

Naples Airport Authority Board Candidates 2026

By Sandy Parker | Sparker's Soapbox | Published 2026-09-25

The Nov. 3, 2026, election will be the first time Collier County voters elect any of the Naples Airport Authority's five board members. A state law enacted earlier this year shifted the Naples Municipal Airport board from one that is appointed by the Naples City Council to one that is elected in a countywide election. Three members, designated as seats 1, 2, and 3, must be residents of the City of Naples, and two members, designated as seats 4 and 5, must be residents of Collier County outside of the municipal boundaries of the City. Members elected in 2026 to odd-numbered seats will serve a four-year term; those elected to even-numbered seats will serve a two-year term. After that, elections will be held to replace members when their terms expire, for four-year terms. ([CS/HB 4005](#))

Only one candidate qualified for each of seats 1 ([Richard Rupert](#)), 2 ([Michelle Arnold](#)) and 3 ([Ralph Alberto](#)), so each is considered elected. Two candidates are competing for Seat 4, and five are competing for Seat 5. The race is nonpartisan; all registered Collier County voters may vote for one candidate per seat.

In this post, I summarize the backgrounds and stated priorities of the seven candidates, along with their endorsements, recent news coverage, and campaign finance data, to help Collier County voters prepare to cast their ballots. I also include links where you can research each candidate further, watch recordings of candidate interviews, and read their responses to my candidate questionnaire.

Seat 4

- [John Goede](#)
- [Rick Mellon](#)

Seat 5

- [Don Antonacchio](#)
- [Jason Brooke](#)
- [David MacGregor](#)
- [Jason Schappert](#)
- [Keith West](#)

Seat 4

John Goede

John Goede, whose full name is John Creighton Goede, is a Naples attorney and co-founder and shareholder of Goede, DeBoest & Cross, a Naples real estate, estate planning, and corporate law firm, where he has practiced since 1998. He earned a B.S. from the University of Florida in 1993 and a J.D. from the University of Florida Levin College of Law in 1998, and was admitted to The Florida Bar the same year. His community involvement includes service on the boards of the Naples International Film Festival and the Haven on Earth animal shelter; he also provides pro bono legal counsel to the shelter. He also serves as legal counsel for the Naples Area Professional League of Executive Services (N.A.P.L.E.S.) and writes a regular HOA and condominium law column for the Naples Daily News and TCPalm. ([campaign website](#); [Goede, DeBoest & Cross](#))

Goede is not a pilot, but he has taken flight training and owns a Falcon 50 jet airplane. ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Platform

Goede does not have a structured issues page but he says he is committed to “ensuring the Naples Airport remains a safe, efficient, and community-friendly asset for every resident of Collier County.” “As an aircraft owner, I don’t just represent the airport. I fly out of it. I have a personal stake in getting this right for our community.” ([campaign website](#))

His priorities if elected, according to his [candidate questionnaire](#), are:

- to “bring business, legal, and aviation experience to the board”
- “to continue the high standard of operations for airport safety and keep it at its current location”
- “to open the airport to commercial airline services”
- “accepting state and federal money is a priority, as it will help with the necessary upgrades and the repair of the airport”

He disagreed with the Naples Airport Authority Board’s decision to “[reject] between \$8 million and \$9 million in Federal Aviation Administration and state grants ... as that money is needed for vital repairs and upgrades to the airport. These grants are necessary to fulfill the safety commitment that the NAA has implemented.” ([candidate questionnaire](#))

He wants to see the Board “continue [its] proactive commitment to safety.” ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Endorsements

According to his [candidate questionnaire](#), Goede has been endorsed by:

- Pat Dearborn, Greater Naples Fire Commissioner
- Dan Kowal, Collier County Commissioner
- Brian Cross, Greater Naples Fire Commissioner

In the News

No news coverage of Goede was found as of Sept. 14, 2026.

Further Research

- [Campaign website](#)
 - [LinkedIn](#)
 - [Gulf Shore Association of Condominiums Candidate Interview](#)
 - [Candidate Bio](#) (via GSAC)
 - [Sparker's Soapbox Candidate Questionnaire](#)
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Rick Mellon

Rick Mellon, aka M. Richard Mellon, received a B.S. degree in Aerospace Management from Auburn University and a J.D. degree from Duquesne University School of Law. ([Martindale-Avvo](#))

