



## POLICY COMMITTEE

Main Conference Room

State of Alaska DOT&PF, 2301 Peger Road

Fairbanks, Alaska

Meeting Minutes –March 26, 2014

### 1. Call to Order

Mayor Luke Hopkins, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

### 2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

#### Attendee

\*Michael Schmetzer for Mayor John Eberhart  
 \*Mayor Luke Hopkins, Chair  
 \*Mayor Bryce Ward, Vice Chair  
 \*Steve Titus  
 \*Guy Sattley  
 \*Renee Staley for Perry Walley  
 \*Alice Edwards  
 \*\*\*Donna Gardino  
 +Joan Hardesty  
 +Brian Lindamood  
 \*\*Aaron Buckley  
 \*\*Deborah Todd  
 \*\*Kellen Spillman  
 Bernardo Hernandez  
 Adam Barth  
 Lance Roberts  
 Ryan Anderson  
 Barbara Tanner  
 Tim Woster  
 Pam Golden  
 Joel Buth  
 Adam Saunders  
 Karri Sicard  
 Robert Worledge  
 Bob Pristash  
 Tim Sullivan  
 Michael Koskey  
 Jennifer Eskridge  
 John Stowman  
 John Ringert (via telephone)  
 Janice Golub (via telephone)  
 David Miller

#### Representative Organization

Mayor, City of Fairbanks  
 Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough  
 Mayor, City of North Pole  
 Northern Region Director, DOT&PF  
 FNSB Assembly Member  
 City Council Member, City of Fairbanks  
 DEC, Division of Air Quality  
 FMATS MPO Coordinator  
 DEC, Division of Air Quality  
 Alaska Railroad  
 FMATS Transportation Planner  
 FMATS, Administrative Assistant  
 FNSB Community Planning  
 FNSB Planning  
 FNSB Transportation  
 Citizen  
 DOT&PF  
 DOT&PF  
 DOT&PF  
 DOT&PF  
 Citizen/Fairbanks Cycle Club  
 Citizen/Bicyclist  
 Citizen/Bicyclist  
 Citizen/Foodbank Volunteer  
 City of Fairbanks  
 Alaska Railroad  
 Citizen  
 FairBikes  
 FairBikes  
 Kittelson & Associates  
 FNSB Assembly  
 DOT&PF Maintenance

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

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

Joel Buth stated that he had worked on College Road in the past and used the road somewhat frequently to get through town, but usually avoided it. Mr. Buth stated that it made him nervous driving the road the way it was currently set up when someone made a left turn because it was kind of dangerous. Mr. Buth stated that he would be in favor of three lanes with a turn lane and thought it would feel safer. Mr. Buth stated that when he had gone down the road the sidewalk was completely unusable due to ice and water on the road and bicycles would get hammered if you were walking or riding a bicycle along that road.

Adam Sanders stated that he worked off College Road and wanted to attend to hear what was going on with the road. Mr. Saunders stated that he thought there were some issues that made it more difficult for alternate use such as bicycles and just wanted to know what was going on.

Kerri Sicard stated that she worked on College Road and found it difficult to walk along the sidewalks there and it was hard to move around and access the businesses in the area was one of her main concerns. Ms. Sicard stated that it would be nicer to have three lanes with a turn lane in the middle and slower for pedestrian/cycling use and she had also wanted to see what was going on with the project as well.

Lance Roberts stated that regarding the College Road Study he ultimately hoped that they would say no to the project but if they went forward with it, he hoped that they would do it as one whole integrated study of the project rather than piecemeal. Mr. Roberts stated that he did not think the project needed to be delayed for another year since it had already been delayed. Mr. Roberts cited Mr. Sattley's comment regarding bus pullouts and stated that there were two types of pullouts on College Road. Mr. Roberts stated that it would be harder for busses to pull back into traffic if the project were built the way they currently had it. Mr. Roberts stated that the busses stopped all traffic when they stopped to pick up passengers. Mr. Roberts stated that the sidewalks on College Road would not be very usable with the project. Mr. Roberts stated that use was not a problem on the current sidewalks.

