

37<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL AAAE/SOUTHEAST CHAPTER AAAE

# FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE

AMELIA ISLAND, FLORIDA • FEBRUARY 9–11, 2026



## AGENDA

*(Subject to Change)*

### Monday, February 9

12:30-5:30 p.m. **Conference Registration**

1-1:50 p.m. **AAAE Finance & Administration Committee Meeting**

*Included in CPE credit total*

Tara Summerlin, ACE (AAAE F&A Committee Chair)

Assistant Director of Airports,  
City of Oklahoma City

#### **Washington Update**

Justin Barkowski

Legislative and Regulatory Counsel  
AAAE

#### **Committee Discussion Session**

2-5 p.m. **Airport Finance 101**

*Included in CPE credit total*

**Objective:** To provide participants with a comprehensive overview of finance specific to airports.

**Description:** *This session will provide an overview of the regulatory and business framework for airport finance, including relevant federal policies; capital program funding sources and project eligibility; airport revenue bond financing; airline rates and charges methodologies; and airline and other key tenant agreements.*

Speakers:

Gisela Shanahan, Managing Director, Frasca & Associates, LLC

Nora Richardson, Director, Frasca & Associates, LLC

Matt Townsend, Director, Frasca & Associates, LLC

3-5 p.m. **Southeast Chapter AAAE Board Meeting**

5:30-6:30 p.m. **Welcome Reception**

*Sponsored by Newton and Associates, and Savannah International Airport*

## Tuesday, February 10

7 a.m.-5 p.m.

### Registration

7:15-8:15 a.m.

### Networking Breakfast

*Sponsored by Flash Parking*

8:15-8:30 a.m.

### Welcome and Opening Remarks

Holly Ackerman, Associate Vice President - Global Operations, AAAE

Cameron Sidor, C.M. A.C.E. (*Conference Committee Chair*), Business Development Manager, Birmingham (Ala.) Airport Authority

Tony Cugno, A.A.E.  
Chief Operating Officer  
Jacksonville Aviation Authority

8:30-9:45 a.m.

### General Session 1 - Industry Update

*Sponsored by Paradis Lagardère*

**Objective:** Equip attendees with actionable knowledge and strategies to navigate emerging challenges and capitalize on opportunities in the evolving aviation industry.

**Description:** *Join us for a session outlining the latest insights from industry experts on critical trends and developments impacting airports. This session will cover key issues shaping the future of the aviation industry.*

Moderator:

Matt Townsend  
Director  
Frasca & Associates LLC

Speaker:

Tom Cai  
Director  
Bank of America Securities, Inc.

Edward Shelswell-White  
Chief Vision and Customer Officer  
Signal Aviation

Jeffrey Lack (confirmed)  
Senior Director, USPF - Transportation  
Fitch Ratings

9:55-10:45 a.m.

### General Session 2 - Public Private Partnerships in Airport Development

**Objective:** Explore the opportunities, challenges, and best practices of leveraging public private partnerships (P3s) to advance airport infrastructure and operations.

**Description:** *Public private partnerships can play a significant role in meeting the growing capital and operational needs of airports. This session will examine how P3 structures are being applied in airport development today, from terminal modernization to concessions and beyond. Industry experts will discuss the financial, legal, and operational considerations that airports must weigh when pursuing P3s, as well as lessons learned from recent projects. Attendees will gain practical insights into when P3s make sense, how to structure successful agreements, and how to maximize value for both airports and their communities.*

Moderator: Cameron Sidor, C.M., ACE  
Business Development Director  
Birmingham Airport Authority

Speakers: Joshua Blum  
CEO  
Conrac Solutions

Gisela Shanahan  
Managing Director  
Frasca & Associates, LLC

Morven McCrindle  
Chief Commercial Officer  
JET Infrastructure

10:45-11:15 a.m. **Networking Break**  
*Sponsored by Florence (S.C.) Regional Airport*

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. **Concurrent Sessions**

**CS 1 - Preparing for External Audits**

**Objective:** Strengthen airport finance leaders' ability to streamline audit preparation, reduce risk, and ensure compliance through practical, repeatable processes they can apply immediately.

**Description:** *External audits are a critical component of maintaining financial integrity and transparency. This session will walk through practical steps for preparing effectively, from organizing documentation and coordinating with auditors to addressing common challenges and findings. Attendees will learn how to build stronger internal processes that not only support a smooth audit but also enhance long-term financial management and accountability.*

Moderator: Pam Hill, CPA  
Partner  
Plante Moran

Speakers: Jose Lopez  
Director of Accounting  
Jacksonville Aviation Authority

Emily Lesnau, CPA  
Assurance Manager  
Plante Moran

## **CS 2 - Strategic Airport Marketing and Public Outreach**

**Objective:** Highlight effective strategies for engaging communities, stakeholders, and travelers through impactful marketing and outreach efforts.

