

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019**

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SENATE BILL 795

Short Title: Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission. (Local)

Sponsors: Senator McInnis (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

May 19, 2020

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT RENAMING THE LAURINBURG-MAXTON AIRPORT COMMISSION AS THE
2 SOUTHEAST REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY, INCREASING THE
3 MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY'S BOARD, AND CLARIFYING THE
4 AUTHORITY'S POWERS AND DUTIES.
5

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** Commission Continued as Authority; Renamed. – The
8 Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission is hereby renamed the Southeast Regional Airport
9 Authority (hereinafter "Authority"). The Authority shall continue to be a body both corporate
10 and politic, having the powers and jurisdiction hereinafter enumerated and such other and
11 additional powers as shall be conferred upon it by general law and future acts of the General
12 Assembly. The name of the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport shall remain unchanged.

13 **SECTION 2.(a)** Members; Vacancies; Removal. – The Authority shall consist of the
14 following members:

- 15 (1) Three registered voters of the City of Laurinburg appointed by the Mayor of
16 the City of Laurinburg.
- 17 (2) One registered voter of the Town of Maxton appointed by the Mayor of the
18 Town of Maxton.
- 19 (3) Three registered voters of Scotland County appointed by the Chair of the
20 Board of Commissioners of Scotland County.
- 21 (4) The Scotland County Economic Development Director, who shall serve as an
22 ex officio nonvoting member.

23 **SECTION 2.(b)** Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, members shall
24 serve for a term of two years, beginning on January 1, and the terms shall be staggered. Members
25 may serve no more than two successive terms. An initial term described in subsection (c) of this
26 section shall be counted when determining the number of successive terms served. A member
27 who has served two successive terms may not be reappointed to the Authority except after a lapse
28 of two years following the most recent term served. In the event a member is appointed to fill an
29 unexpired term, and at least one year of the unexpired term remains to be served, the appointment
30 shall be counted in determining the number of successive terms served. Upon the expiration of a
31 member's term, the member may continue to serve until a successor has been appointed, but in
32 no case shall the member serve for more than 60 days beyond the end of the member's term. Any
33 vacancy occurring among the membership of the Authority shall be filled within 60 days after
34 notice thereof by the appointment of a successor by the mayor or chair who made the original
35 appointment. The successor member shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term. Each
36 member shall take and subscribe before the clerk of the town or county an oath of office, and the



1 oath shall be filed in the office of the clerk. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to
2 the Scotland County Economic Development Director who shall not be limited to the number of
3 terms he or she may serve.

4 **SECTION 2.(c)** Initial member of the Authority shall be appointed as follows:

- 5 (1) Three registered voters of the City of Laurinburg appointed by the Mayor of
6 the City, two of whom shall serve for a term of one year and one of whom
7 shall serve for a term of two years.
- 8 (2) One registered voter of the Town of Maxton appointed by the Mayor of the
9 Town, who shall serve for a term of two years.
- 10 (3) Three registered voters of Scotland County appointed by the Chair of the
11 Board of Commissioners, one of whom shall serve for a term of one year and
12 two of whom shall serve for a term of two years.
- 13 (4) The Scotland County Economic Development Director, who shall serve as an
14 ex officio nonvoting member.

15 **SECTION 2.(d)** A member may be suspended or removed from office by the
16 appointing mayor or chair for (i) cause affecting the member's duties and responsibilities as a
17 member of the Authority, (ii) misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance in office, (iii) conduct
18 tending to undermine any decisions of the Authority, or (iv) conduct exposing the Authority to
19 liability for damages. Except for malfeasance, members shall not be personally liable, in any
20 manner, for their acts or omissions as members of the Authority.

21 **SECTION 2.(e)** The members of the Authority shall elect annually from their
22 membership a chair, vice-chair, and secretary, and may elect any other officers they deem
23 appropriate to provide for the efficient administration of the Authority's affairs.

24 **SECTION 3. Meetings; Compensation.** – (a) Members shall constitute the governing
25 board of the Authority and may, among other things and from time to time, adopt suitable bylaws
26 not inconsistent with the provisions of this act. Each member, including the chair, shall have one
27 vote. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum and, unless otherwise provided in this
28 act, all actions of the Authority shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present
29 and voting in a duly called meeting at which a quorum is present. The Authority shall hold
30 meetings at least monthly at such times and places as it, from time to time, may designate and at
31 such other times on the call of the chair or a majority of the members of the Authority. All
32 meetings and closed sessions of the Authority shall be conducted in accordance with Article 33C
33 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.