Mr. Sattley asked Mr. Roberts about the three lane configuration with no bus turnout and when there were bus stops with one travel lane what drivers would do that were stuck behind the bus. Mr. Roberts stated that most drivers would probably take the turn lane called the suicide lane to pass the stopped bus.

John Stowman from Fair Bikes, is interested in everything bike related and spoke in favor of bike and bus transportation in Fairbanks and everything that improved bike traffic and found College Road to be very problematic to negotiate and use with respect to traffic using the road for multiple uses.

Jennifer Eskridge with Fair Bikes spoke in favor of the bike lanes on College Road because it was difficult to navigate the road as it was and there would be at least one hundred more bicycles navigating that road as early as June. Ms. Eskridge stated that they were initiating a new bike program in Fairbanks and had negotiated with the

University of Alaska to have bike stations on campus. Ms. Eskridge stated that the majority of bicycling occurred from the University and was on College Road. Ms. Eskridge stated that more bike lanes would be useful and were much needed.

Mr. Schmetzer stated that this was the first time he had heard about the bike program and inquired if there would be a bike station in the City of Fairbanks.

Ms. Eskridge stated that they did not have one negotiated within the City of Fairbanks yet but there had been a number of businesses express an interest in having bike racks in front of their businesses.

Mr. Sattley inquired if when people picked up a bike from some location in Fairbanks were they required to return it to the same place.

#### **4. Approval of March 26, 2014 Agenda**

**Motion:** To approve the March 26, 2014 Agenda as amended. (Ward/Sattley).

**Discussion:** Mr. Titus stated that under New Business, Item 8a and 8b should be switched around for better flow of information.

**Amendment to the Motion:** To move Item 8b to 8a and Item 8a to 8b in the Agenda. (Titus/Schmetzer)

**Vote on Amendment to the Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**Amended Motion:** To approve the March 26, 2014 Agenda, as amended.

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

#### **5. Approval of February 19, 2014 Minutes**

**Motion:** To approve the February 19, 2014 meeting minutes. (Titus/Sattley).

**Vote on the motion:** None opposed. Approved.

#### **6. Committee Reports**

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

Ms. Gardino summarized the Coordinator's office monthly report of meetings and activities for FMATS that were included in the meeting packet.

#### **7. Old Business**

None.

#### **8. New Business**

##### **a. College Road Corridor Study Recommendations (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino provided a timeline for the College Road Corridor Study to the Policy Committee and explained the formalized study recommendations that were approved by the Technical Committee. Ms. Gardino introduced John Ringert, the

consultant from Kittelson & Associates, who spoke via telephone and gave a summary of the final recommendations that were made for the College Road Corridor Study.

Mr. Ringert gave a slide presentation to the Policy Committee and provided information about corridor segments, alternative evaluation criteria, public outreach, traffic volume and growth analysis, public meeting and advisory group input, and the four options evaluated with resulting favored option which was three lanes with a restriped bike lane.

**Motion:** To accept the College Road Corridor Study Recommendations which will be used to scope projects within the corridor. (Titus/Ward).

**Discussion:**

Mr. Titus stated that his concern with the recommendations was that they discussed bike paths a lot and the scope and environmental document for the College Road project had already been completed and no bike lanes were addressed as part of the scope. Mr. Titus stated that then there was a study to institute the road diet and bike paths and studies were usually done at the front end of a project moving forward, so coming back after-the-fact to change the project design and if a motion were passed to add bike lanes, the project would not happen for many years. Mr. Titus stated that if the project was constructed with three lanes and restriped shoulders, the project could happen with an amended environmental document.

Mayor Ward stated that it was his understanding that they were looking at the recommendations of the study and did not think by accepting the study, the way it was worded, would change the actual scope of the project. Mayor Ward stated that this was just a recommendation based on the scope, public participation, and work done by Kittelson & Associates on the corridor. Mayor Ward stated that he felt discussion of actual projects would come later on.

Mr. Sattley stated that he read the minutes from the Technical Committee Meeting this month and asked Mr. Titus about bike paths versus shoulders and whether there was a difference between the shoulders he talked about and the bike paths with the bike symbols painted on them with everything being the same except how they were labeled.

Mr. Titus stated that Mr. Sattley was correct but if they were called out as “bike paths”, there was design criteria related to that, the project would have to be re-scoped and there would have to be an environmental document prepared to address the bike path.

Mr. Sattley inquired if the area that was already on the ground remained the same under either scenario except for the symbol on the road.

Mr. Titus stated that Mr. Sattley was correct and without the bike path symbol, they would have widened shoulders and could probably make the project happen.

Mayor Hopkins asked Mr. Titus if, after discussion, there was need to change the wording from: "bike lanes" to "widened shoulders" for recommendations when they considered moving a project forward in a timely manner.

Mr. Titus stated that he did not believe so, because Mayor Ward had been very articulate in explaining that this document was to be used as a scope with recommendations for future projects. Mr. Titus stated that if they did not want to have bike lanes in project scopes in the future, they could take them out.

Mayor Hopkins asked Mr. Titus if when making the motion it was understood that under the middle segment where the Consultant had left out the wording: "bike lanes" had been part of Mr. Titus' motion.

Mr. Titus stated that "bike lanes" was not part of his motion.

Mr. Sattley stated that it was part of the page.

Mayor Hopkins stated that Mr. Titus' motion did not say that and unless someone wanted to make an amendment, he thought Mr. Titus had been very clear that it was not part of his motion.

Mr. Sattley stated that Mr. Titus had already said the page was just back up to the motion and he did not have "bike lanes" in his motion.

Mr. Titus stated that the recommendations did not say "bike lanes" and if they were going to use them as recommendations in the future, they could add "bike lanes" in future scopes or not have them.

Mr. Sattley stated that the Consultant had said it was an oversight that "bike lanes" were not included in the middle segment and he had written it down.

Mayor Hopkins clarified that the Consultant had said that, but what Mr. Titus was recommending was Table 4 implementation recommendations included in the packet and did not include the word "bike lanes", so it was not what they were actually adopting. Mayor Hopkins stated that he wanted to make sure it was clear to everyone what they were voting on. Mayor Hopkins stated that if the Committee wanted the word "bike lanes" added to the motion, he would suggest they do so since it was not in there and they were about to vote on it.

Mayor Ward asked as a point of information for Ms. Gardino to reread the motion Mr. Titus had made. Mayor Ward stated that he did not think the motion was specific to the table and his point was that they were just recommendations.

Mayor Hopkins stated that he was asking for a clarification from Mr. Titus' who made the motion, who had said it was the recommendations document that Mr. Titus had referenced.

Mr. Titus stated that those were the recommendations in Table 4.

Mayor Hopkins asked Mayor Ward if there was nothing referenced, then what were the recommendations since they were not in the motion and they were referencing the list.

Mayor Ward stated it was his understanding that this was a tool to disseminate the information that was presented and thought it had been implied in the presentation that by restriping the middle segment it had been implied that there would be widened shoulders.

Mayor Hopkins stated that unless the parties were going to overrule, it was clear to him that this was the document that was being voted on by the motion.

Mr. Titus stated that if the Committee wanted to add the word "bike lanes" to the motion as mentioned by the Consultant and Mr. Sattley was correct and the Consultant had said that it had been a mistake that it was not included, including that was fine with him.

**Vote on Motion:** Six in favor. One opposed (Sattley). Approved.

**b. College Road Design Project Update**

Ryan Anderson from DOT gave a brief presentation for the College Road design projects that were currently in process which included: College Road Right Turn Lanes, Project which would be constructed in 2015; College/Antoinette/Margaret Intersection Reconstruction Project anticipated to be constructed in 2015, and College Road Pavement Rehabilitation, which would be rehabilitated and repaved between University Avenue and Danby Street with project to be constructed in 2015. Mr. Anderson stated that they were requesting the project scope change for termini on the College Road Pavement Rehabilitation Project to pave the gap between Danby Street and Margaret/Antoinette projects. Mr. Anderson stated that since the projects would be constructed at the same time, adding it to the College Road Rehabilitation project made the most sense. Mr. Anderson stated that DOT had incorporated corridor recommendations in a phased approach and proposed to incorporate some changes into projects already in progress to save time and money. Mr. Anderson stated that the biggest concern with the bike lanes was that they had not been included in the original rehabilitation project and there were a lot of unknowns about the incorporation of bike lanes with respect to the NEPA process.