**Description:** *Airports of all sizes face the challenge of strengthening their brand, connecting with their communities, and communicating effectively with the traveling public. This panel will showcase innovative approaches to airport marketing and public outreach from large hubs to GA airports, emphasizing both traditional and digital strategies. Hear from marketing leaders on how to build trust, manage messaging during times of change, and create campaigns that resonate with diverse audiences. Attendees will leave with practical ideas to enhance visibility, promote their airport's value, and foster stronger community support.*

Moderator: Megan McLellan, C.M., MBAA  
Strategic Funding Manager  
Garver

Speakers: Ken Warriner  
Senior Director, Finance and Administration  
Naples Airport Authority

Greg Willis  
Marketing and Public Relations Manager  
Jacksonville Aviation Authority

12:30-2 p.m. **Lunch with presentation**  
*Sponsored by Plante Moran*

*AAAE ACT Finance Task Force: Capital Investment Program Planning and Financial Management at Airports*

**Objective:** Participants will gain an understanding of key practices and financial considerations involved in planning and managing airport capital improvement programs.

**Description:** *This session introduces selected findings from the ACT Finance Task Force report on Capital Improvement Program planning and management (issued June 2024). Speakers, who participated as authors of the report, will provide an overview of how airport finance leaders approach CIP governance, project scoping, prioritization, and financial oversight. The presentation will touch on common financing considerations, affordability metrics, and stakeholder roles relevant to capital planning decisions.*

Introduction: Holly Ackerman  
Associate Vice President, Global Operations  
AAAE

Speakers: Guy Nagahama  
Managing Director  
Ramirez & Co., Inc.

Ira Smelkinson  
Managing Director  
Loop Capital

2-2:50 p.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

**CS 3 - Unlocking Airport Revenue: Business Development and Real Estate Strategies**

**Objective:** Explore innovative approaches to diversifying and maximizing airport revenue through business development and real estate initiatives.

**Description:** *As airports look beyond traditional aeronautical revenues, opportunities in commercial development, concessions, land use, and real estate partnerships have become increasingly important. This session will examine strategies for identifying and pursuing new revenue streams, structuring successful agreements, and balancing long-term financial goals with community needs. Industry experts will share lessons learned, emerging trends, and practical tools to help airports of all sizes strengthen their business development and real estate portfolios.*

Moderator: Gisela Shanahan  
Managing Director  
Frasca & Associates, LLC

Jay Cunio  
Chief Development Officer  
Jacksonville Aviation Authority

Jay Cassens, Vice President  
Aviation Real Estate & Commercial Properties  
Orlando International Airport & Orlando Executive Airport

**CS 4 - Best Practices in Airport Budgeting and Forecasting**

**Objective:** Share proven methods and innovative tools for building accurate, flexible, and transparent airport budgets and forecasts.

**Description:** *Effective budgeting and forecasting are critical for navigating uncertainty, aligning resources with strategic priorities, and ensuring long-term financial health. This session will highlight best practices airports are using to improve accuracy, enhance collaboration across departments, and incorporate scenario planning into their financial models. Attendees will gain insights into tools, techniques, and real-world examples that can strengthen their airport's budgeting and forecasting*

*processes, whether managing steady operations or responding to unexpected challenges.*

Moderator: James Thomas  
Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director  
Montgomery Airport Authority

Speakers: Kristen Deuben, C.M., CPA  
Vice President, Deputy Chief Financial Officer  
Nashville International Airport

Matt Ruffa  
Associate Vice President  
Landrum & Brown

2:55-3:45 p.m.

**General Session 3 - Airport Capital Planning: Building for the Future**

**Objective:** Provide insights into effective capital planning strategies that balance operational needs, financial realities, and long-term growth.

**Description:** *With infrastructure demands increasing and funding sources often constrained, airports must carefully plan and prioritize capital projects to meet both current and future needs. This session will explore how airports of different sizes approach capital planning, from aligning projects with strategic goals to securing funding and managing stakeholder expectations. Experts will share best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches to ensuring that capital planning supports sustainable growth, operational efficiency, and financial stability.*

Moderator: Brian Drake  
Assistant Vice President  
Unison Consulting

Speakers: Eleni Elling, A.A.E.  
Airport Director - Treasury  
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

Toni Broom, C.M.  
Deputy Director, Finance & Administration  
Rapid City Regional Airport

Sheneice Hughes, M.A.P., C.M.  
Deputy Director - Airport Finance, People & Culture  
Dallas Love Field

3:45-4:15 p.m.

**Networking Break**  
*Sponsored by Garver*

4:15-5:30 p.m.

**General Session 4 - Beyond the Basics: Navigating Today's Bond Market**

**Objective:** Provide airport finance leaders with practical strategies to structure, time, and market bond deals in a shifting environment, so they can manage risk effectively and capture new financing opportunities.

**Description:** *Bond financing plays a critical role in funding airport capital projects, yet the details of structuring, issuing, and managing bonds can often feel complex and daunting. This session takes a creative approach by turning bond knowledge into a lively game-show experience. Three airport volunteers will team up to answer questions that cover essential topics such as financing structures, timing, regulatory requirements, investor relations, and common pitfalls. Along the way, attendees will gain valuable insights into the mechanics of bond issuance while enjoying a dynamic and engaging session.*

Facilitators:

Eleni Elling, A.A.E.  
Airport Director - Treasury  
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

Matt Townsend  
Director  
Frasca & Associates LLC

6-9 p.m.

**Evening Event**

*Sponsored by Jacksonville International Airport*

**Wednesday, February 11**

8-8:30 a.m.

**Breakfast with Exhibitors**

*Sponsored by Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport and Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport*

8:30-9:45 a.m.

**General Session 5 - FAA Update**

*Sponsored by Cherry Bekaert*

**Objective:** Provide airports with the most up-to-date information on FAA priorities, funding opportunities, and regulatory initiatives in the context of recent legislative and policy actions in Washington, D.C.

**Description:** *With FAA reauthorization shaping the agency's direction and federal policymakers focused on aviation's future, staying informed has never been more important. In this session, FAA officials will share the latest updates on funding programs, regulatory changes, and key initiatives impacting airports nationwide. Attendees will gain practical insights into how federal decisions in Washington influence local operations, capital planning, and compliance, equipping them to anticipate challenges and leverage opportunities for their airports.*

Moderator:

Barry Molar  
Director  
Unison Consulting

Speaker: Jesse Carriger  
Manager - Infrastructure Branch, Office of Airports  
U.S. Federal Aviation Administration

9:55-10:45 a.m.

**Concurrent Sessions**

**CS 5 – Emergency Planning: Unexpected Decision Making (Jacksonville Aviation Authority Case Study)**

**Objective:** Learn how airport organizations can plan for and manage financial, operational, and compliance challenges during emergency situations, including making time-critical decisions when standard controls, approvals, and budgeting processes are disrupted.

**Description:** *Using a real-world case study from the Jacksonville Aviation Authority, this session examines how airports prepare for emergencies and respond when unforeseen events require rapid financial and operational decision making. Participants will explore how leaders assess risk, balance financial controls with operational continuity, and coordinate across departments and external partners when established procedures are insufficient. The discussion will highlight lessons learned related to governance, compliance, and accountability during crisis response and recovery.*

Moderator: Richard Rushing, A.A.E.  
Director of Operations  
Savannah Airport Commission

Speakers: Terry Dlugos  
Vice President of Operations  
Jacksonville Aviation Authority

Tony Cugno, A.A.E.  
Chief Operating Officer  
Jacksonville Aviation Authority

Devin Reed  
Chief Compliance Officer  
Jacksonville Aviation Authority

**CS 6 – Adapting HR for a Changing Aviation Industry**

**Objective:** Explore how airports can modernize HR practices to address workforce challenges, strengthen organizational culture, and enhance employee engagement.

**Description:** *Airports are navigating a rapidly shifting HR landscape shaped by evolving employee expectations, competitive labor markets, and the integration of new technologies. This session will focus on the broader HR function—examining strategies for attracting and retaining staff, adapting policies to support flexibility, advancing diversity and inclusion, and leveraging technology to streamline workforce management. Attendees will gain actionable insights on how to update HR practices to build a resilient, engaged workforce that supports airport operations and growth.*

Moderator: James Thomas  
Assistant to the Executive Director  
Montgomery Regional Airport

Speakers: Krystel Davis, MBA, SHRM-CP  
Deputy General Manager-Admin & People Strategy  
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

Beth Crites, SPHR, SHRM-CP  
Human Resource Manager  
Punta Gorda Airport (PGD)

10:45-11:15 a.m. Networking Break with Exhibitors  
*Sponsored by Talbert & Bright*

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. **General Session 6 – Airport and Airline Roundtable**  
**Objective:** Facilitate an open dialogue between airport CFOs and airline financial leaders on the challenges and opportunities shaping the aviation industry’s financial future.

**Description:** *Financial leaders from both airports and airlines face complex and interconnected challenges—from managing costs and capital planning to navigating regulatory requirements and evolving market dynamics. This interactive roundtable will bring together CFOs from airports and airlines to share perspectives on key financial issues, explore areas of alignment and tension, and discuss strategies for building sustainable partnerships. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of how financial decision-makers across the industry are approaching today’s pressures and preparing for long-term resilience.*

Moderator: Andrea Goodpasture  
Financial/Business Planning Leader  
Garver

Speaker: Andrew Rountree  
Senior Vice President for Finance and CFO  
Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

Jose Lopez  
Director of Finance  
Jacksonville Airport Authority

Monica Del Rio  
Director - Airport Affairs  
Southwest Airlines

Angeles Castro  
Managing Director, Airport Affairs, Corporate Real Estate  
American Airlines

12:30-2 p.m.

### **Luncheon**

*Sponsored by Richmond International Airport*

2-3:15 p.m.

### **Concurrent Sessions**

#### **CS 7 - Reporting Sustainability: ESG Strategies for Airports**

**Objective:** Help airport leaders understand the role of ESG reporting in advancing sustainability initiatives, meeting stakeholder expectations, and strengthening financial and community trust.

**Description:** *As sustainability becomes a top priority for the aviation industry, airports are increasingly expected to measure, track, and communicate their environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance. This session will examine how airports are developing ESG frameworks, gathering meaningful data, and reporting progress to regulators, investors, airlines, and local communities. Experts will share lessons learned, highlight emerging standards, and explore how effective ESG reporting can support funding opportunities, operational improvements, and long-term resilience.*

Moderator:

Eleni Elling, A.A.E.  
Airport Director - Treasury  
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

Speakers:

Melissa Sabatine  
CEO  
Capital Runway Advisory

Katherine Shabb  
Airport Sustainability Program Manager  
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

#### **CS 8 - From Passenger Experience to Airport Profitability**

**Objective:** Equip finance and administration leaders to actively shape operational and customer service decisions in order to protect revenue, retain passengers, and manage risk more effectively.

**Description:** *This session will explore the critical connections between day-to-day operational decisions and an airport's financial health. Using real-world examples such as deicing procedures that protect on-time performance and rental car coordination that supports arriving passengers, speakers will demonstrate how finance and administration professionals can add value by engaging beyond budgets and audits. Attendees will gain practical insights on collaborating with operations and customer service teams to improve reliability, enhance the passenger experience, and support informed budgeting, staffing, and cost-benefit analysis.*

Moderator:

Elliott Black, C.M.  
Director of Finance & Administration  
Capital Region Airport Authority

Speakers: Shawn Schroeder, A.A.E.  
Director, Properties & Facilities  
Savannah Airport Commission

Rhona DiCamillo  
Principal  
DKMG Consulting

Tara Summerlin, ACE, C.M.  
Assistant Director of Airports  
Oklahoma City Airport Trust

3:15-3:45 p.m. Networking Break with Exhibitors  
*Sponsored by Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport*

3:45-4:15 p.m. **Breakout Discussions**  
**Objective:** Facilitate focused, collaborative discussions among industry professionals to share insights, address challenges, and explore actionable solutions

**Table 1 - Administrative Issues**

*This discussion will focus on key administrative challenges and strategies in airport operations, including staffing, regulatory compliance, and effective management practices.*

Table Lead: Sheneice Hughes, M.A.P., C.M.  
Deputy Director - Airport Finance, People & Culture  
Dallas Love Field

**Table 2 - Current Issues**

*This table will explore pressing issues impacting airports today. Topics may include emerging trends, operational challenges, and opportunities for innovation in the aviation industry.*

Table Lead: Tara Summerlin, ACE, C.M.  
Assistant Director of Airports  
Oklahoma City Airport Trust

**Table 3 - Finance and Accounting**

*This conversation will delve into finance and accounting topics, including GASB updates, budgeting, financial reporting, cost management, and best practices for ensuring fiscal responsibility in airport operations.*

Table Lead: Jim Holman  
Director, CFO Advisory  
Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

4:15-4:30 p.m. **Closing Remarks**

Cameron Sidor, C.M., A.C.E. (*Conference Committee Chair*), Business Development Manager, Birmingham (Ala.) Airport Authority