



## POLICY COMMITTEE

Council Chambers, City Hall, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, AK

Meeting Minutes – November 12, 2015

### 1. Call to Order

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

### 2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

<b>Attendee</b>	<b>Representative Organization</b>
*Bryce Ward, Chair	Mayor, City of North Pole
*Karl Kassel, Vice Chair	Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
*John Eberhart	Mayor, City of Fairbanks
*David Miller	Northern Region Director, DOT&PF
*Janice Golub for Guy Sattley	FNSB Assembly Member
*Perry Walley	City Council Member, City of Fairbanks
*Denise Koch	DEC, Division of Air Quality
**Donna Gardino	FMATS
**Alicia Giamichael	FMATS Transportation Planner
+Mark Peterburs	Alaska Railroad
+Lee Borden	DEC, Division of Air Quality
+Judy Chapman	DOT&PF Planning
**Margaret Carpenter	DOT&PF Planning
**Linda Mahlen	DOT&PF Planning
Adam Barth	FNSB Transportation
Casey Anderson	Fairbanks Transportation Mobility Coalition
Chanelle Whitehurst	Access Alaska

*\*FMATS Policy Committee Members, \*\*FMATS Staff Members, +FMATS Technical Committee Members*

### 3. Public Comment Period (3 minute limit)

No public comment.

### 4. Approval of the November 12, 2015 Agenda

**Motion:** To approve the November 12, 2015 Agenda. (Golub/Eberhart).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

### 5. Approval of the September 16, 2015 Meeting Minutes

**Motion:** To approve the October 21, 2015 meeting minutes. (Golub/Kassel).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

### 6. Committee Reports

#### a. Coordinator's Office Report and Technical Committee Action Items

Ms. Gardino provided information for all meetings, briefings, open houses, and presentations she and FMATS staff had attended or participated in.

#### b. Coordinator's Office Reorganization Subcommittee Update

Ms. Gardino stated that the City of Fairbanks had polled employees to determine if they wanted to find an alternative insurance program and FMATS was waiting for those results. Ms. Gardino stated that she did not have the poll results, but the next step was to send a list of all the employees and their dependents with a brief health history to an underwriter to determine what type of group insurance rates they could get. Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS was looking forward to the results of that and if they were able to get more affordable, sustainable health care hopefully that would enable FMATS to attract and retain employees. Ms. Gardino added that the City employees that were in the IBEW Union had recently voted to have their wages reduced by \$5.22 an hour in order to pay for the current health care. Ms. Gardino stated that a group of employees were scheduled to meet to further discuss the wage reduction since the City was researching alternate health care plans.

**c. FMATS Improvement Program Subcommittee Update**

Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS was organizing the FMATS Improvement Subcommittee Meeting seven months earlier than usual this year since it was usually held in May. Ms. Gardino stated that they did that in order to enable DOT to get moving on creating estimates, communicating with owners to make sure that they understand all the issues, complete surveying if necessary, and address all drainage issues that might occur with road repaving.

**7. Old Business**

**a. TIP and Conformity Status Update**

Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS had sent the TIP but it had not yet been approved and the STIP had not been approved. Ms. Gardino added that with no TIP they were unable to program projects. Ms. Gardino continued that they were also in an Air Quality Conformity lapse but were in a grace period. Ms. Gardino stated that it was not a good situation but she had been told that the STIP was scheduled to be approved by November 20<sup>th</sup> and her hope was to have the TIP incorporated simultaneously, but there had been instances in the past where that had not occurred. Ms. Gardino stated that she had asked that everyone send in their funding requests and there had been an increase to the Noble Street project which required an Administrative Modification and was trying to get a determination from FHWA on another item on the Old Steese project.

Mayor Ward stated that in their conversation with the Commissioner they discussed their concerns about the lack of a TIP and were told that they were very much aware of the issues and shared their concerns.

**8. New Business**

**a. Election of Chair and Vice Chair (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino stated that there were ballots available for the members to vote for a new Policy Committee Chair and Vice Chair for 2016.