**c. College Road Rehabilitation Design (and associated Scope) Changes (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino stated that the Technical Committee recommendation was to approve the \$300,000 in additional design funds and scope change request as presented.

**Motion:** To approve \$300,000 in design funding for the College Road Rehabilitation project in accordance with the revised scope/schedule/budget, as presented. (Titus/Schmetzer).

**Discussion:** Mr. Schmetzer inquired if Phase 4 would be incorporated at a later date since only Phase 2 was mentioned.

Ms. Gardino stated that it would depend on what year the funding was obligated and would work closely with Mr. Anderson to figure out the funding and when they got further along in the design phase they would have a better idea where the funding would come from.

Ms. Edwards wanted clarification that the \$1 million dollar Phase 4 obligation would be addressed at a later date.

Mayor Hopkins asked Mr. Titus if the money could be obligated for Phase 4.

Mr. Titus stated that it would be mid-August but would not speak to that schedule just yet.

Mayor Hopkins asked Mr. Titus if restriping the east end of the College Road project could be incorporated into the project since it was not part of the project right now.

Mr. Schmetzer stated that restriping was not an option that was figured into the project by the Advisory Group and there were no bike paths east of the area that Mayor Hopkins was talking about and you would just get on the sidewalk.

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

**d. South Cushman Sidewalk and Drainage Improvements PH4 Increase (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino stated that the project information was included in the meeting packet and a Special Technical Committee Meeting had been held and they approved the increase for the signalization so the project could move forward.

**Motion:** To approve \$132,000 for the South Cushman Sidewalk and Drainage Improvements project. (Schmetzer/Sattley).

**Discussion:** None.

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

**e. PL Funding Recommendations (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino explained the funding recommendations brought forward from the Special Technical Committee meeting and included in the meeting packet.

**Motion:** To appropriate \$166,400 for a standalone freight plan, \$20,000 for developing a bicycle and pedestrian count methodology, and \$13,600 for the Don't Be Fuelish Campaign as a result of an expected increase in FFY13 and FFY14 PL funds and that a consultation regarding the new PL fund amounts will take place between DOT and FMATS on April 30, 2014. (Sattley/Schmetzer).

**Discussion:** Mayor Hopkins stated that discussion should occur with DOT on or before the April 30, 2014 deadline.

Mayor Ward stated that they were looking at different ways to spend the PL funds but it was his understanding that earlier this year they had discussed looking into implementing or establishing a freight plan and that had not been something that the Policy Committee had been interested in pursuing. Mayor Ward stated that the City of North Pole had wanted a freight plan because they were concerned about the amount of truck traffic coming into the City of North Pole and getting on and off the Richardson Highway. Mayor Ward stated that his concern with doing a standalone area freight plan was that they would lose the specificity for the Richardson Highway corridor in North Pole. Mayor Ward stated that he was curious about the motivations behind an areawide freight plan when they had previously not been interested in that.

Ms. Gardino explained that North Pole was an important element that could be perceived as a problem and also thought that trucks moving in and out of North Pole were going through the Fairbanks area as well, so to have a more comprehensive and all-inclusive study was thought to be of value.

Mr. Schmetzer stated that they had not thought it would dilute North Pole's concerns but would address them all and the whole area which clearly was critical.

Mayor Hopkins inquired about the scope of the Stand Alone Freight Plan and what it would include.

Ms. Gardino stated that there had been no discussion of the scope and specific type of freight plan at the meeting.

Mayor Hopkins asked Ms. Gardino if it could become a rail plan as well.

Mr. Schmetzer stated that a freight plan was definitely a necessary tool.

Mayor Ward stated that there needed to be some type of scope development prior to funding and establishing a plan.

