

Blue Ridge Airport Authority

Created: 1964 Acts of Assembly, c. 25.
(Henry and Patrick Counties, City of Martinsville)

Amended: 1978 Acts of Assembly, c. 633
Amended (§ 3)
1980 Acts of Assembly, c. 83
Amended (§§ 8, 9)
1996 Acts of Assembly, c. 465
Amended (§ 3).

§ 1. Definitions.—As used in this Act the following words and terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context shall indicate another or different meaning or intent:

(a) The word “Authority” shall mean the Blue Ridge Airport Authority hereinafter created or, if the Authority shall be abolished, the board, body, commission or agency succeeding to the principal functions thereof or upon whom the powers given by this Act to the Authority shall be conferred by law.

(b) The word “project” shall mean an airport for general, commercial and private use constructed by the Authority under the provisions of this Act, together with all necessary and convenient approaches, roads and streets used in connection with such airport.

(c) The term “cost of the project” shall embrace the cost of construction, landscaping and conservation, the cost of acquisition of all land, rights of way, property, rights, easements and interests acquired by the Authority for the construction and operation of the project, the cost of demolishing or removing any buildings or structures on land so acquired, including the cost of acquiring any land to which such buildings or structures may be moved, the cost of all machinery and equipment, financing charges, interest prior to and during construction and, if deemed advisable by the Authority for a period not exceeding one year after completion of construction, cost of traffic estimates and of engineering and legal services, plans, specifications, surveys, estimates of cost and of revenues, provisions for working capital and a reserve for interest, other expenses necessary or incident to determining the feasibility or practicability of constructing the project, administrative expenses, and such other expenses as may be necessary for incident to the construction of the project, the financing of such construction and the placing of the project in operation.

(d) The word “bonds” or the words “revenue bonds” shall mean revenue bonds or revenue refunding bonds of the Authority issued under the provisions of this Act.

(e) The word “owner” shall include all individuals, copartnerships, associations or corporations and also municipalities, political subdivisions and all public agencies and instrumentalities having any title or interest in any property, rights, easements and interests authorized to be acquired by this Act. (1964, c. 25)

§ 2. Credit of Commonwealth and Political Subdivisions Not Pledged.—Revenue bonds issued under the provisions of this Act shall not be deemed to constitute a debt of the Commonwealth of Virginia or of any county, city, district or political subdivision thereof, or a pledge of the faith and credit of the Commonwealth or of any county, city, district or political subdivision thereof, but such bonds shall be payable solely from the funds herein provided therefor from tolls and revenues. The issuance of revenue bonds under the provisions of this act shall not directly or indirectly or contingently obligate the commonwealth or any county, city or district therein or any political subdivision thereof to levy or to pledge any form of taxation whatever therefor. All such revenue bonds shall contain a statement on their face substantially to the foregoing effect.

All expenses incurred in carrying out the provisions of this Act shall be payable solely from funds provided under the provisions of this act and no liability or obligation shall be incurred by the authority hereunder beyond the extend to which moneys shall have been provide under the provisions of this Act. (1964, c. 25)

§ 3. "Blue Ridge Airport Authority".—There is hereby created and constituted a political subdivision of the Commonwealth to be known as the "Blue Ridge Airport Authority". The exercise by the Authority of the powers conferred by this act in the construction, operation and maintenance of the project authorized by this act shall be deemed and held to be the performance of an essential governmental function.

The Authority shall consist of nine members, all of whom shall be appointed by the presiding judge or judges of the Seventh Judicial Circuit of the counties of Henry and Patrick and the city of Martinsville, at least three of whom shall be residents of said Judicial Circuit. Two of the members of the Authority first appointed shall continue in office for terms expiring on June 30, 1967, two for terms expiring on June 30, 1966, one for a term expiring on June 30, 1965, two to be appointed July 1, 1978, for terms expiring June 30, 1980, and two to be appointed July 1, 1996, for five-year terms, the term of each such member to be designated by said judge or judges and to continue until his successor shall be duly appointed and qualified. The successor of each such member shall be appointed for a term of five years and until his successor shall be duly appointed and qualified, except that any person appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve only for the unexpired term. Any member of the Authority shall be eligible for reappointment. Members of the Authority shall be subject to removal from office in like manner as are State, county, town and district officers under the provisions of Article 7 (§ 24.2-230 et seq.) of Chapter 2 of Title 24.2 of the Code of Virginia. The Authority shall annually elect one of its members as chairman and another as vice-chairman and shall also elect annually a secretary-treasurer, who may or may not be a member of the Authority.

