



Media Release

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Melinda Crawford, CEO at CHO Airport, announces her retirement.

(Charlottesville, VA) – After 10 years of serving as the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport Authority (CHO Airport), Chief Executive Officer Melinda Crawford announced that she will retire effective August 31, 2023.

During her tenure, Mrs. Crawford has guided the Airport through numerous industry challenges while maintaining CHO's self-supporting status as a political subdivision that does not use local tax revenues. Mrs. Crawford has also overseen more than \$75 million in airport improvement projects and equipment acquisitions. These investments have improved the operational efficiency of the Airport. The major projects completed under her leadership include completing the Runway21 Extension project, which extended the Airport's sole runway, and the extensive airfield pavement project that rehabilitated all the taxiways and the runway on the Airport. She oversaw numerous other airport enhancements, such as a terminal expansion project, an air-carrier ramp expansion project, multiple parking expansion projects, a sustainability project to replace all airfield lighting/signage with LED technology, and many projects to enhance customer convenience. The Virginia Department of Aviation recognized her leadership during these projects and her outstanding achievements while managing CHO Airport by presenting her with the "Virginia Airport Manager of the Year 2022" award in August 2022.

In addition to serving in her leadership role at CHO, Mrs. Crawford serves as the President of the Virginia Airport Operators Council, an organization that represents airports throughout the Commonwealth. She also serves as the Chair for the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development (CVPED), the regional economic development organization that combines the expertise and resources of the City of Charlottesville and the Counties of Albemarle, Culpeper, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, and Orange, and local institutions of higher education including the University of Virginia, Germanna Community College, and Piedmont Virginia Community College, and about 65 private sector companies.

"My time as CEO of CHO has been extremely rewarding," Mrs. Crawford said. "And I will always remain grateful to the Authority's Board for its leadership and support. I have been honored and privileged to lead CHO through the pandemic, and other industry changes over the last ten years, but my greatest accomplishment is creating a strong employee team that strives each day to make CHO a great "first impression" for those visiting our community."

"Melinda's main priority has always been providing a welcoming, safe, and convenient environment for her passengers," stated Donald Long, Chairman of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport Authority. "Recognizing the importance of the Airport as a gateway to the community, her focus has also been on ensuring that CHO strives to be an excellent reflection of our region. Melinda is also well respected throughout the national airport leadership community. We will miss her at CHO, but she has prepared the Airport and her team to continue her success into the future."

As Melinda's retirement moves closer, she will assist the Authority's Board members with the transition as they explore options for the future leadership of CHO. The Authority will consider the appropriate process for selecting her successor at its next meeting.

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