**Motion:** To nominate Mayor Bryce Ward as the Policy Committee Chair. (Walley/Golub).

**Discussion:** No further discussion

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**Motion:** To nominate Mayor Karl Kassel as the Policy Committee Vice Chair (Eberhart/Walley).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**b. FFY17 Funding Request (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino stated that every year FMATS had written a letter to the Governor. Ms. Gardino stated that they had received funding in 2011 and 2013 but had received no other funding to be used strictly for TIP projects since 2013. Ms. Gardino stated that in the letter FMATS emphasized development, increase in jobs, population growth, and positive effects on economic development.

**Motion:** To forward the FFY17 funding request to the Governor, as written. (Kassel/Golub).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**c. Noble Street Upgrade Phase 4 Increase (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino stated that there was nothing in the meeting packet but she was just notified by the DOT that the Noble Street Upgrade estimate had gone up from \$9 million to \$10.7 million. Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS' program was \$8 million plus \$900,000 from CMAQ per year. Ms. Gardino stated that they had banked Federal money for the past two or three years to get this project to construction and now it needed another \$1.7 million. Ms. Gardino stated that she had almost found the money because there had been \$800,000 in the TIP for the Old Steese Highway Upgrade Project and that project had been modified and expanded which enabled it to qualify as a GO Bond project which freed up those federal funds, but left them \$900,000 short. Ms. Gardino continued that there was \$2 million allocated for the College Road Bus Pullout Project that DOT wanted to further review, so that project would be moved out to 2017. Ms. Gardino stated that the FMATS Improvement Program currently being designed contained \$2 million and they only needed about \$1.4 million, so they were getting close. Ms. Gardino stated that they had several projects going out to bid in January and February and hoped bids would come in lower than expected. Thus, offset funds may be available. Ms. Gardino stated that because they had to show the \$1.7 million in the TIP in order to program the project, the recommendation was to approve the additional funds.

**Motion:** To recommend and approve \$1,700,000 additional funds for the Noble Street Upgrade project.

**Discussion:** Mr. Miller inquired if everyone was aware that the cost increase was due to a utility replacement. Mr. Miller stated that there was a water line that needed to be replaced and since it was not an upgrade the DOT was going to assume 90 percent of the cost of that with Golden Heart Utilities and the sewer line replacement was a betterment so they were going to participate in about ten percent of that cost which brought the total to \$1.7M. Mr. Miller explained that the water and sewer lines were deep utilities and needed to be done since the sewer line was 50 years old and there were frequent backups on that line. Mr. Miller explained that DOT strongly

encouraged Golden Heart Utilities to move forward with the decision to replace the lines because it made sense to do it in conjunction with the road project to minimize disruption to the downtown area; so they moved forward with the design. Mayor Ward inquired what type of actions constituted a “betterment”.

Mr. Miller stated that the project construction required them to take out the water line and put it back, so they had to bear the cost for that whereas the sewer line was at the bottom of the hole and not something DOT was disturbing but since it was an old wood stave line that backed up in various places; Golden Heart wanted to replace it with newer line. Mr. Miller continued that since it was not being replaced in-kind that made it a “betterment”.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**d. Fairbanks North Star Borough Coordinated Transportation Plan Approval (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino stated that the Coordinated Transportation Plan Update was precipitated by the formation of the Fairbanks Transportation Partnership Group which was put together through the Alaska Mobility Coalition’s ability to obtain a grant. Ms. Gardino stated that the Alaska Mobility Coalition partnered with FMATS, DOT, and the Borough to form the Transportation Partnership group to coordinate public transportation efforts. Ms. Gardino stated that with a Coordinated Transportation plan, other entities could apply for formula grants from the Federal Transit Administration for the enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Ms. Gardino stated that the Borough had a Plan that expired in 2012 and was not renewed. Ms. Gardino stated that with the renewed Plan, other entities could apply for funding through the Plan. Ms. Gardino stated that the question was raised by the Technical Committee whether they should be approving the plan. Ms. Gardino stated that when looking back she found that they had previously written a Resolution of Support for the Plan so she had drafted the one contained in the meeting packet for their review. Ms. Gardino then introduced Casey Anderson of the Alaska Mobility Coalition to provide them with more detailed information about the Plan.

