Joplin Regional Airport
602 S Main Street
Joplin, Missouri 64801
417-623-0262

CALL TO ORDER

The Airport Board met in the Administrative Conference Room at the Joplin Regional Airport Commercial Terminal on March 12, 2026. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Jones at 7:00 A.M.

ROLL CALL

A. Board Members
   a. Brian Jones
   b. Tom Christensen
   ~~c. Brett LaForest – Not present~~
   d. Joshua Oathout
   e. Tom Robertson
   f. Michelle Steverson – New Board Member
   g. Kris Zibert

B. Staff
   a. Airport Manager – Allison Zahner
   b. Operations Supervisor – James McBryde
   c. Administrative Assistant – Cristy Short
   d. Public Works Assistant Dir. – Jeremy Hagerman
   e. Airport Police - Brent Williams

C. Other
   a. Freedom of Flight Museum – Darryl Coit
   b. Olsson – Steve Stockam – Attended virtually
   c. JRAH - Lori Worthington – Attended virtually
   d. Valkyrie UAS Solutions - Ty Harmon – Attended virtually

MINUTES

Mr. Jones moved to approve minutes from the February 12, 2026, board meeting. This motion was seconded by Mr. Oathout and unanimously approved.

MEETING

Mr. Jones opened by welcoming new Airport Board member Michelle Steverson. She joins us from Joplin Chamber of Commerce as a member relations coordinator and is a Joplin resident. She was appointed by Joplin City Council and will fill the vacancy created by Mike King's departure.

Mr. Jones directed discussion to the virtual guests. Tyson Harmon, CEO and Co-Founder of Valkyrie UAS Solutions and Lori Worthington, Executive Director of Joplin Regional Alliance for Health were introduced and invited to share a presentation linking aviation to healthcare and education in the community.

Joplin Regional Airport
602 S Main Street
Joplin, Missouri 64801
417-623-0262

Mr. Harmon shared a presentation and outlined Valkyrie UAS Solution's mission as a rural healthcare drone company. Presentation highlights included:

- Valkyrie proposes a rural healthcare drone program to connect remote communities to healthcare.
- The drones will move lab samples (not organs) along an FAA-approved corridor between Springfield and St. Louis. He emphasized FAA-approved routes and safety.
- For a potential to improve organ placement rates and life-saving impacts.
- The hub model is a six-drone configuration with two drones allocated for university research and education. (Also working with MSSU.)
- The eVTOL platform is a fifth-generation, all-electric VTOL with substantial flight and software hours and described some performance and requirement needs.
- The platform is all-electric VTOL with conformed aircraft logging ~3,400 flight hours and 44,000 software hours without incident.
- Operations are constrained to Class G airspace below 400 feet and require a ~30m x 30m fenced vertiport for FAA compliance.
- Requirements for secure storage, vertiport leases, and plans for remote pilot operations centers to support scaled drone fleets.

Mr. Harmon concluded with Valkyrie priorities: operational "blocking and tackling" for drones, community alignment, and seeking FAA and other grants to support airport–drone integration projects. Mr. Jones invited Mr. Harmon and Ms. Lori Worthington to the Future of Joplin working group. Ms. Zahner added that Valkyrie will present at the Missouri Airport Managers Association (MAMA) conference on March 24–27.

Ms. Zahner detailed current Airport business. She stated the Airport is accepting bids for an air service consultant with bid opening scheduled for March 17. The current EAS contract coverage and recent reductions in flights and load factors were reviewed with traffic reports (Denver at ~36% last month; Chicago at ~67%).

Mr. Jones opened the floor to Mr. Coit with Freedom of Flight Museum. Mr. Coit invited everyone to an upcoming Chamber ribbon cutting on 4/16/2026 for the T-33 project. This is concurrent with the volunteer appreciation event. He reminded that Wings and Wheels 10/3/2026 needs fundraising if anyone knows of sponsorship opportunities.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Oathout motioned to adjourn. This was seconded by Mr. Robertson, and the motion carried unanimously at 8:13 A.M.

Brian Jones, Chairman

Cristy Short, Administrative Assistant