



POLICY BOARD

Meeting Minutes - May 17, 2017

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

1. Call to Order

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

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

Attendee

- *Bryce Ward, Chair
- *Karl Kassel, Vice Chair
- *Jim Matherly
- *Sarah Schacher for Ryan Anderson
- *Van Lawrence
- *Jerry Cleworth
- *Denise Koch (via telephone)
- **Donna Gardino
- **Alicia Stevens
- **Deborah Todd
- **Margaret Carpenter
- Jewelz Barker
- **Don Galligan
- +Jackson Fox
- +Judy Chapman
- Lance Roberts
- Michael Meeks

Representative Organization

- Mayor, City of North Pole
- Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
- Mayor, City of Fairbanks
- Director, DOT&PF, Northern Region
- FNSB Assembly
- City Council, City of Fairbanks
- DEC, Division of Air Quality
- FMATS MPO Coordinator
- FMATS Transportation Planner
- FMATS Administrative Assistant
- DOT&PF Planning
- Catalyst AK Consultant
- FNSB Planning
- City of Fairbanks
- DOT&PF Planning
- FNSB Assembly
- City of Fairbanks

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

3. Approval of the May 17, 2017 Agenda

Motion: To approve the May 17, 2017 Agenda. (Lawrence/Kassel).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the April 19, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the April 19 2017 meeting minutes. (Matherly/Lawrence).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Committee/Working Group Reports (including the Chair's Report)

a. Staff Report and Technical Committee Action Items

Ms. Gardino provided information and highlights for all meetings, briefings, conferences, teleconferences, seminars, open houses, workshops, presentations, forums, and field trips she or FMATS staff had attended or participated in since the last meeting.

b. Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Plan Working Group Update

Ms. Gardino summarized the work group discussion and the resulting information and goals derived from that discussion. Ms. Gardino stated that

there would be a meeting on June 2, 2017 to go over the comments received and try to put a more succinct direction on the scope of the project.

6. Public Comment Period (Items not on the Agenda)

Lance Roberts, PO Box 83449, Fbks., AK 99708 - Mr. Roberts stated that he wanted to talk about bike lanes. Mr. Roberts stated that one thing he found when he was involved with the bike lanes they were trying to put on College Road was that, after doing research, he wanted to point out that it was not like all bikers in the world wanted bike lanes. Mr. Roberts stated that there was a lot of controversy out there and it was usually based on specific circumstances. Mr. Roberts stated that not all the bikers wanted bike lanes all the time. Mr. Roberts stated it was something that needed to be thought out with each project on whether they wanted to do bike lanes or not. Mr. Roberts stated that there were circumstances where they were not necessarily good. Mr. Roberts stated that there was a good article that he had sent to FMATS where some people wanted bike lanes based on environmental considerations of bikes and some wanted them based on economic considerations. Mr. Roberts stated that it was a really important point to think about that in terms of the amount of money you spent based on the relatively small amount of people that used it. Mr. Roberts stated that you really had to look at your infrastructure and see if you really wanted to dedicate that much money to it. Mr. Roberts stated that in terms of the amount of capital money it cost to build it and the maintenance money to maintain it, they really needed to look at the infrastructure and see whether it was needed. Mr. Roberts stated that the biggest concern was safety and how to make the bike lanes safer. Mr. Roberts stated that it had to be done right and cited an article he had sent them about a bike lane design they did in Europe at an intersection where they integrated the bike lanes in so it was safe for the bike traffic relative to the traffic. Mr. Roberts stated he sent the article to them because he thought it would be interesting. Mr. Roberts stated that the biggest point he wanted to make on it was that if they were going to do bike lanes, put them where they would fit, and do not put them where you had to cut mobility down for the regular road traffic. Mr. Roberts stated that they had roads for a reason and it was to help people get from Point A to Point B. Mr. Roberts stated that traffic flow was important for economic development and it was important for the whole PM^{2.5} issue. Mr. Roberts stated that not just the number of lanes, but also traffic signal timing and things like that were all critical issues so that people were not hanging out with their vehicles and running them longer. Mr. Roberts stated that bike lanes were important but do not cut down mobility. Mr. Roberts stated that was the problem with College Road because they would have lost a lot of mobility if they had done bike lanes the way they were planned and taken it down to three lanes. Mr. Roberts stated that was why hundreds of people signed the petition to stop it. Mr. Roberts stated that people from all walks of life had signed it and it was the most bipartisan thing he had ever done. Mr. Roberts stated that he was not against bike lanes. Mr. Roberts stated that something the City always worried about was where to put the snow, so maybe they could do summer bike lanes that were posted and only used in the summer, and the City could use the bike lanes for snow storage in the winter months. Mr. Roberts stated that he did not have any specific issues going on right now, but he just wanted them to really think about it and really look at where it was going to fit in for the projects going forward so they were not impacting the mobility of the other users and were keeping good traffic flow and safety.

Mr. Cleworth asked Mr. Roberts if he had given that article to Ms. Gardino.

Mr. Roberts stated that he had sent it to Ms. Gardino to pass on this morning and she might not have received it in time to pass it on.

Ms. Gardino stated that she had not received anything and she was going to ask him for a copy.

Mr. Roberts stated that Ms. Gardino was the only one that he sent it to and it was sent through the Borough email so it might have been an old email address and not gone through, so he would send it again.

Ms. Schacher stated that she was curious what Mr. Roberts' thoughts were because he suggested that they should be carefully looking at where bike lanes were on a project by project basis. Ms. Schacher asked if that would suggest that, in his mind, it might make sense to have a bike lane on University Avenue but not on College Road even though they connected so they might have discontinuous, non-connected facilities.

