like to learn more about the airport? The GFIA Marketing and Communications division would welcome the opportunity to come to your next meeting and provide an overview of the airport, updates on ongoing airport development projects and the state of the aviation industry. Presentations can be timed to fit nicely into a breakfast or lunchtime meeting.



For more information, or to request a speaker for your next meeting, please contact the Marketing and Communications division at (616) 233-6031 or visit the website at www.FlyFord.org for more information located under News & Info.

Employee Spotlight



Recently, Carlos Glenn, a 29-year employee of Delta Air Lines, was spotted going above and beyond to accommodate a passenger request. When asked about it, what was Carlos' response? "I just wanted to make sure their trip started well." Thanks for making GRR #1 in customer service, Carlos!

Celebrating Our Staff

Congratulations to GFIAA Firefighter Tony Gutierrez who was recently promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in the Civil Air Patrol (CAP).

Tony has served in the CAP for 24 years, starting as a cadet in 1992. He currently serves as Wing Director for Emergency Services where he manages a training budget of over \$40,000 and leads a staff of 12 active professionals who are assigned to training, administration, preparedness, and homeland security.

Tony has also served as a director for multiple professional development courses, provided mentoring to junior officers and attended CAP's National Staff College.



Lieutenant Colonel Tony Gutierrez

FUN FACT!



The Green Coat Ambassadors logged 363 miles for the month of June in steps they have taken while working at the airport. That is the equivalent of walking from our airport to Chicago... and back! The group pictured above are a part of the 16-member Ambassador staff serving the GRR passengers.

Introducing the WMAA Class of 2016 Private Pilots

The fifteen young men pictured below are all new private pilots! These West Michigan Aviation Academy students participated in the State of Michigan Certified Career & Technical Education (CTE) Aviation Program to earn this achievement. The average student completion flight time was 50 hours.

Congratulations to these students on their achievement and best wishes as they soar to new heights in the future!



Award-Winning Construction

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport parking garage roof project was recently named the "2016 NuHeights Design Award Winner" in the Transportation category. This award recognizes excellence and quality in professional design and building construction and evaluates projects with steel construction.

With more than 600 joists at 62-feet long, creative solutions were required to complete the fabrication, shipping, and installation of the steelwork used in the roof project.



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News In Brief

- » The next meetings of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority Board are currently scheduled to occur on August 31, September 28, and October 26. Board meetings begin at 8:30 a.m. All meetings are open to the public. *Due to construction activities, the August 31 Board meeting will be held in the Ford Room on the mezzanine level of the passenger terminal building. Please check the website for the location of the September and October meetings (www.flyford.org/airport-board.php).*

Employee Information Corner

Stormwater, which is generated by rainfall and snow melt, can negatively affect surface water resources such as lakes and streams. GFIAA's stormwater is conveyed to local surface waters by the airport's storm sewer network. The airport and its tenants are required to manage outdoor activities, petroleum products, and other potential pollutants so as to prevent or minimize the presence of contaminants in stormwater runoff. Good housekeeping practices, including making sure dumpster lids are closed when not in use can help in preventing or minimizing stormwater contact with polluting materials. Other practices used as part of GFIAA's stormwater management program are described in the airport's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which is available on-line on the Environment & Zoning page at www.FlyFord.org/environment-zoning.php.

The active participation of GFIAA staff and tenants is a critical part of the stormwater management program. If you observe any practices or situations that appear to have the potential to negatively affect the quality of stormwater at the Airport, call Airport Communications at 233-6055 to report your observation(s). Situations that would warrant a call to Communications could include the improper disposal of wastes, improper (illicit) discharges to the storm sewer system, or any other activity that appears to have the potential to negatively affect the quality of stormwater discharges at the Airport.

Airport Connections is the quarterly newsletter of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. We encourage our readers to contact us with comments, suggestions, and submissions. If you wish to be added to the mailing list for *Airport Connections*, please contact the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority:

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Email: gfainfo@grr.org

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