

**3CU AIRPORT COMMISSION MEETING
AUGUST 17, 2026 – 4:30 PM
CABLE UNION AIRPORT TERMINAL**

MINUTES

Call to Order

Chairman Rowe called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

Attendance: Chairman Doug Rowe, Commissioner Ray Ebert, Jeff Hurula, Jeff Smits, Airport Manager Mike Nichols, and Secretary Holly Holly.

Virtual: Commissioner Bob Rasmussen, Treasurer Dale Kruse

Absent: Commissioner Joe Garceau

Guests

Karen Ruth

Virtual: Brad Volker, Cooper Engineering; Blake Bristow, Jack Perron, Hangar Owners

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Ebert to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Smits. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments

Karen Ruth inquired about renting hangar space when her plane arrives next month. Her intent is to base her plane permanently in Cable. She asks for hangar owners who might be willing to accommodate her request to please contact her.

Commissioner Ebert relayed a complaint from a resident in the Valhalla Townhouses regarding the SRE building security light. Blake Bristow said he has found it slightly distracting while landing at night. Manager Nichols and Mr. Volker will check to see if there is a way to adjust the brightness setting, replace the bulb or add a shade to deflect the light downward.

Approval of Minutes – July 20, 2026

Motion by Commissioner Rasmussen to approve minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Smits. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Expenditures:	\$ 6,189.42
Receipts:	\$ 4,551.90 (\$2,760.98, 14 fuel sales, 443.89 gal)
Balance on 07/31/26:	\$86,984.01

Treasurer Kruse sent a report stating no unpaid invoices as of July 30th and one outstanding account receivable totaling \$750.

Motion by Commissioner Ebert to accept the treasurer's report and file for audit, seconded by Commissioner Hurula. Motion carried unanimously.

Manager's Report

Manager Nichols reported a \$120 donation was received. Blake Bristow volunteered to set up a QR code for the Stripe App which is a simple way for donations to be made to the airport. More information next month.

The Young Eagles event was successful with 20 kids participating, good weather, and seven planes. Thank you to Mr. Volker for being one of the pilots volunteering his time and airplane.

Commissioner Ebert will check on shelving for the SRE building.

Manager Nichols and Commissioner Hurula will evaluate the fuel hose reel motor and try to determine if replacing just the motor (\$700) fixes the problem rather than replace the entire reel mechanism (\$7,500).

Manager Nichols and Secretary Holly are working to create a Google Drive making airport documents available to commissioners online in addition to paper files.

OLD BUSINESS

Update BOA/Environmental Assessment (EA)

– **Brad Volker, Cooper Engineering, Colin Davidson, BOA Project Manager**

Mr. Davidson was absent. On July 29, 2026, Chairman Rowe sent a letter to Senator Baldwin seeking assistance with convincing the FAA to honor the long-standing plan to clear obstructions to accommodate 3400 ft. of usable runway, expectations, see *Attachment A, Letter to Senator Baldwin*. Mitch Merfield, of Senator Baldwin's office, has confirmed that the letter has been received by the FAA and is being processed. In an additional avenue to address this issue, Karla Knorr, BOA, has been actively trying to set up a meeting between the BOA, Airport, and FAA as suggested by the Acting Manager of the Chicago ADO planning office in a phone conversation with Chairman Rowe three weeks ago, but Chicago has not yet responded to her request.

SRE Building Update - Brad Volker, Cooper Engineering, Colin Davidson, BOA

Mr. Volker reported no new update to the EA from the standpoint of Cooper Engineering. Three weeks ago, Cooper Engineering did provide a proposal to Karla Knorr to continue with the assistance from Westwood Consultants, Chairman Rowe offered to contact Ms. Knorr and request a status update.

SRE building project is winding down. Northwest Builders is gathering labor compliance documentation from sub-contractors. In the meantime, the BOA is withholding \$10,000 of the payment. Mr. Volker is more than willing to help solve the light complaint and check to see if there is a way to adjust the intensity of the security light.