The secretary-treasurer shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Authority and shall be custodian of all books, documents and papers filed with the Authority and of the minute book or journal of the Authority and of its official seal. He shall have authority to cause copies to be made of all minutes and other records and documents of the Authority and to give certificates under the official seal of the Authority to the effect that such copies are true copies, and all persons dealing with the Authority may rely upon such certificates.

Five members of the Authority shall constitute a quorum and the affirmative vote of five members shall be necessary for any action taken by the Authority. No vacancy in

the membership of the Authority shall impair the right of a quorum to exercise all the rights and perform all the duties of the Authority.

Before the issuance of any revenue bonds under the provisions of this act, the secretary-treasurer of the Authority shall execute a surety bond in the penal sum of fifty thousand dollars, such surety bond to be conditioned upon the faithful performance of the duties of his office, to be executed by a surety company authorized to transact business in the Commonwealth as surety and to be approved by the Attorney General and filed in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

The members of the Authority shall be entitled to reimbursement for their expenses incurred in attendance upon the meetings of the Authority or while otherwise engaged in the discharge of their duties. Each member shall also be paid the sum of twenty dollars per day for each day or portion thereof during which he is engaged in the performance of his duties, with the maximum payable to any one member in any one calendar year of fifteen hundred dollars. (1964, c. 25; 1978, c. 633; 1996, c. 465)

§ 4. General Grant of Powers.—The Authority is hereby authorized and empowered:

- (a) to adopt by-laws for the regulation of its affairs and the conduct of its business;
- (b) to adopt an official seal and alter the same at pleasure;
- (c) to determine the location of the project, to determine, in its discretion and without reference to any other provisions of any State law, the design standards and the materials of construction, and to construct, maintain, repair and operate the project;
- (d) to issue revenue bonds of the Authority for any of its purposes, payable solely from the tolls and revenues pledged for their payment, and to refund its bonds, all as provided in this Act;
- (e) to fix and revise from time to time and charge and collect tolls, rates, fees, rentals and other charges for the use of the project;
- (f) to acquire, hold and dispose of real and personal property in the exercise of its powers and the performance of its duties under this Act;
- (g) to employ, in its discretion, consulting engineers, attorneys, accountants, construction and financial experts, superintendents, managers, and such other employees and agents as may be necessary in its judgment, and to fix their compensation;
- (h) to enter upon any lands and premises for the purpose of making such surveys, soundings, borings and examinations as the Authority may deem necessary for convenient for its purposes, and such entry shall not be deemed a trespass, nor shall an entry for such purposes be deemed an entry under any condemnation proceedings; provided, however, the Authority shall pay any actual damage resulting to such lands and premises as a result of such entry and activities as a part of the cost of the project;
- (i) to sue and be sued in its own name, plead and be impleaded;
- (j) to make and enter into all contracts and agreements necessary or incidental to the performance of its duties and the execution of its powers under this Act; and
- (k) to do all acts and things necessary or convenient to carry out the powers expressly granted in this Act. (1964, c. 25)

§ 5. Acquisition of property.—(a) The Authority is hereby authorized and empowered to acquire by purchase solely from funds provided under the provisions of this Act, such lands, structures, property, rights, rights of way, franchises, easements and

other interest in lands as it may deem necessary or convenient for the construction and operation of the project, upon such terms and at such prices as may be considered by it to be reasonable and can be agreed upon between it and the owner thereof.

All public agencies and the commissions of the Commonwealth, with the approval of the Governor, and the counties of Henry, Patrick and the city of Martinsville, notwithstanding any contrary provisions of law, are hereby authorized and empowered to lease, lend, grant or convey to the Authority at its request upon such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed upon, without the necessity for any advertisement, order of court or other action or formality, any real property which may be necessary or convenient to the effectuation of the authorized purposes of the Authority, including public highways and other real property already devoted to public use.