Mr. Anderson stated that Ms. Gardino provided a good overview of the process. Mr. Anderson stated that the process began in 2013 and they had an initial stakeholder group consisting of 35 to 40 different organizations involved with the initial phases of the project and since then those numbers had varied. Mr. Anderson stated that they reached the point where other entities needed to come forward to provide comments and information. Mr. Anderson stated that the stakeholders included organizations that provided senior services, individuals with disabilities, and assisted lower income individuals. Mr. Anderson stated that many different meetings were held that were opened to the public to allow those organizations and the clients that they served to participate and provide information. Mr. Anderson stated that three specific meetings were held that were advertised to the public through the use of radio, newspaper, and flyers circulated throughout the community to encourage participation. Mr. Anderson stated that a survey tool was used to collect responses from the public at the Tanana Valley Fair,

various community events such as the Fred Meyer Back to School Night, as well as direct solicitation on the bus through transit users. Mr. Anderson stated that they completed the study with plans and goals to allow better access and better utilization of the transportation options available and to try to encourage providers that were already operating to look for ways to try and make their operation more functional and efficient. Mr. Anderson stated that they looked at ways to reduce cost and “head times”; which was the time between when a vehicle was dispatched and when the passenger was picked up. Mr. Anderson stated that the strategies laid out were based on the Mobility Management Plan by RLS and Associates that was put together between 2010 and 2011. Mr. Anderson stated that the plan was very thorough, well researched, and put together. Mr. Anderson stated that their plan was not to reinvent the wheel, but to take what was already put together and incorporate public comments and put together a plan that fit the needs of the community. Mr. Anderson stated that the funds available to the Borough during the current grant cycle would be in the \$65,000 range. Mr. Anderson stated that the funds consisted of Federal and State money that would come into the Borough to be used primarily to support the prioritized project list. Mr. Anderson stated that in future years as other needs were identified that funding would continue to be available. Mr. Anderson stated that the plan allowed the Borough and other entities within the Borough to apply for that funding going forward to Fiscal Year 2021. Mr. Anderson stated that what the Plan did was encourage efficiency and transit improvements as well as a means to obtain funding. Mr. Anderson stated that in future years they were looking at \$65,000 and possibly \$75,000.

**Motion:** To approve Resolution 2016-01 (support of the Coordinated Transportation Plan. (Golub/Walley).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

#### **9. Public Comment Period (3 minute limit)**

No public comment.

#### **10. Other Issues**

No other issues.

#### **11. Informational Items**

##### **a. Zimride Demonstration**

Ms. Gardino introduced Adam Barth, Fairbanks North Star Borough Transportation Department, to give them a demonstration of Zimride.

Mr. Barth stated that the Borough had a contract with Enterprise Rental Car to market ride share services. Mr. Barth stated that part of the contract was to create a website that would connect users to facilitate ride sharing. Mr. Barth stated that the registration process on the website consisted of a user name and password. Mr. Barth stated that once you were logged in and typed in a destination, whether it was a single trip or multiple trips, dates and times you needed to commute, how much time you had, number of people commuting, smoking or non-smoking, pets or

no pets. Mr. Barth stated that you would only want to narrow your search field to Fairbanks only. Mr. Barth stated that a list would generate of potential ride share. There was no personal information shown directly on the website, but you could select the location and send an email with your information to connect with them offline in order to get to know them before you decided to share commutes.

Ms. Gardino stated that this was an example of how the Borough was trying to encourage people to share rides rather than using single occupancy vehicles for air quality.

Mr. Barth stated that the program had only been open about a month and the response had been okay and there were currently 22 active users in the system. Mr. Barth stated that Enterprise was in charge of marketing and they were trying different techniques to make people more aware of the website. Mr. Barth stated that currently they were offering a \$100 gift card drawing that you were entered in when you posted a ride online.