NEW BUSINESS

Bayfield County Board - Sue Rosa Absent

Correspondence

Chairman Rowe sent the Town of Namakagon a 2027 Budget Request, (\$12,000 operating fund and \$5,000 contingency fund), per their request. Commissioner Hurula and Smits asked that the request also be sent to the Towns of Cable and Drummond.

County Zoning updates were received, but are not actionable at this time.

Discussion & Possible Action - Airport Insurance Coverage

Commissioner Smits and Steve Bruss are in agreement that most insurance companies provide quotes 30 days prior to end of a policy. Mr. Bruss said there are 28 companies providing coverage to airports and suggested starting the process in November; he offered to assist. Chairman Rowe extended the Commissions' gratitude for all the hangar owners who graciously volunteer to assist with various projects.

FAA Directed NEPA Study for Phase II Hangars

Colin Davidson says the SHPO has determined a finding of "No Negative Impact for the Phase II Hangars" and is forwarding the NEPA Study to the BOA for final signature.

Discussion and Possible Action – Phase II Electricity Installation Cost Settlement with Hangar Owners

Presently, finalization of the NEPA Study will allow for each Phase II hangar owner to be reimbursed in the amount of \$303.87 (\$51,657.50 project costs, \$5,000/hangar collected, \$4,696/hangar actual cost, \$303.87 reimbursement due).

Motion by Commissioner Ebert to approve reimbursement to hangar owners once finalized by BOA in the amount of \$303.87 per hangar owner, seconded by Commissioner Hurula. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion & Possible Action - Hangar Lease Rates

Discussion regarding set rates for a specific number of years. Chairman Rowe expressed concern in doing this in case of unforeseen circumstances. The hangar lease agreement addresses this in paragraph 4 stating the airport will conduct periodic review and adjustment of hangar lease rates. It is not the Commissions intent to raise rates frequently. They have remained unchanged for the past 11 years. It is important to ensure the airport does not tie its own hands in insuring it is adequately funded and maintained. An addendum to current lease will be drafted.

Motion by Commissioner Hurula to raise annual hangar lease rates to \$600, effective January 1, 2027, seconded by Commissioner Ebert. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of Telemark Road Easement–Matt Pobloske

No new updates.

Discussion and Possible Action – Second Courtesy Car Donation

Discussion to sell car via Facebook Marketplace or the local auction, suggested by Jack Perron.

Rezoning and Land Ownership

No update.

Pancake Breakfast Fly-In

The fly in is scheduled for Saturday, September 26, 2026, 8 am – 12 pm. Volunteers will start setting up at 7 am. Kay Rowe is organizing food. Commissioner Rasmussen will organize tables and chairs. Manager Nichols will purchase additional garbage cans.

Future Airport Events

None.

Tree Clearing

Gordon Correctional Facility crew is scheduled to do tree clearing in late October. Commissioner Hurula will reserve the wood chipper.

2026 Tractor Acquisition Discussion

Mr. Davidson confirmed the tractor purchase is on track for this fall with expected delivery next spring. Jeremy Roberts, BOA, will contact the commission with purchase specification in September.

Items for Next Agenda:

Bayfield County Board

Correspondence

2027 Budget Discussion

Telemark Rd Easement/Matt Pobloske Requesting Approval from the Airport

Discussion & Possible Action-Phase II Electricity Installation Cost Settlement to Hangar Owners

Rezoning & Land Ownership

Future Airport Events

Donated 2nd Courtesy Car

2026 Tractor Acquisition Discussion

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, September 15, 2026, at the Airport Terminal at 4:30 p.m.

Adjournment

Chairman Rowe declared the meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Attachment A

July 29, 2026

To: Senator Tammy Baldwin

From: Doug Rowe

Cable Union Airport

Commission Chairman 3CU

Subj: Seeking your assistance to influence the FAA's Chicago ADO (Airports District Office) to stop changing the rules on an EA to improve the functionality and safety of 3CU that has been ongoing for at least 15 years. Each change delays progress and unnecessarily costs taxpayers significant money.