(b) The Authority is authorized and empowered to acquire by the exercise of the power of eminent domain limited to the definition of "project" as set forth herein, any lands, property, rights, rights of way, franchises, easements and other property, including public lands, parks, playgrounds, reservations, highways or parkways, or parts thereof or rights therein, of any person, copartnership, association, public service, public utility or other corporation, or of the county, deemed necessary or convenient for the construction or the efficient operation of the project or necessary in the restoration, replacement or relocation of public or private property damaged or destroyed, whenever a reasonable price cannot be agreed upon or whenever the Authority cannot agree on the terms of purchase or settlement with the owner or owners because of the incapacity of such owner or owners or because of the inability to agree to the compensation to be paid or other terms of settlement or purchase, or because such owner or owners are nonresidents of the commonwealth, or are unknown, or are unable to convey valid title to such property. Such proceedings shall be in accordance with and subject to the provisions of any and all laws of the Commonwealth applicable to the exercise of the power of eminent domain in the name of the State Highway Commissioner and subject to the provisions of § 25-233 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as fully as if the Authority were a corporation possessing the power of eminent domain; provided, however, that title to any property condemned by the Authority shall immediately vest in the Authority, and the Authority shall be entitled to the immediate possession of such property upon the deposit with the clerk of the court in which such condemnation proceedings are originated, of the total amount of the appraised price of the property and court costs and fees as provided by said laws, notwithstanding that any of the parties to such proceedings shall appeal from any decision in such condemnation proceedings. Upon the deposit with the clerk of the court of the appraised price, any person or persons entitled thereto may, upon petition to the court, be paid his or their pro rata share of 90% of such appraised price. The acceptance of such payment shall not preclude such person or persons for appealing any decisions rendered in such proceedings. If the appraisement is greater or less than the amount finally determined by the decision in such proceeding or by an appeal, the amount of the increase or decrease shall be paid by or refunded to the Authority.

The terms "appraised price" and "appraisement" as used in this section mean the value determined by two competent real estate appraisers appointed by the Authority for such purposes.

The acquisition of any such property by condemnation or by the exercise of the power of eminent domain shall be and is hereby declared to be a public use of such property.

(c) Title to any property acquired by the Authority shall be taken in the name of the Authority.

(d) In any eminent domain proceedings the court having jurisdiction of the suit, action or proceedings may make such orders as may be just to the Authority and to the owners of the property to be condemned and may require an undertaking or other security to secure such owners against any loss or damage by reason of the failure of the Authority to accept and pay for the property, or by reason of the taking of property occupied by such owners, but neither such undertaking or security nor any act or obligation of the Authority shall impose any liability upon the Commonwealth or upon any county, or other political subdivision of the Commonwealth.

(e) If the owner, lessee or occupier of any property to be condemned or otherwise acquired shall refuse to remove his property therefrom or give up possession thereof, the Authority may proceed to obtain possession in any manner provided by law. (1964, c. 25)

§ 6. Revenue Bonds.—The Authority is hereby authorized to provide by resolution for the issuance, at one time or from time to time, of revenue bonds of the Authority for the purpose of paying all or any part of the cost of the project. The principal of and the interest on such bonds shall be payable solely from the funds herein provided for such payment. The bonds of each issue shall be dated, shall bear interest at such rate or rates not exceeding six per centum (6%) per annum, shall mature at such time or times not exceeding forty years from their date or dates, as may be determined by the Authority, and may be made redeemable before maturity, at the option of the Authority, at such price or prices and under such terms and conditions as may be fixed by the Authority prior to the issuance of the bonds. The Authority shall determine the form and the manner of execution of the bonds, including any interest coupons to be attached thereto, and shall fix the denomination or denominations of the bond and the place or places of payment of principal and interest, which may be at any bank or trust company within or without the Commonwealth. In case any officer whose signature or a facsimile of whose signature shall appear on any bonds or coupons shall cease to be such officer before the delivery of such bonds, such signature or such facsimile shall nevertheless be valid and sufficient for all purposes the same as if he had remained in office until such delivery. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, all such bonds shall be determined to be negotiable instruments under the laws of the Commonwealth. The bonds may be issued in coupon or in registered form, or both, as the Authority may determine, and provision may be made for the registration of any coupon bonds as to principal alone and also as to both principal and interest, for the reconversion into coupon bonds of any bonds registered as to both principal and interest, and for the interchange of registered and coupon bonds. The Authority may sell such bonds in such manner, either at public or negotiated sale, and for such price, as it may determine will best effect the purposes of this Act.

