

Colorado Airport Operators Association

Membership Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, January 28th, 2026
8:30 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.
Sonesta Denver Downtown Hotel

1. **Call to Order and Attendance - Roll Call of BOD**
 - a. **Please sign the attendance sheet to be passed around.**
2. **Approval of Jun 19th, 2025 Minutes** – Page 3 & 4 of this document
3. **CAOA Training Committee Update:**
 - a. Fall 2026 Training – Airfield Electrical & Lighting Course
 - b. Dates: TBD
 - c. Thank you to all of the members that voted.
4. **CAOA Conference Committee Update:**
 - a. 2025 Spring Conference
 - i. 2025 Paid Attendance – 288
 - ii. 2024 Paid Attendance – 261
 - iii. Sponsorship Total - \$106,000
 - b. 2026 Spring Conference
 - i. Pueblo CO
 1. June 10-12, 2026
 2. Pueblo Convention Center
 3. [Visit Pueblo](#) Video
 4. [Plan your next event in Pueblo](#) - Video
 5. Courtyard By Marriot Next to the Convention Center
 - a. Courtyard can only offer 70 rooms each night
 - ii. Sponsorships and exhibitor tables available
 - iii. Tickets will go on sale Feb. 15
 - c. 2026 Winter Conference
 - i. 2025 Paid Attendance – 149 tickets –
11 reception only tickets – 160 total
 - ii. 2026 Paid Attendance – 147 tickets – 14 reception only tickets – 161 total as of 1/22/2026 - Update at conference.
 - iii. 2026 Sponsorship total - \$7000
5. **CAOA Financial Committee Update:**
 - a. [P&L for 2024-2025 fiscal year](#) - PAGE 5 of this document
 - b. 2025-2026 Working Budget – PAGE 6 of this document
6. **CAOA Communications Committee Update:**
 - a. Internal Communications plan proposed and approved by BOD. - PAGES 7-11 of this document
 - b. External Communications Plan will be presented to the BOD at the spring conference in June 2026

7. **Membership Update**

- a. CAO A Membership structure was adjusted and approved by the CAO A BOD in June 2025
- b. New membership drive began on Oct. 1, 2025
- c. Currently there are 195 current members under 76 membership teams. There are 56 memberships that expired in Nov & Dec 2025.
- d. Currently there are 22 annual sponsors for 2026.

8. **CAOA Scholarship Committee Update:**

- a. Four applications
- b. BOD will vote to award two \$2500 scholarships at the BOD meeting on Jan. 28th

NEW BUSINESS

9. **Approval of New CAO A Mission Statement**

Background: On October 29th, 2025 the CAO A Board of Directors met for Retreat facilitated by Hilary Fletcher with Woolpert. This retreat was intended to review last year and make sure the organization is meeting the goals of the association and its members.

- a. **Proposed Mission Statement:** *As a trusted aviation resource, CAO A advocates for all Colorado airports while fostering collaboration and networking for its members.*
- b. Summary of the BOD retreat – PAGES 12-19

10. **New Business**

a. **2027 Spring Conferences**

i. 2027 Tentative Locations

- 1. Gunnison Airport
- 2. KGWS Sumers Airport & Rifle Airport– Glenwood Springs

ii. If you would like to apply for consideration for 2027 please apply at admin@coloradoairports.org

11. **Adoption of a current Bowditch and Cassel contract**

12. **Legislative White Paper**

Background: CAO A President, Vice President and Association manager will be taking the annual trip to Washington DC in March 2026. Attached is the prepared white paper for discussion points regarding state initiatives.

- a. Proposed White Paper – PAGES 20-21.

13. **Other New Business**

Open floor for additional topics or concerns

14. **Adjourn**

Colorado Airport Operators Association

Membership Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 19th, 2025
9:20 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.
Steamboat Grand Hotel

1. Call to Order and Attendance - Roll Call of BOD

President Dylan Heberlein called the meeting to order at 9:22am and took roll call for the Board

Board Members in Attendance: Cooper Anderson__X__, Jared Bass__X__, Mike Fronapfel__X__, Dylan Heberlein__X__, Steve Lee__X__, Alex McKean__X__, Greg Pedroza__X__, David Reid__X__, Tony Vicari__X__, Also in attendance: Erinn Hoban__X__

2. **Approval of Jan 29th, 2025 Minutes** – Greg Pedroza made a motion to approve the minutes from the Jan. 29th membership meeting. Alex McKean second that motion. Motion passes

3. Voting on new Board of Director members

Voting takes place among the membership to fill two open BOD positions.

A tie happened in the first round. Second round of voting results in Lauren Wiarada and Sydney Boyd filling the available positions.