Mr. Roberts stated that he thought they probably could get away with that, depending on the spacing, because some places like College Road had very wide sidewalks. Mr. Roberts stated the he grew up on College Road and they were taught very early on that sidewalks were the bike path. Mr. Roberts stated that there were very wide sidewalks on College Road so he thought they could easily get a bike path to integrate somehow to connect in with the sidewalk on College Road so you could have a path around town with a mixture of sidewalks and bike paths. Mr. Roberts stated that there was some engineering there and some very tight spaces around town, so there were lots of questions.

7. Old Business

a. Freight Mobility Plan Existing Conditions Report (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained that it was not included in the meeting packet but they had provided a link to the third draft on the FMATS website and had received many comments and the responses to those comments which were also posted on the website. Ms. Gardino stated that the recommendation from the Technical Committee was to approve the Existing Conditions Report of the Freight Mobility Plan.

Mr. Lawrence stated that he had not had a chance to review the report and asked Ms. Gardino if there were any over-arching recommendations or conclusions in the report.

Ms. Gardino stated that there were not. Ms. Gardino stated that it was an existing conditions report so they were basically just looking at where they were today. Ms. Gardino stated that the next step would be to develop their proposed projects for the next 20 to 25 years in a model. Ms. Gardino stated that this part helped them identify existing deficiencies but did not define what they did to address those deficiencies.

Motion: To approve the Existing Conditions Report of the Freight Mobility Plan. (Kassel/Lawrence).

Public Comment: No public comment.

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

b. FMATS Transition Plan Update: Joint Meeting

Ms. Gardino introduced Ms. Barker of Catalyst Alaska who was the Consultant for the FMATS Transition Plan to provide an update to the Policy Board.

Ms. Barker stated that they had moved through Task 4 and the literature review process simultaneously and the next task was to present the results of those findings to both the Technical Committee and Policy Board. Ms. Barker stated that it was their recommendation that they have a joint meeting to keep them on schedule for hiring the new Executive Director and the succession plan for the next FMATS Executive Director. Ms. Barker stated that the June meeting would be more of a work session and would be at least two hours so that everyone received the same information all at once.

Mr. Lawrence stated that they should talk about scheduling that meeting.

Ms. Barker stated that there were some options discussed and it was suggested that a possible date for the meeting was prior to the Policy Board meeting in June. Ms. Barker inquired if the Policy Board was willing to host a joint meeting that the Technical Committee Staff could join before or after their regularly scheduled June Policy meeting. Mayor Ward stated that he thought that it was a great idea but he would not be there for the July meeting.

Ms. Gardino stated that for the July meeting they could possibly meet the week before the Policy Board meeting so they could discuss and make any changes to it and make a determination to present at the Policy meeting.

It was decided by the Policy Board and the meeting was scheduled for June 21, 2017 from 2-4 p.m. Ms. Barker stated that she would defer to Ms. Gardino to invite the Technical Committee members to that meeting.

8. New Business

a. Birch Hill Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Phase 7 Increase (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that there was a request from DOT for \$175,000 due to an unanticipated utility relocation of a GVEA pole that contained fiber optics.

Ms. Gardino stated that this was work that needed to be done ahead of the actual construction project. Ms. Gardino stated that the amount of the request had actually gone up to \$260,000 and the recommendation from the Technical Committee had been to approve the funding using funds from Phase 4.

Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Schacher if the optic cable was above or below ground. Ms. Schacher stated that it was above ground and on the GVEA pole that was in conflict with the path. Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Schacher if she could explain how it took a quarter of a million dollars to move a pole.

Ms. Schacher stated she would try her best. Ms. Schacher stated that to do that she would have to explain how DOT worked on utility estimates.

Ms. Schacher explained that utility companies had relocation benefits per State law so if they came in and developed a facility such as a bike path and their facility was in conflict with that work, DOT had to pay to relocate them.

Ms. Schacher stated that they were not a utility company's number one priority especially in the Planning phase. Ms. Schacher stated that even when Construction was barking at the door, it was really difficult to get estimates from them. Ms. Schacher stated that in this case, they initiated the utility funding based on an estimate from cursory review and discussions with that utility company. Ms. Schacher stated that two years later they came out with a different set of staff and looked at it when construction was imminent and said

that pole was a conflict and happened to be an expensive pole with fiber optics attached. Ms. Schacher stated that was the estimate they gave DOT to relocate the pole. Ms. Schacher stated that it was not a bidding situation. Ms. Schacher stated that they went off of actual costs incurred to the utility company. Ms. Schacher stated that it was an estimate and could end up being more or less. Ms. Schacher stated that an agreement was established based on that estimate and then they worked on that agreement. Ms. Schacher stated that if there were funds leftover those funds went back and if more funds were needed, they had to come back and request them. Ms. Schacher stated that it was a frustrating thing that they could not get that much control of. Ms. Schacher stated that the best that DOT could do was keep their thumb on the utility companies and try to improve communication with them. Ms. Schacher stated that DOT was making sure that they were communicating regularly with the utilities about projects or conflicts and not letting staff turnovers or other things create surprises for them later.

Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Schacher if she knew how they came up with an estimate of \$260,000 dollars and what was involved. Mr. Lawrence stated that they had optic cable which he knew was pricey stuff, but that was attached to a wooden pole. Mr. Lawrence stated that they had to set a new pole in the ground and then move the cable to a new pole.

Ms. Schacher stated that she suspected that it might be, but they had the fiber too and there might be some reroute considerations with new poles or new anchoring considerations for the pole. