

Hillsborough County Aviation Authority  
Special Board Meeting

Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.  
October 30, 2024

A Special Board Meeting was convened in the Boardroom, Level 4 of SkyCenter ONE, Tampa, Florida, on Wednesday, October 30, 2024.

Members present were Chairman Diehl, Gary Harrod, Robert Watkins, Commissioner Cohen and Mayor Castor.

Aviation Authority staff members present were CEO Joe Lopano, Scott Knight, Veronica Cintron, Elita McMillon, Michael Kamprath, Silvana Muro, Emily Nipps, Rob Porter, James Tarro and Kristopher Allen.

Chairman Diehl welcomed everyone to the Special Board Meeting of the Aviation Authority. He stated the focus of the Special Board Meeting is the selection of a new CEO. Chairman Diehl spoke of Mr. Lopano's tenure at the Authority and the legacy he will leave behind.

Assistant General Counsel Scott Knight asked if anyone would like to make a Public Comment. There were no Public Comments.

Chairman Diehl commented that the recommendation of the Finance Committee who met prior to the Special Board Meeting was to bring two candidates, Michael Stephens and John Tiliacos, forward to the full Board for CEO consideration.

Commissioner Cohen brought forth a motion to bring two candidates back in the next month to give a 10-minute presentation to the Board. This process would add some transparency to a divided Board and drive the Board toward a consensus to clarify the vote when it takes place.

Upon motion of Commissioner Cohen, seconded by Mayor Castor, Michael Stephens and John Tiliacos would be asked to make a presentation in front of the full Board at a mutually agreeable date ideally within 30 days or less. The presentation would last 10 minutes with a questions and discussion from the Board Members and a vote would follow. The motion failed with a 3 to 2 vote. Gary Harrod, Chairman Diehl and Robert Watkins were in opposition and voted Nay.

Chairman Diehl asked Scott Knight to discuss options on how the Board Members could vote.

Mr. Knight stated that there were 2 ways to vote, either by roll call vote in which he would call each Board Member individually and the Board Member would state their selection for CEO or by paper

ballot where each Board Member would circle the CEO candidate and sign the ballot. The ballots would be collected by Elita McMillon. Each vote would need to be read aloud.

Gary Harrod made a motion to vote by paper ballot and it was seconded by Mayor Castor. The motion passed in a 4 to 1 vote with Robert Watkins in opposition.

Mr. Watkins asked if he could change his vote on Commissioner Cohen's motion for a presentation by the candidates. Commissioner Cohen asked if Mr. Watkins could ask for the motion to be reconsidered.

Mr. Watkins made a motion to reconsider Commissioner Cohen's previous motion. The motion failed in a 3 to 2 vote. Gary Harrod, Commissioner Cohen and Mayor Castor were in opposition.

Paper ballots were distributed to the Board Members and collected. They were reviewed by Elita McMillon and Scott Knight. The results of the voting were as follows:

Commissioner Cohen voted for Christopher Minner  
Gary Harrod voted for Michael Stephens  
Mayor Castor voted for Michael Stephens  
Chairman Diehl voted for John Tiliacos  
Robert Watkins voted for John Tiliacos

Michael Bell stated that there was no majority. The Board could continue to deliberate and vote again or reconsider the idea to continue the process and invite two or more candidates to come and make a presentation.

Commissioner Cohen made a motion to invite the top two candidates, Michael Stephens and John Tiliacos, back to give a presentation, with 30 minute maximum and answer any questions. Then the Board would deliberate and vote. Mayor Castor seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by all Board Members present.

Michael Bell guided the Board through the presentation process. Mr. Watkins asked that the presentation by the candidates be free flowing with no guidance from Korn Ferry.

Mr. Watkins proposed that the presentations be made at the November 7, 2024 Board Meeting.

Mr. Knight replied that the Mayor would not be in attendance at that meeting and suggested that the meeting be a Special Board Meeting.

There was some discussion on when the Special Board Meeting could be held and the consensus was to hold it on Tuesday, November 12 at 9:00 am.

With no further business to be brought before the Board, Chairman Diehl adjourned the meeting.



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Arthur F. Diehl III, Chairman



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Jane Castor, Secretary