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Gary / Chicago International Airport Authority Announces New Authority Secretary

Tom Collins, Jr Elected by Vote of Authority During September Meeting

(Gary, IN – September 16th, 2025) – The September meeting of the [Gary / Chicago International Airport \(GCIA\)](#) Authority saw it formally elect sitting Authority Commissioner Tom Collins, Jr to the role of Authority Secretary. Mr. Collins was appointed to the 7-member GCIA Authority in 2021 to serve a 4-year term as the Porter County appointee, and was elected to fill a recent vacancy for the Authority Secretary.

The GCIA Authority serves as the decision-making body of the Chicago region's premier mid-sized airport and has oversight on all GCIA policies, operations and its budget. The Authority commissioners are appointed to 4-year terms by an intra-governmental agreement, with the Authority Chairman appointed by the Governor of Indiana, four (4) commissioners appointed by the Mayor of the City of Gary and a commissioner appointed by Lake and Porter Counties, respectively.

GCIA has seen significant growth over the past decade, including the 2015 expansion of the airport's main runway to nearly 9,000 feet, making it the region's second longest after O'Hare International Airport (ORD). The runway expansion allows GCIA to service larger and heavier aircraft, up to and including a 777, one of the largest planes operating globally. GCIA also opened its premier U.S. Customs and Border Protection Facility in late 2018, allowing international travelers to frequent GCIA without first needing to clear customs elsewhere.

In 2020, GCIA began cargo service operations via the UPS, who signed a long-term lease agreement. Cargo service operations have quickly scaled, and GCIA now ranks 3rd in the State of Indiana on its freight volume, with further growth anticipated in coming years.

In 2022, GCIA received formal FAA approvals for its Master Plan, a document that will guide the next several decades of airport development and growth. In late 2023, GCIA announced the acquisition of the Griffith-Merrillville Airport, with this now providing additional operations capacity for GCIA and making it one of three (3) aviation systems in the State of Indiana.

2024 saw multiple milestones reached, including unveiling its new website, breaking ground on a [new \\$12 million, 47,000 square foot aviation hangar](#) as well as breaking ground on ["Phase 1" of a planned \\$67 million cargo services infrastructure investment](#) that will boost its growing cargo sector. This effort coincided with the [airport agreeing to a long-term extension with UPS](#), further enlarging the airports cargo capacity. The year also saw the [airport awarded a \\$1.7 million Federal Aviation Administration \(FAA\) grant](#) to design and engineer a new, state-of-the-art airport traffic control tower.

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