Ms. Koch stated that Mr. Barth had mentioned that Zimride was in use in a number of different communities and wondered if he could provide a ballpark figure of how widely it was used or if it was a relatively new technology.

Mr. Barth stated that he knew it was used at different Universities around the country and people used it to get rides from one place to another. Mr. Barth stated that when he was in school they used a ride board to match up rides and this was just an electronic way to do that.

Ms. Gardino stated that she was planning a trip in the State of Washington and wanted see if there was a shuttle from the airport to the ski area which was about an hour and a half away and what came up was Zimride.

Ms. Gardino noted that there was also a listing for Zimride in Boise.

Mayor Ward inquired if the application was available for trips to connecting communities such as Fairbanks to Anchorage or Fairbanks to Nenana.

Mr. Barth stated that you could post a single trip from Fairbanks to Anchorage or Maine if you wanted to.

**b. Federal Highway Reauthorization Status**

Ms. Gardino stated that Congress passed an extension through November 20<sup>th</sup> so they were working on a six year highway bill.

Ms. Gardino added that the Senate passed the DRIVE Act, the House passed the Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act; so the next step was for both to go to conference. Ms. Gardino stated that both of those bills only funded three out of the six years of the bill.

Ms. Gardino stated that there were quite a few amendments that were entertained and not entertained to the STRR Act in the House.

Ms. Gardino stated that it was determined in that bill that a public

transportation representative could be the same person that, for example in our area, was the Mayor of the Borough, so he could also represent the Transit Department and it did not have to be two separate people which was a rule for larger MPOs which was something that was a question under MAP-21 that had been resolved. Ms. Gardino stated that there were new planning factors which were important to the MPO. Ms. Gardino stated that the planning factors under SAFETEA-LU did not change under MAP-21 and those planning factors were the basis for what the long-term goals and objectives were for the MPO and what you saw when you looked at the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Ms. Gardino stated that the new House bill actually added some planning factors which included: Improve the reliance and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and enhanced travel and tourism. Ms. Gardino stated that we would probably want to look at those new planning factors as they passed to decide whether to include them. Ms. Gardino stated that there was new focus on public transportation facilities, bus facilities, carpool, vanpool, employer-based commuting programs, and congestion management plans were not going to be mandatory and they were leaning toward making the performance measures drive the reduction in congestion so your travel time, reliability and those types of things would be the goals and targets. Ms. Gardino heard at the AMPO Conference that a lot of the larger MPOs were still interested in doing the congestion management plan for a tool. Ms. Gardino stated that there was going to be a time period when there would have to be an evaluation of small MPOs to determine whether they needed to be involved in those performance measures. Ms. Gardino stated that the House Bill was funded at a lower level and the six year total was \$242 Billion and the Senate Bill was about \$3 Billion.

**c. Obligations and Offsets**

Ms. Gardino stated that currently there were no obligations or offsets until there was new programming.

**12. Policy Committee Comments**

- Mayor Kassel stated that it was a great first meeting and much more efficient and he was glad to be part of it.
- Mayor Eberhart congratulated Mayor Ward on his reelection as Chair of the Policy Committee.
- Mr. Walley congratulated Mayor Ward on his reelection to Chair and Mayor Kassel on being elected Vice Chair. Mr. Walley also thanked Ms. Gardino for finding the \$1.7M for Noble and he appreciated the comments from Mr. Miller explaining why that addition was needed on the project.

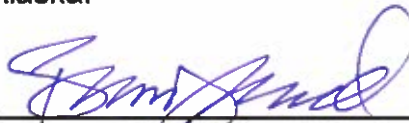
- Mayor Ward thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve again as Chair and hoped they could have a productive year. Mayor Ward stated that he appreciated all the staff and it would not be as easy to run the meetings if it were not for all the great staff they had here at the MPO and thanked them for all their hard work and for making them look good.

**13. Adjourn**

**Motion to adjourn.** (Golub/Kassel). The meeting adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

The next Policy Committee Meeting is scheduled **Wednesday, December 16, 2015** at 12 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_



**Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair  
FMATS Policy Committee**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

12-14-15