After a career as an attorney, judge and academic, he devoted most of his time to his hobbies, board work and philanthropy. In 2016, he donated \$1 million to Quest for Success, a Naples-based nonprofit college preparatory organization, to provide a perpetual endowment for scholarships for high school students to attend Quest programs. In addition, he is the founder of the Mellon Veterans' and First Responders' Outreach and Wellness Campus in North East, PA. His community involvement has also included volunteerism with Angel Flight, Friends of Naples Airport, Friends of Rookery Bay, Humane Society Naples advisory board and Rotary Club Naples-Pelican Bay. He is also involved with the American Arbitration Association, Arc Allegheny, Civic Light Opera and Easter Seals. ([Naples Daily News](#); [Florida Weekly](#))

A pilot with more than 50 years of flying experience and owner of a Maule SEL Aircraft, Mellon has held inspector general and legal officer roles with the Civil Air Patrol in Florida and received the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in 2017. He previously chaired the Naples Airport Authority's Noise Compatibility Committee, an advisory committee. ([Aviation Pros](#); [Naples Daily News](#); [Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association \(AOPA\)](#))

Platform

Mellon does not have a campaign website.

According to his [candidate questionnaire](#), Mellon's priorities if elected would be:

- “open collaborative meetings of all neighborhoods with airport officials to air concerns and discuss issues, done in an open session without the Formal Board Meeting restrictions”
- “transparency in airport decisions, growth, expansion, increased usage, commercial flights, safety concerns and neighborhood integrity”
- “investigate over usage of airport facilities by non-revenue creating operations”
- “financial responsibility of airport usage; when an opportunity comes about for non-recourse funding to increase safe usage, we must avail ourselves of that opportunity”

A decision or policy of the Naples Airport Authority in the last several years that he disagreed with was the current board's decision to “refuse a multi-million-dollar grant from the FAA to improve taxiway and ramp improvements.” ([candidate questionnaire](#))

A decision or action by the Naples Airport Authority in the last several years that he supported and would want to see continued was the Authority's decision “to continue input from the Noise Compatibility Committee and allow more resident participation.” ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Endorsements

No endorsements were found in public sources as of Sept. 14, 2026.

In the News

- Rick Mellon on the joys of getting through giving. ([Naples Daily News](#), 9/26/16)
- Naples man receives Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award after 50-plus years chasing clouds. ([Naples Daily News](#), 7/29/17)
- Naples' Richard Mellon receives highest accolades from the FAA. ([Florida Weekly](#), 8/30/17)

Further Research

- No campaign website found as of Sept. 14, 2026.
- [Candidate's Statement](#)
- [Gulf Shore Association of Condominiums Candidate Interview](#)
- [Candidate Bio](#) (via GSAC)
- [Sparker's Soapbox Candidate Questionnaire](#)

The Race in the News

- Florida law shifts Naples airport authority board selection to voters ([AOPA](#), 5/22/26)
 - Who's running in first Naples Airport Authority Commissioner election? ([Naples Daily News](#), 7/3/26)
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Seat 4 Campaign Finances

John Goede reported no campaign contributions, in-kind support, or expenditures as of Sept. 17, 2026.

Rick Mellon reported \$23.70 in total funds, all of it in-kind support he contributed to his own campaign; no outside contributions were reported.

Campaign finance data is from the Collier County Supervisor of Elections' [VoterFocus campaign finance system](#), downloaded Sept. 17, 2026.

Seat 5

Don Antonacchio

Don Antonacchio has lived in Naples for more than 50 years and retired after a 38-year career in real estate. He has served on the board of the Naples Roller Hockey League. He is not a pilot, but his family has ties to aviation: his wife worked for an airline, and his son, who has a degree in Aviation Technology, learned to fly at Naples Airport and worked ground crew there. (Candidate Statement via [Collier County Supervisor of Elections; candidate questionnaire](#))

Platform

Antonacchio does not have a campaign website. He has described himself as a “concerned citizen who listens” and has said he believes the Airport Authority “should be comprised of people from the entire county.” (Candidate Statement via [Collier County Supervisor of Elections](#))

According to his [candidate questionnaire](#), his priorities if elected would be:

- “put safety first”
- see that it stays “extremely well run”
- “open communication to me for all the citizens of Collier County”

Asked to name one decision or policy of the Naples Airport Authority in the last several years that you disagreed with, he said “no comment.” ([candidate questionnaire](#))

A decision of the NAA he supported and would want to see continued: “Curfew enforcement and constant monitoring for safety.” ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Endorsements

No endorsements were found in public sources as of Sept. 14, 2026.

In the News

No news coverage of Antonacchio was found as of Sept. 14, 2026.