Senator Baldwin,

About a year ago your office came to the aid of Cable Union Airport (3CU) and brought reasonableness to FAA's oversight of hangar development. Your influence resulted in the elimination of unnecessary cost and redundant work. We are extremely grateful.

Once again, we need your help.

In 2011 an Airport Master Plan for 3CU, completed at the direction of the FAA, was published. It included the justification for this project. In about 2017, 3CU began the planning for an Environmental Assessment (EA) with the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics (BOA) to clear trees which had become obstructions for arriving and departing airplanes on our 3709 ft paved runway. A short time later our contacts at the BOA told us that in the eyes of the FAA, Cable Union Airport (3CU) by classification, is only eligible for assistance to clear obstructions for 3400ft of usable runway surface. That did not sit well with us since this FAA action would permanently make our airport less functional and less safe. We protested but were subsequently convinced 3400 ft was the best we could get. Federal, state and local taxpayers spent tens of thousands of dollars paying a consultant to develop alternatives for airspace clearing that would bring at least 3400 ft of our runway into compliance for airport operations. This has been the recommendation in our published Airport Master Plan (AMP) since 2011 and part of our Airport Layout Plan (ALP) since 2017. Incidentally, the FAA required 3CU to develop these documents for planning. The ALP is a graphic depiction of the Airport Master Plan and requires FAA signature and approval. The ALP for 3CU has been in final draft form awaiting signature since 2017.

Now, some nine years later, the FAA is changing the rules again. They are telling us we need to come up with additional justification for even that 3400 ft. Their stated reason for this decision is they contend painting new threshold lines on our existing 3709 ft of pavement somehow equates to a "runway extension", thus triggering the need for more studies. This is absurd and defies all logic. The pavement is existing. The usable runway was temporarily shortened with paint for aircraft safety until we could work through the EA process to clear the obstructions. This is in NO Way a "runway extension". We are trying to bring 3CU into compliance with our Airport Master Plan and ALP. That has been our goal all along.

At a minimum, the proposed new justification-process of counting airplane operations over the course of at least a year, unnecessarily delays the completion of the EA. More significantly, it potentially adds tens (maybe hundreds) of thousands in Federal, State, and Local dollars spent to redo work that has already been completed. Additionally, the proposed count is flawed in several ways. One of the most egregious being there is no accounting for the many larger advanced aircraft whose pilots would prefer to use 3CU but can't, or elect not to, in it's current shortened state. These airplanes will come to 3CU as the Airport Master Plan forecasts if we stay

the course and complete the project.

How is it possible the FAA can make the assertion that turning 3709 ft of runway surface into 3400 ft of usable runway constitutes a "runway extension"? How can the FAA sit on the 3CU ALP for nine years with no action? Please help us convince the FAA's Chicago ADO to abide by the recommendations in our Airport Master Plan and ALP. Otherwise, the time and money spent on these planning documents was wasted and seems they mean nothing. We need this assurance in order to proceed with the EA in a timely and fiscally responsible manner. Those driving this are Acting Assistant Manager at Chicago ADO planning, Kimberly Porter, and the Acting Manager, Gary Wilson.

Wisconsin Governor Evers has flown into 3CU three times in the last twelve months on the State of Wisconsin's King Air. We have several other twin engine aircraft and a turboprop who's owners have hangars on the airfield. We have the potential to better serve several major events in our area throughout the year (The American Birkebeiner to mention one). If the FAA continues to change the rules and deny us the functionality for which we've been working (within the system) to achieve, for the last fifteen or more years, the local economy will be negatively impacted and other operations at 3CU will be in jeopardy. Doesn't the FAA exist to promote aviation and make it safer?

Please contact me with any questions. I look forward to discussing this with you soon.

*Sincerely,
Doug Rowe
Cable Union Airport Commission Chairman
dougrowe3cu@gmail.com*