4. Reports of Officers and Committees

- a. Financial Report
 - i. Current P&L for the 2024-2025 fiscal year is available.
 - ii. Current working budget is also available.
- b. Conference Committee
 - i. Spring conference update regarding 2025 numbers
 - ii. Survey to be emailed out after the conference.
 - iii. Announcement of the 2026 spring conference in Pueblo.
 - iv. Opportunity for communities to apply to host the 2027 spring conference
- c. Training Committee
 - i. Tony Vicari reviewed training topics from the last couple of years and thanked CDOT for their assistance and participation.
 - ii. Offering an ACE Operations course in Sept. with registration still available.
- d. Scholarship committee

- i.\$5000 budgeted again for 2 recipients
- ii.Application process on the CAO website.

5. **BOD Retreat**

Information to the membership regarding the background and intention for a Board of Directors retreat.

6. **Membership review and considerations for changes**

Review of membership structure was given to the membership with information about changes to that structure and the website in order to make the membership structure fairer to all members.

7. **Adjournment at 10:14**

Statement of Activity

Colorado Airport Operators Association

October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Income	
Grant	36,951.85
Membership Due	16,500.00
Sales	\$10,285.00
Exhibitor Sales	8,050.00
Spring Ticket Sales	85,790.00
Winter Ticket Sales	41,950.00
Total for Sales	\$146,075.00
Sponsorship	112,000.00
Total for Income	\$311,526.85
Gross Profit	\$311,526.85
Expenses	
Bank Charges	9,237.03
Conference Fees	162,016.91
Dues & Subscriptions	2,629.21
Insurance	1,783.00
Legal & Professional Fees	70,516.00
Meals and Entertainment	626.50
Promotional	553.63
Subcontractors	49,847.93
Training Expense	5,506.11
Total for Expenses	\$302,716.32
Net Operating Income	\$8,810.53
Other Income	
Interest Earned	18.06
Total for Other Income	\$18.06
Other Expenses	
Scholarship	5,000.00
Total for Other Expenses	\$5,000.00
Net Other Income	-\$4,981.94
Net Income	\$3,828.59

Projected Income	FY 2025	FY 2026
Grants	\$ 36,951.85	\$ 45,000.00
Membership dues	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 18,000.00
Exhibitor Sales	\$ 8,050.00	\$ 9,000.00
Spring Conference tickets	\$ 89,725.00	\$ 90,000.00
Winter Conference Tickets	\$ 42,300.00	\$ 45,000.00
Sponsorships	\$ 118,000.00	\$ 120,000.00
Actual	\$ 311,526.85	
Projected		\$ 327,000.00

Projected Expenses	FY 2025	FY 2026
Bank Charges	\$ 9,237.03	\$ 10,000.00
Conference Fees	\$ 162,016.91	\$ 170,000.00
Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 2,629.21	\$ 3,000.00
Insurance	\$ 1,783.00	\$ 2,000.00
AAAE - Training free	\$ 56,680.00	\$ 50,000.00
Taxes	\$ 1,836.00	\$ 3,000.00
B&C	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 16,000.00
Website - hosting	\$ 9,353.75	\$ 3,000.00
Meals & Entertainment	\$ 626.50	\$ 700.00
Training Meals	\$ 5,506.11	\$ 6,000.00
Promotional	\$ 553.63	\$ 2,000.00
Subcontractors	\$ 40,494.18	\$ 65,000.00
Scholarships	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Actual	\$ 307,716.32	
Projected		\$ 325,700.00

Internal Communications Plan: Colorado Airport Operators Association (CAOA)

Purpose

Create a consistent, transparent, and member-centered internal communication structure that:

- Aligns the Board, committees, and members
- Improves engagement and retention
- Reinforces CAOAs value as the central voice for Colorado airports
- Supports growth in membership, sponsorships, and participation

1. Internal Audiences

<u>Audience</u>	<u>Needs</u>	<u>Risk if Not Addressed</u>
Board of Directors	Strategic alignment, clarity on priorities, decision visibility	Disengagement, inconsistent direction
Airport Members	Timely updates, advocacy info, education, peer connection	Low participation, attrition
Corporate Members / Sponsors	Value visibility, ROI, touchpoints	Loss of sponsorship
Committees / Working Groups	Clear roles, timelines, follow-ups	Work stalls, burnout
Prospective Members (internal-adjacent)	Clear value proposition	Missed growth

2. Internal Communication Objectives

SMART Objectives

1. Increase member email engagement by 25% by Q4
2. Achieve monthly internal communication consistency (no gaps longer than 30 days)
3. Increase committee participation by 20% by year-end
4. Improve member-reported understanding of CAOAs value in annual survey

3. Core Internal Messaging Pillars

These messages should be reflected in every internal communication:

1. CAOA is Your Collective Voice
Advocacy, education, and statewide collaboration.
2. Membership Has Tangible Value
Training, networking, peer access, visibility.
3. Transparency & Trust
Members are informed early and often.
4. Colorado-Specific Leadership
Issues, funding, regulations, and opportunities unique to Colorado airports.