34 (b) Members shall receive no compensation for serving on the Authority; however,
35 members shall be reimbursed for their actual traveling expenses incurred when conducting
36 business outside Scotland County on behalf of the Authority.

37 **SECTION 4. Powers; Duties.** – The Authority shall have the following powers and
38 duties:

- 39 (1) To purchase, acquire, establish, construct, own, control, lease, equip, improve,
40 maintain, operate, and regulate airports and landing fields for the use of
41 airplanes and other aircraft within the limits of Scotland County and for this
42 purpose to purchase, improve, own, hold, lease, or operate real or personal
43 property. The Authority may exercise these powers alone or in conjunction
44 with the City of Laurinburg, Town of Maxton, or Scotland County.
- 45 (2) To make contracts and hold any personal property necessary for the exercise
46 of the powers of the Authority, and to acquire by purchase, lease, or otherwise
47 any existing lease, leasehold right, or other interest in any existing airport
48 located in Scotland County.
- 49 (3) To sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any property, real or personal, belonging
50 to the Authority, according to the procedures provided in Article 12 of Chapter
51 160A of the General Statutes, but no sale of real property shall be made

- 1 without the approval of the City of Laurinburg City Council, Town of Maxton
2 Town Council, and Scotland County Board of Commissioners.
- 3 (4) To make all reasonable rules and regulations it deems necessary for the proper
4 maintenance, use, operation, and control of the airport and to provide penalties
5 for the violation of these rules and regulations; provided, the rules and
6 regulations and schedules of fees are not in conflict with the laws of North
7 Carolina and the regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration. The
8 Authority may administer and enforce any airport zoning regulations adopted
9 by the City of Laurinburg, Town of Maxton, or Scotland County.
- 10 (5) To operate, own, lease, sublease, control, regulate, and/or grant to others the
11 right to operate on any airport premises owned, operated, or controlled by the
12 Authority, general aviation terminal and fixed base operations, aircraft deicing
13 equipments and systems, restaurants, snack bars and vending machines, food
14 and beverage dispensing outlets, rental car services, catering services, novelty
15 shops, insurance sales, advertising media, merchandise outlets, motels, hotels,
16 barber shops, automobile parking and storage facilities, automobile service
17 stations, garage service facilities, motion picture shows, personal service
18 establishments, and/or all other types of facilities, activities, and enterprises
19 as may be directly or indirectly related to the maintenance and/or furnishing
20 of public commercial service and/or general aviation airport facilities.
- 21 (6) To charge and collect reasonable and adequate fees and rents for the use of
22 airport property or for services rendered in the operation of the airport.
- 23 (7) To purchase any insurance that the Federal Aviation Administration or the
24 Authority shall deem necessary. The Authority shall be responsible for any
25 and all insurance claims or liabilities.
- 26 (8) To deposit or invest and reinvest any of its funds as provided by the Local
27 Government Finance Act, as it may be amended from time to time, for the
28 deposit or investment of Authority funds.
- 29 (9) Subject to the limitations set out in this act, to have all the same power and
30 authority granted to cities and counties pursuant to Chapter 63 of the General
31 Statutes.
- 32 (10) To contract with and accept grants from the Federal Aviation Administration,
33 the State of North Carolina, or any of the agencies or representatives of either
34 of said governmental bodies relating to the purchase of land and air easements
35 and to the grading, constructing, equipping, improving, maintaining, or
36 operating of an airport or its facilities or both.
- 37 (11) To acquire from the City of Laurinburg, Town of Maxton, and Scotland
38 County, by agreement with the municipalities and county, and the
39 municipalities and county may grant and convey, either by gift or for such
40 consideration as the municipalities and county may deem wise, any real or
41 personal property which it now owns or may hereafter acquire, including
42 nontax monies, and which may be necessary for the construction, operation,
43 and maintenance of any airport located in the county.
- 44 (12) To acquire private property needed by the Authority for any airport, landing
45 field, or as facilities of an airport or landing field by gift or devise, by private
46 purchase, or by the exercise of eminent domain pursuant to Chapter 40A of
47 the General Statutes.
- 48 (13) To employ any agents, engineers, attorneys, and other persons whose services
49 may be deemed by the Authority to be necessary and useful in carrying out
50 the provisions of this act.
- 51 (14) To have a corporate seal, which may be altered at will.