Further Research

- No campaign website found as of Sept. 14, 2026.
 - [Candidate’s Statement](#)
 - [Gulf Shore Association of Condominiums Candidate Interview](#)
 - [Candidate Bio](#) (via GSAC)
 - [Sparker’s Soapbox Candidate Questionnaire](#)
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Jason Brooke

Jason Keith Brooke is a Naples native whose family has lived in the area since 1952 and has a family connection to the airport’s origins through his grandfather’s work on the early military airfield. A U.S. Navy veteran who served as an Aviation Electronics Technician, he received technical education in Electro-Mechanical Engineering, specializing in aviation applications. He has more than 35 years of experience in aviation, engineering, and infrastructure development. He is not a pilot or aircraft owner.

Brooke is currently CEO of Aerostructure Architecture and Management LLC, where he leads aviation infrastructure programs and works with airports, operators, and stakeholders on the planning and execution of facilities such as hangars, maintenance bases, and logistics infrastructure. He also serves as Chief Operating Officer of Worldwide Aviation Operations Group (WWAOG), supporting aviation operations across both commercial and government sectors. Throughout his career, he has worked directly with airport authorities, developers, and aviation operators, which he says has given him firsthand insight into the coordination required to manage airport growth while balancing community interests. (Candidate Statement via [Collier County Supervisor of Elections](#)).

His community service includes a two-year term as president of his neighborhood HOA, coach of a Navy-sponsored women's soccer team in 1993, and as a DECA mentor in 2012. ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Platform

Brooke does not have a campaign website.

According to his ([candidate questionnaire](#)), Brooke's priorities if elected would be:

- safety
- responsible airport development
- financial discipline
- transparency

He disagreed with the Authority's "efforts to challenge the new state law creating an elected Airport Authority Board with representation from both the City of Naples and greater Collier County.... The airport's impact extends beyond city limits, and I believe combining Naples representation with broader Collier County participation can contribute to better-informed decisions and stronger longterm stewardship of the airport." ([candidate questionnaire](#))

He supports the Authority's willingness to "evaluate appropriately scaled commercial service, including the current discussions with American Airlines.... I support growth when it makes operational and economic sense and can be accommodated responsibly within the airport's existing footprint." ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Endorsements

No endorsements were found in public sources as of Sept. 14, 2026.

In the News

No news coverage of Brooke was found as of Sept. 14, 2026.

Further Research

- No campaign website found as of Sept. 14, 2026.
- [Candidate's Statement](#)
- [Gulf Shore Association of Condominiums Candidate Interview](#)
- [Candidate Bio](#) (via GSAC)
- [Sparker's Soapbox Candidate Questionnaire](#)

David MacGregor

David MacGregor holds an A.S. degree in professional pilot and aviation administration and a B.S. in business administration from Nathaniel Hawthorne College in New Hampshire. After six years as an aircraft mechanic, inspector, shift supervisor and maintenance training instructor with Provincetown-Boston Airline, he spent 25 years with the Golden Gate Fire and Rescue District (2007 Firefighter of the Year) as a firefighter, driver engineer, shift officer and logistics officer, retiring in 2011. (Candidate Statement via [Collier County Supervisor of Elections](#); [Collier Citizen](#); [candidate questionnaire](#))

MacGregor is a pilot, aircraft owner, and Naples Airport tenant who holds an FAA Airframe and Powerplant certificate with Inspection Authorization. He is also a NAA hangar tenant and owns a 1950 Cessna 170A. (Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association ([AOPA](#)); [candidate questionnaire](#))

Platform

MacGregor does not have a campaign website.

According to his [candidate questionnaire](#), his priorities if elected would be:

- “responsible oversight”
- “total transparency”
- “very informed and disciplined decision making, with the best interests of all parties concerned, with all of the NAA operations”

He disagreed with the Authority’s “‘Voluntary Noise Curfew’, as it only serves to pacify a very small complaining portion of the Collier County Communities and hobbles ALL of the airport users.” ([candidate questionnaire](#))

He supports the Authority’s “aircraft weight restriction, [which] keeps the airport in good shape, from a maintenance perspective, while not overwhelming the available airport support facilities and staff.” ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Endorsements

He lists an endorsement by the Greater Naples IAFF Local 2396; no endorsements were found in public sources as of Sept. 14, 2026. ([candidate questionnaire](#))

In the News

- Fire district officials present awards. ([Collier Citizen](#), 1/5/2007)

Further Research

- No campaign website found as of Sept. 14, 2026.
 - [Candidate's Statement](#)
 - [Gulf Shore Association of Condominiums Candidate Interview](#)
 - [Candidate Bio](#) (via GSAC)
 - [Sparker's Soapbox Candidate Questionnaire](#)
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Jason Schappert

Jason Schappert attended Bridgewater State University in Massachusetts and studied aviation. He holds CFII and ATP pilot ratings with more than 8,000 hours of flight-instruction experience. Founder of MzeroA.com, an online aviation ground school, Schappert was named the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA)'s Top Collegiate Flight Instructor in 2008 and Outstanding Flight Instructor in 2014 and 2015, and has amassed over 8,000 hours of in-flight instruction since learning to fly. ([Wikipedia](#)).