4. Internal Communication Channels & Use

Primary Channels

<u>Channel</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Owner</u>
Email (Constant Contact)	Official updates, calls-to-action	2× / month	Assoc. Manager
Board Brief (Email or PDF)	Board-only updates	Monthly	Assoc. Manager
Website (Members Section)	Central source of truth	Weekly updates	Assoc. Manager
Virtual Meetings (Zoom)	Engagement & alignment	Quarterly	Assoc. Manager
Conference Touchpoints	In-person reinforcement	Event-based	Assoc. Manager

Important Fix: Avoid generic subject lines like “Newsletter.” Use value-based headers (e.g., “*What Colorado Airports Need to Know This Month*”) to address the underperforming email titles identified in the audit

5. Internal Communication Cadence (Recommended)

Monthly

- Member Update Email

- Advocacy updates
- Funding or regulatory alerts
- Member spotlight
- Upcoming events / deadlines

Quarterly

- Board Update Brief
- Member Virtual Touchpoint
 - “State of Colorado Airports”
 - Peer discussion or guest speaker

Annually

- Member Survey
- Year-in-Review Report
- Board Retreat Messaging Reset

6. Message Framework by Audience

Board of Directors

- Strategic priorities
- Financial & sponsorship health
- Legislative landscape
- Membership trends

Airport Members

- “What this means for your airport”
- Funding, grants, and compliance
- Peer success stories
- Training opportunities

Corporate Members / Sponsors

- Visibility opportunities

- Engagement metrics
- Conference & sponsorship ROI
- Recognition moments

7. Governance & Accountability

<u>Role</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Assoc. Manager	Strategic tone & priorities
Executive Director	Message approval, delivery
Comms Committee Chair	Drafting, scheduling, analytics
Board Members	Content input & deadlines

8. Measurement & Evaluation

Track quarterly and review annually:

- Email open rate (target: 50%+)
- Click-through rate (target: 10%+)
- Event participation
- Committee engagement
- Membership retention & growth

Use these insights to refine cadence, tone, and content.

9. Immediate Next Steps (30-Day Action Plan)

1. Approve internal messaging pillars
2. Establish a 12-month communication calendar
3. Redesign email subject line strategy
4. Define Board vs. Member communication streams
5. Launch first “Member Value” spotlight

Final Thought

Internal communication is not about volume—it's about relevance. If CAO A communicates clearly, consistently, and with purpose, external credibility and growth will follow naturally.



**Colorado Airport Operators Association
Board Retreat Summary
October 29, 20205
Centennial Airport Conference Room**

Attendees:

Cooper Anderson	Steve Lee
Jared Bass	Greg Pedroza
Sydney Boyd	David Reid (virtual)
Michale Fronapfel	Tony Vicari
Dylan Heberlein	Lauren Wiarda
Erinn Hoban	Hilary Fletcher (facilitator)
Alex McKean	

Welcome and Opening Comments

Board President Dylan Heberlein welcomed participants to the Board’s retreat. Erinn stated her desire to get a clear sense of the Board’s desires and directions for the organization moving forward. Hilary briefly touched on ground rules for the retreat to ensure an open and full dialogue.

Year in Review

Attendees review the past 12 months and provided the following input.

What worked well?

- Record-breaking conference attendance
- Erinn and her structure and organizational skills
- Transitioning of the organization
- Incorporation of new ideas such as sponsorship for the winter conference
- Solid attendance at trainings
- Board interactions
- Addition of committees
- Involvement of younger generation as an organization
- Website with membership list and access
- Flexible Board – willingness to consider new items
- Current Board make-up/composition is reflective of membership

What did not work well?

- Small airport representation
- Chaotic year – big transition
- Legislative reception – not as impactful with less legislators in attendance
- Chocolate airplanes
- Not fully realized financial opportunities
- Organizational reach out to membership
- Board schedule of things to do; officer changes that need to be completed
- Unclear meeting schedule
- Vague By-Laws
- Lack of knowledge of CAO A among smaller GA airports
- Lack of internal communication among the Board and with members
- Not getting feedback from members
- Staying on top of membership

Vision Discussion

The attendees were asked to think about how they might describe CAO A five years from now. The following key words were identified.