- 1 (15) To purchase real and personal property.
2 (16) To sue and be sued in the name of the Authority.
3 (17) To issue bonds pursuant to Article 5 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes.
4 (18) To purchase any of the Authority's outstanding bonds or notes.

5 **SECTION 5.** Taxes; License Fees. – The Authority shall possess the same
6 exemptions in respect to payment of taxes and license fees and be eligible for sales and use tax
7 refunds to the same extent as provided for municipal corporations by the laws of the State of
8 North Carolina.

9 **SECTION 6.** Airport Property. – All right, title, and interest of the
10 Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission in and to the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport property and
11 facilities and all other property held or owned by the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission,
12 real or personal, tangible or intangible, including all cash and cash equivalents and checking,
13 investment, and demand deposit bank accounts held by the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport
14 Commission pertaining to or generated from revenues of the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport, shall
15 hereby be vested in the Southeast Regional Airport Authority as a matter of law when this act
16 becomes law, and no action by the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission or the Southeast
17 Regional Airport Authority shall be necessary to effect any change in any right, title, and interest
18 in and to the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport property and facilities and other property described in
19 this section. Any lands acquired, owned, controlled, or occupied by the Authority shall be, and
20 are declared to be acquired, owned, controlled, and occupied for a public purpose.

21 **SECTION 7.** Annual Report. – The Authority shall make an annual report to the
22 Laurinburg City Council, Maxton Town Council, and the Scotland County Board of
23 Commissioners setting forth in detail the operations and transactions conducted by it pursuant to
24 this act. The Authority shall not have the power to pledge the credit of the City of Laurinburg,
25 Town of Maxton, or Scotland County, or any subdivision thereof, or to impose any obligation on
26 the City of Laurinburg, Town of Maxton, or Scotland County, or any of their subdivisions, except
27 when that power is expressly granted by general law.

28 **SECTION 8.** Authority to Operate Airports. – Subject to the limitations set out in
29 this act, all rights and powers given and granted to counties or municipalities by general law,
30 which may now be in effect or enacted in the future relating to the development, regulation, and
31 control of municipal airports and the regulation of aircraft are vested in the Authority. The City
32 of Laurinburg, Town of Maxton, or Scotland County may delegate their powers under these acts
33 to the Authority, and the Authority shall have concurrent rights with the municipalities and
34 county to control, regulate, and provide for the development of aviation in Scotland County.

35 **SECTION 9.** Funds. – The City of Laurinburg City Council, Town of Maxton Town
36 Council, or Scotland County Board of Commissioners may appropriate funds derived from any
37 source, including ad valorem taxes, to carry out the provisions of this act in any proportion or
38 upon any basis as may be determined by the City of Laurinburg City Council, Town of Maxton
39 Town Council, or Scotland County Board of Commissioners. The Authority may expend funds
40 appropriated by the City of Laurinburg, Town of Maxton, or Scotland County for joint airport
41 purposes and may pledge the credit of the Authority to the extent of the appropriated funds.

42 **SECTION 10.** Severability. – If any one or more sections, clauses, sentences, or
43 parts of this act shall be adjudged invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate
44 the remaining provisions thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the specific provisions
45 held invalid, and the inapplicability or invalidity of any section, clause, sentence, or part of this
46 act in one or more instances or circumstances shall not be taken to affect or prejudice in any way
47 its applicability or validity in any other instance.

48 **SECTION 11.** The terms of the current members of the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport
49 Commission shall expire on December 31, 2020. Initial members of the Southeast Regional
50 Airport Authority, as enacted in Section 1 of this act, shall be appointed as provided in Section
51 2(c) of this act, and the terms of the initial members shall begin January 1, 2021.

1 **SECTION 12.** The following acts are hereby repealed: Chapter 533 of the Session
2 Laws of 1947, Chapter 641 of the Session Laws of 1953, Chapter 1210 of the Session Laws of
3 1957, Chapter 36 of the Session Laws of 1961, Chapter 1166 of the Session Laws of 1977, and
4 Section 10 of Chapter 414 of the Session Laws of 1993.

5 **SECTION 13.** This act is effective when it becomes law.