**Amendment to the Motion:** and request that the Technical Committee clarify the scope on the standalone area freight plan. (Schmetzer/Staley).

**Discussion:** Mayor Ward stated that establishing a scope was a very good idea but he had more concerns with the motion as a whole.

Mr. Lindamood stated that he wanted to clarify that the Railroad had a plan to move the North Pole piece of the railroad which would significantly reduce and resolve the majority of the freight movement concerns for rail transportation in North Pole which was why it had been left out of the motion.

Mayor Ward stated that the motion stated that they approved the funding for the project and it seemed to him that clarification of the scope was needed prior to approval of funding.

Mayor Hopkins stated that the Technical Committee had \$166,400 and that was all the money they had and they would want to put together a scope for that.

**Vote on Amendment to the Motion:** Five in favor. One opposed. (Ward).  
Approved.

**Amendment to the Motion:** and to reduce the areawide freight plan by \$25,000 to establish a budget for a consultant to help address the issues with the UPWP, and task FMATS staff with identifying a least two consultants for the Policy Committee to choose from by the next meeting. (Ward/Schmetzer).

**Discussion:** Mayor Ward stated that this would establish a funding mechanism for development of the priorities.

Mr. Titus stated that the UPWP had to be fully developed, agreed upon, and signed off by FHWA by September. Mr. Titus stated that as he understood it, the items were being broken down into tasks and within those tasks there were different responsibilities for different organizations and it appeared to him that dollar figures could be attached to those tasks. Mr. Titus stated that this breakdown could be completed in-house and save the money of hiring a consultant. Mr. Titus stated that there were those that disagreed with the current PL fund split and unless there was empirical evidence to the contrary, the split should remain the same. Mr. Titus stated that here we had the opportunity to quantify those costs without using a consultant and believe that we could do that ourselves.

Mayor Ward stated that if there was commitment by the Policy Committee that they could come to an agreement with this, but over a year later there were still issues with it and felt that a hiring a consultant was the most prudent way to do that.

Mr. Titus stated that the work needed to be done in-house due to the critical time constraints on the UPWP.

Mr. Schmetzer stated that he thought Mayor Ward's idea was a very good one, but he did not think there was enough time to hire a consultant and would suggest that the Technical Committee provide that information.

Mr. Titus stated that the Technical Committee had failed once, so possibly a work session with a different group of people should meet.

Mr. Sattley stated that he agreed with Mr. Titus regarding that hiring a consultant was probably the worst thing they could do at this point.

**Vote on Amended Motion:** Motion withdrawn.

**Amended Motion:** To appropriate \$166,400 for a standalone freight plan, \$20,000 for developing a bicycle and pedestrian count methodology, and \$13,600 for the Don't Be Fuelish Campaign as a result of an expected increase in FFY13 and FFY14 PL funds and that a consultation regarding the new PL fund amounts will take place between DOT and FMATS on April 30, 2014 and request that the Technical Committee clarify the scope on the standalone freight plan.

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

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

**f. FFY15 – FFY16 UPWP Development (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino explained there had been a special Technical Committee meeting the day before for development of the UPWP and passed out the task list compiled by the Technical Committee at that meeting.

**Motion:** To include the following tasks to be included within the UPWP: MTP development and implementation, UPWP development and implementation, TIP development and implementation, and the Air Quality Conformity development and that all other tasks, as necessary, are supporting tasks and should be addressed in the UPWP. (Ward/Schmetzer).

**Discussion:** Mr. Titus stated that there was an opportunity to break down costs each entity was responsible for and come up with a cost accounting for the PL funding and this was a step in the right direction to negate the use of a consultant.

Mayor Ward asked Ms. Gardino how the recommendations for the tasks were defined.

Ms. Gardino stated that the tasks were the five main tasks required under 23 USC 134 which were the current planning regulations required of an MPO.

Mayor Hopkins inquired who modified the tasks and what action was taken that modified it.

Ms. Gardino stated that she had modified the tasks and added GIS under supporting tasks and modified public involvement communication labels since the Borough was used to provide labels in planning efforts such as for the College Road Corridor Study.