- Forward-thinking
- Collaborative
- Representation of all airports
- Networking
- Communication hub
- Advocate
- Enrichment through training
- Fun
- Opportunity for knowledge and growth
- Professional development, leadership skills
- Value added
- Keeping Colorado airports at the forefront of the State
- Supportive
- Connectivity of airports
- Trusted resource
- Inclusive
- Local/state relationships

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Exercise

A SWOT exercise was conducted to categorize both internal actions and external influences that directly impact the organization. The items listed below were identified by the attendees.

Internal Strengths

- Conference networking
- Training and education
- Diverse Board
- Lobbying
- Partnership with CDOT and the ADO
- Membership numbers
- Representation across the state
- Membership attendance at conferences has increased
- Collaboration among airport consultants
- We don't take ourselves too seriously – are approachable
- Good financial standing
- Good buy-in with the Board to move forward
- Forward progression with staff, website
- Honest about what we need to work on
- Affordable membership price
- Enjoyable/fun conference

Internal Weaknesses

- Promoting airport to airport network
- Not reaching a demographic due to not having social media/branding presence
- Lack a full communication plan
 - Internal communication
 - External communication
- Lack full/year-round communication thread
- Need to bring national speakers to conferences
- Looking ahead on legislative issues and trends – we are reactionary
- Need to be proactive
- Focus/target organizational mission
- Vague By-Laws

- Lack of follow-through
- Lack of available resources
- Reliance on AAEE training
- Financial system and structure
- Lack of financial plan
- Still making a paradigm shift
- Board cycle
- Survey system
- By-Laws
- Board meeting commitment to be prepared and present (change meeting to be prior to conference)

External Opportunities

- Local and state politics – legislative initiatives
- Small airport membership
- Contractor membership
- Collaboration with contractors and consultants for training
- AAEE Hub – similar but lighter version state-wide
- Recognition awards
- Airport job shadowing
- Annual airport events (ex. Drills, etc.)
- Mentorship for new members, first conference attendees
- Social networking – meet up groups
- Elected officials, city leadership, Airport boards as a targeted audience
- CDOT relationship
- Connection with other state airport associations
- Ability to change conference agenda

External Threats

- Increasing conference costs
- Scale and size of conference reduces potential locations
- Conference planning workload
- Legislator attendance has decreased for winter conference
- Financial planning – lack of a 5-year plan
- Sponsorship reduction
- State/local/federal politics



- National economy
- Government shutdown

Prioritization

Participants were asked to review all the materials generated throughout the retreat and narrow and identify their top priorities. The following items were noted as priorities.

- Financial plan and system
- Communication plan
- Small airport membership
- Mentorship program
- Conference agenda
- Networking and collaboration

The group discussed the items with the intent to consolidate down to 2 to 3 initiatives. The discussion resulted in the following key initiatives.

- Financial Plan and System
- Communication Plan
 - Conference Agenda and Planning
- Networking and Collaboration
 - Small airport membership
 - Mentorship program

Strategic Initiatives

The following key action items/outcomes were identified for each of the initiatives.

- **Financial System**
 - Generate 5-year financial forecast with revenue projections
 - Develop an annual budget
 - Establish accounting controls to empower Manager with Controller oversight
 - Provide financial documentation
 - Develop financial policies/standards operating procedures
 - Evaluate lobbying firm agreement; set expectations
 - Conduct an audit
 - Finalize banking fees and signatories
- **Communication**
 - Promote CAO
 - Enhance networking opportunities

- Provide member access to other members
- Develop consistent communication
- Identify outreach efforts and schedule
- Expand communication tools
- Establish a Help Hub to facilitate membership exchange, especially for smaller GA airports
- Offer job postings for members
- Enhance member recruitment
- Establish a President's Message (newsletter)
- Provide Board with nametag pins
- Develop a Standard Operating Procedure for public comments and media requests
- Conference planning considerations
 - Evaluate regional conference effort (go-to-them concept) to help offset conference size issues
 - Develop mentorship program for first time participants to assist in networking and participation
 - Strengthen interactive conference sessions, make them a priority
 - Gage chocolate planes and delivering lunch to legislators for legislative reception
- **Membership**
 - Increase engagement of current members
 - Consider inclusion of members on committees
 - Expand membership with a focus on GA airports for conferences and training
 - Defined membership benefit plan for airports, consultants and contractors
 - Increase opportunities for GA airport collaboration
 - Expand scholarships
 - Promote airport events
 - Connect with partner organizations, interested parties and students

Sydney departed the meeting.

Mission Review

The following descriptors of the organization were identified by the group.

- Representation
- Collaboration
- Networking



- Advocate
- Trusted resource
- Promote aviation

Draft mission statement:

As a trusted aviation resource, CAO A advocates for all Colorado airports while fostering collaboration and networking for its members.

Organizational Discussion

The Board and Erinn discussed several key issues included the need to address access bank information, expanded committees that include general members, potential Bylaw changes, ongoing website improvements, and Board members terms. Board members identified the following leads for specific initiatives and associated work effort.

- Training – Tony Vicaro and Lauren Wiarda
- Financial System – Greg Pedroza and Tony Vicaro
- Communication – Sydney Boyd
- Legislative Committee – Executive Board
- Conference Committee – Alex McKean, Jarod Bass, Greg Pedroza

Board Working Agreements

The Board discussed what they would like from each other to work successfully as a board. The items are listed below.

- Read packet before Board meeting
- Communicate workload issues
- Ok to re-nudge on emails
- Identify deadlines with requests
- Provide 30-day advance notice of meetings
- Fully participate and provide support at conferences
- Erinn to provide a monthly status email
- Ask for help when needed
- Follow through or acknowledge need to defer
- Show up at meetings

Next Steps

The Board and Erinn discussed next steps, including completing the bank account transition as a priority, initiating monthly status emails. Hilary will provide a retreat summary for the Board's consideration.

The following prioritization of activities is recommended:

- Immediate (0-3 months)
 - Bank account transition
 - Monthly status email from Erinn
- Short Term (3-18 months)
 - Communication Plan
 - SOP for public comment
 - SOP for media contact
 - Membership Newsletter
 - Conference Plan
 - Planning checklist
 - SOP for sponsorships
 - SOP for scholarships
 - Financial Plan
 - SOP for financial operating thresholds
- Long Term (18-36 months)
 - Financial Plan
 - 5-year plan
 - Website enhancements
 - Help Hub
 - Airport event calendar
 - Mentorship program
 - Onboarding packet for Board members
 - Member Recruitment plan
 - GA airport focus



The retreat adjourned at 4:00pm.



LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS & REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT

The Colorado Airport Operators Association (CAOA) serves the common interests of the owners, operators, and users of the seventy-six public use airports located throughout the State of Colorado. CAOAs provides a unified voice for airport operators to State and Federal agencies, the General Assembly, and the Congress of the United States of America, on proposed or pending legislation and regulations. The airports that CAOAs represents would like to call to your attention the following legislative positions and requests, in no particular order.

Fully Fund FAA Programs

- Ensure full appropriations for the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024, including \$4 billion annually for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). Assure AIP can expand in 2029 to pace construction escalations.
- Advocate for Colorado airports to receive their fair share of federal funding.

Address Air Traffic Controller Shortages

- Support the Air Traffic Control Staffing Improvement Act to expedite hiring and training.
- Invest in modern training simulators to reduce certification time.

Adjust Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs)

- Support legislation to raise or remove the \$4.50 PFC cap, allowing airports to generate revenue for expansion and modernization.

Provide Funding for PFAS Transition

- Allocate federal grants to assist airports in complying with new environmental regulations phasing out PFAS-based firefighting foams.

Provide TSA Funding to Eliminate Airport Worker Screening, Exit Lane Staffing

- Allow TSA the funding to provide more staffing to address insider threats through expanded screening of workers in Small, Medium, Large, and Non-Hub airports, and to monitor exit lanes.

Expand Funding for Contract and Non-Contract Air Traffic Control Towers

- Provide funding to allow airports to either construct new or update dated control towers to enhance safety and efficiency of air traffic at busy airports that otherwise do not have the funding sources to do so.

Protect & Expand Essential Air Service (EAS) Funding

- Ensure continued funding to maintain commercial air service in rural Colorado communities.

Increase Funding for Regional & General Aviation Airports

- Boost Non-Primary Entitlement (NPE) funding to support smaller airports in infrastructure and maintenance projects.

Strengthen Aviation Workforce Development

- Expand funding for training programs to address shortages of pilots, mechanics, and airport personnel.

Enhance Cybersecurity Protections for Airports

- Support federal grants to improve cybersecurity resilience for airport infrastructure.

IMMEDIATE LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

- Sponsor or co-sponsor bills supporting aviation workforce development, PFC adjustments, and FAA appropriations.
- Engage with local airport leaders to understand funding priorities.
- Advocate for targeted earmarks to support Colorado airport infrastructure projects.
- Support legislative hearings to address air traffic control staffing shortages and aviation security.