The proceeds of the bonds shall be used solely for the payment of the cost of the project, and shall be disbursed in such manner and under such restrictions, if any, as the Authority may provide in the resolution authorizing the issuance of such bonds or in the trust agreement hereinafter mentioned securing the same. If the proceeds of the bonds of

any issue, by error of estimates or otherwise, shall be less than such cost, additional bonds may in like manner be issued to provide the amount of such deficit, and, unless otherwise provided in the resolution authorizing the issuance of such bonds or in the trust agreement securing the same, shall be deemed to be of the same issue and shall be entitled to payment from the same fund without preference or priority of the bonds first issued. If the proceeds of the bonds of any issue shall exceed such cost, the surplus shall be deposited to the credit of the sinking fund for such bonds.

Prior to the preparation of definitive bonds, the Authority may, under like restrictions, issue interim receipts or temporary bonds, with or without coupons, exchangeable for definitive bonds when such bonds shall have been executed and are available for delivery. The Authority may also provide for the replacement of any bonds which shall become mutilated or shall be destroyed or lost. Bonds may be issued under the provisions of this Act without obtaining the consent of any department, division, commission, board, bureau or agency of the Commonwealth, and without any other proceedings or the happening of any other conditions or things than those proceedings, conditions or things which are specifically required by this Act. (1964, c. 25)

§ 7. Trust Agreement.—In the discretion of the Authority any bonds issued under the provisions of this Act may be secured by a trust agreement by and between the Authority and a corporate trustee, which may be any trust company or bank having the powers of a trust company within or without the Commonwealth. Such trust agreement or the resolution providing for the issuance of such bonds may pledge or assign the tolls and other revenues to be received, but shall not convey or mortgage the project or any part thereof. Such trust agreement or resolution providing for the issuance of such bonds may contain such provisions for protecting and enforcing the rights and remedies of the bondholders as may be reasonable and proper and not in violation of law, including covenants setting forth the duties of the Authority in relation to the acquisition of property and the construction, improvement, maintenance, repair, operation and insurance of the project, the rates of toll or other charges to be charged, and the custody, safeguarding and application of all moneys. It shall be lawful for any bank or trust company incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth which may act as depository of the proceeds of bonds or of revenues to furnish such indemnifying bonds or to pledge such securities as may be required by the Authority. Any such trust agreement may set forth the rights and remedies of the bondholders and of the trustee, and may restrict the individual right of action by bondholders. In addition to the foregoing, any such trust agreement or resolution may contain such other provisions as the Authority may deem reasonable and proper for the security of the bondholders. All expenses incurred in carrying out the provisions of such trust agreement or resolution may be treated as a part of the cost of the operation of the project. (1964, c. 25)

§ 8. Revenues.—A. The Authority is hereby authorized to fix, revise, charge and collect tolls or other charges for the use of the project and to contract with any person, partnership, association or corporation desiring the use of any part thereof, including the right of way adjoining the airport for placing thereon telephone, telegraph, electric light or power lines, and to fix the terms, conditions, rents and rates of charges for such use. Such tolls or other charges shall be so fixed and adjusted in respect of the aggregate of tolls or other charges from the project as to provide a fund sufficient with other revenues, if any, to pay (a) the cost of maintaining, repairing and operating such project and (b) the

principal of and interest on such bonds as the same shall become due and payable, and to create reserves for such purposes. The tolls and all other revenues derived from the project, except such part thereof as may be necessary to pay such cost of maintenance, repair and operation and to provide such reserves therefor as may be provided for in the resolution authorizing the issuance of such bonds or in the trust agreement securing the same, shall be set aside at such regular intervals as may be provided in such resolution or such trust agreement in a sinking fund which is hereby pledged to, and charged with, the payment of the principal of and the interest on such bonds as the same shall become due, and the redemption price or the purchase price of bonds retired by call or purchase as therein provided. Such pledge shall be valid and binding from the time when the pledge is made; the tolls and other revenues or other moneys so pledged and thereafter received by the Authority shall immediately be subject to the lien of such pledge without any physical delivery thereof or further act, and the lien of any such pledge shall be valid and binding as against all parties having claims of any kind in tort, contract or otherwise against the Authority, irrespective of whether such parties have notice thereof. Neither the resolution or any trust agreement by which a pledge is created need be filed or recorded except in the records of the Authority. The use and disposition of moneys to the credit of such sinking fund shall be subject to the provisions of the resolution authorizing the issuance of such bonds or of such trust agreement. Except as may otherwise be provided and in such resolution or such trust agreement, such sinking fund shall be a fund for all such bonds without distinction or priority of one over another.