Mayor Hopkins wanted to clarify that the tasks were modified by her after discussion with the Technical Committee.

Ms. Gardino stated that was correct.

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

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

Lance Roberts commented that he was saddened by the Policy Committee decision to spend more money, time, change the scope, destroy his road, and downgrade his community. Mr. Roberts stated that he could usually get on College Road quickly with two lanes but now there would only be one congested lane. Mr. Roberts stated that the study had not addressed traffic flow appropriately and the fact that the purpose of a road was to get from point A to point B and everything else was to support that. Mr. Roberts stated that FMATS had lost track of that. Mr. Roberts stated that studies were about the accoutrements that could be added to the road rather than traffic flow and safety. Mr. Roberts stated that busses stopping would decrease traffic flow on the road, which would cost him many minutes a day going back and forth to work. Mr. Roberts stated that the conclusion he had come to was that FMATS was able to destroy his road and community because they had too much time and money to spend. Mr. Roberts stated that he was extremely disappointed that his neighborhood was marginalized and they were moving forward and delaying the entire College Road project just to accommodate the scope change.

Jennifer Eskridge stated that she wanted to thank the Policy Committee and that was her neighborhood. Ms. Eskridge stated that she was grateful for the opportunity to have more bikes and to be able to bike more safely. Ms. Eskridge stated she was grateful for the opportunity to have more bikes on the road and the fact that bikes and cars could share the road safely. Ms. Eskridge stated that bicycling and other forms of transportation made a difference in the air quality and impact to the environment.

Mr. Spillman stated that he was part of the subcommittee that looked at the stand alone freight plan and there was significant discussion about the North Pole freight

congestion that did not get into the scope and was sure that the Technical Committee would address it and get it into the scope.

**10. Other Issues**

None.

**11. Informational Items**

**a. Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for HSIP Program**

To be discussed at the next meeting.

**b. FMATS Historical Plaque Update**

To be discussed at the next meeting.

**c. Obligations/Offsets**

Ms. Gardino explained the obligations/offset list included in the meeting packet.

**12. Policy Committee Comments**

- Ms. Staley had no comment other than being glad to have filled in for Mr. Walley.
- Mr. Schmetzer commented that he was looking forward to Mayor Eberhart's return.
- Mr. Sattley stated that he had watched Gavel to Gavel and the Statewide Planning Director, Jeff Ottesen, was asked by Legislators about improving road infrastructure for the new potential gasline alignment on the Parks Highway. Mr. Sattley stated that Mr. Ottesen stated that there had been plans for upgrades to bridges on the Richardson and those projects could slide to obtain the funding for the gasline. Mr. Sattley inquired where the money would come from for that project and it seemed that all the funds came out of Northern Region.
- Mr. Titus stated that there would be a lot of work on the Parks and Richardson Highways as well as others. Mr. Titus stated that he believed all the bridges on the Dalton were up to snuff except for a couple. Mr. Titus stated that the Gerstle River Bridge on the Alaska Highway needed to be worked on. Mr. Titus stated that he thought what Mr. Otteson was talking about was moving money out of the MAP21 in the STIP to NHS which the Dalton was and moving that money into those projects.
- Mayor Ward thanked everyone for a productive meeting.
- Mayor Hopkins stated that he hoped the Policy Committee brought forward a TIP project that put in more bus pullouts in the future.

Mayor Hopkins stated that he was concerned that Fairbanks had not been part of the initial Statewide Long Range Plan meeting in Anchorage except via teleconference which was not the same as being there in person.

Ms. Gardino stated that she and Judy Chapman had attended the meeting as well as people from Bethel, Nome, and other places as well.

Mayor Hopkins stated that his concern had been that there was inadequate representation from the Interior, as it was a large transportation hub.

13. **Adjourn**

**Motion to Adjourn:** (Ward/Sattley). The meeting was adjourned at 12:44 p.m.

The next Policy Committee Meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. April 16, 2014 in the DOT&PF Main Conference Room at 2301 Peger Road.

Approved:  Date: 4/16/14  
Mayor Luke Hopkins, Chair  
FMATS Policy Committee