Platform

No campaign website or public platform statement was found for Schappert as of Sept. 14, 2026.

Endorsements

No endorsements were found in public sources as of Sept. 14, 2026.

In the News

No news coverage of Schappert was found as of Sept. 14, 2026.

Further Research

- No campaign website found as of Sept. 14, 2026.
- [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [YouTube](#) | [X](#)
- [MzeroA.com](#)
- [Gulf Shore Association of Condominiums Candidate Interview](#)
- [Candidate Bio](#) (via GSAC)
- Sparker's Soapbox Candidate Questionnaire: not received

Keith West

Keith West earned his pilot's license at 17 and a B.S. degree in History at the U.S. Naval Academy, then completed primary pilot and jet training. He was assigned to Oceana, VA, flying the A-6 attack aircraft and serving as public affairs officer, company commander responsible for 200 trainees, and officer recruiter. After completing his naval service and more than 25 years of flying, he earned his flight instructor certificate and took over management of a regional flight school in Richmond, VA. That led to a position as Senior Director of Flight School Business Support at the Aircraft Owner's and Pilot's Association, the world's largest general aviation organization, where he worked closely advising flight schools across the country. In 2021, West acquired Rexair Flight Training and Maintenance at the Naples Airport. ([campaign website](#); [LinkedIn](#); [candidate questionnaire](#))

His prior community service includes servicing one term on the Richmond City School Board (from 2007) and president of an active community association. He is currently on the board of the Friends of the Naples Airport, the board of the National Flight Training Alliance and Founder/President of the Naples Airport Tenants' Association. ([General Aviation News](#); [AOPA](#); [candidate questionnaire](#))

As owner of Rexair, West is a tenant of the airport and owns a business on the field. ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Platform

On his [website](#), West says, "For more than a decade, the airport board has failed to focus on the real issues surrounding the airport, ultimately getting involved in non-productive political disputes and putting the continued safe operation of the Naples Airport in jeopardy." His "Issues" ([website](#)) are Rejecting State and Federal Grants; Lack of Focus; and Proper Control.

According to his [Candidate Questionnaire](#), West's priorities if elected would be:

- "always and forever safety"
- "the airport must remain in place and free from the operational constraints city council wants to impose"
- "the airport should be run to the benefit of local citizens and businesses while prudently controlling spending."

He disagreed with the Authority's decision to "[turn] down more than \$8 million in federal grants for airport improvements. These funds had to be made up by local users and businesses. The airport should be accepting all available grants. The funds for those grants come from aviation fuel taxes that aircraft users paid into the system. This rejection was unwarranted and irresponsible." ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Otherwise, “There have actually been many good decisions. Most airport operations are not controversial. ([candidate questionnaire](#))

Endorsements

No endorsements were found in public sources as of Sept. 14, 2026.

In the News

- [New owner for RexAir Flight Training and Maintenance at KAPF](#). (General Aviation News, 8/11/21)
- [Battle over plane noise, curfew continues](#). (Naples Press, 6/27/25; updated 10/30/25)

Further Research

- [Campaign website](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Rexair Flight Training and Maintenance](#)
- [Candidate’s Statement](#)
- [Gulf Shore Association of Condominiums Candidate Interview](#)
- [Candidate Bio](#) (via GSAC)
- [Sparker’s Soapbox Candidate Questionnaire](#)

The Race in the News

- Who’s running in first Naples Airport Authority Commissioner election? ([Naples Daily News](#), 7/21/26)

Seat 5 Campaign Finances

Don Antonacchio raised a total of \$2,450 (monetary contributions plus in-kind support); of his six outside donors, four, 67 percent, were from Collier County.

Jason Brooke, David MacGregor, and Jason Schappert each reported no campaign contributions, in-kind support, or expenditures as of Sept. 17, 2026.

Keith West’s \$23,004 total includes a \$5,000 personal loan and a \$10 direct contribution he made to his own campaign; the remaining \$17,994 came from 46 outside donors, 83 percent of whom were from Collier County.

Campaign finance data is from the Collier County Supervisor of Elections' [VoterFocus campaign finance system](#), downloaded Sept. 17, 2026.

The Race in the News

- Who's running in first Naples Airport Authority Commissioner election? ([Naples Daily News](#), 7/21/26)
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This post was researched and drafted with the assistance of Claude (Anthropic AI). The content was reviewed, edited, and fact-checked by the author. Both humans and AI can make mistakes. Please let us know if you spot one.