B. The Authority is authorized to accept, receive, receipt for, disburse, and expend federal and State moneys and other moneys, public or private, made available by grant or loan or both to accomplish, in whole or in part, any of the purposes of this Act. All federal moneys accepted under this subsection shall be accepted and expended by the Authority upon such terms and conditions as are prescribed by the United States and as are consistent with State Law, and all State moneys accepted under this subsection shall be accepted and expended by the Authority upon such terms and conditions as are prescribed by the State. (1964, c. 25; 1980, c. 83)

§ 9. Trust Funds.—All moneys received pursuant to the provisions of this Act from the sale of bonds or shall be deemed to be trust funds to be held and applied solely as provided in this Act. The Authority shall, in the resolution authorizing the bonds or in the trust agreement securing such bonds, provide for the payment of the proceeds of the sale of the bonds and the revenues to be received by a trustee, which shall be any trust company or bank having the powers of a trust company within or without the Commonwealth, which shall act as trustee of the funds, and hold and apply the same to the purposes of this Act, subject to such regulations as this Act and such resolution or trust agreement may provide. The trustee may invest and reinvest such funds in such securities as may be provided in the resolution authorizing the bonds or in the trust agreement securing such bonds. (1964, c. 25; 1980, c. 83)

§ 10. Remedies.—Any holder of bonds issued under the provisions of this Act or of any of the coupons appertaining thereto, and the trustee under any trust agreement, except to the extent the rights herein given, may be restricted by such trust agreement, may either at law or in equity, by suit, action, injunction, mandamus or other proceedings, protect and enforce any and all rights under the laws of the Commonwealth or granted by this Act or under such trust agreement or the resolution authorizing the

issuance of such bonds and may enforce and compel the performance of all duties required by this Act or by such agreement or resolution to be performed by the Authority or by any officer or agent thereof including the fixing, charging and collection of tolls or other charges. (1964, c. 25)

§ 11. Exemption from Taxation.—The exercise of the powers granted by this Act shall be in all respects for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Commonwealth, for the increase of their commerce, and for the promotion of their safety, health, welfare, convenience and prosperity, and as the operation and maintenance of the project by the Authority will constitute the performance of essential governmental functions, the Authority shall not be required to pay any taxes or assessments upon the visions of this act or upon the income therefrom; and the bonds issues under the provisions of this Act, their transfer and the income therefrom, including any profit made on the sale thereof, shall at all times be free and exempt from taxation by the Commonwealth and by any municipality, county or other political subdivision thereof. (1964, c. 25)

§ 12. Revenue Refunding Bonds.—The Authority is hereby authorized to provide by resolution for the issuance of its revenue refunding bonds for the purpose of refunding any bonds then outstanding within shall have been issued under the provisions of this Act, including the payment of any redemption premium thereon and any interest accrued or to accrue to the date of redemption of such bonds, and, if deemed advisable by the Authority, for the additional purpose of constructing improvements, extensions or enlargements of the project. The issuance of such bonds, the maturities and other details thereof, the rights of the holders thereof, and the rights, duties and obligations of the Authority in respect of the same, shall be governed by the provisions of this Act insofar as the same may be applicable. (1964, c. 25)

§ 13. Act Liberally Construed.—This Act, being necessary for the welfare of the Commonwealth and its inhabitants, shall be liberally construed to effect the purposes thereof. (1964, c. 25)

§ 14. Constitutional Construction.—The provisions of this Act are severable and if any of its provisions shall be held unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, the decision of such court shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions of this Act. It is hereby declared to be the legislative intent that this Act would have been adopted had such unconstitutional provisions not been included therein. (1964, c. 25)

§ 15. Inconsistent Laws Inapplicable.—All other general or special laws inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby declared to be inapplicable to the provisions of this Act. (1964, c. 25)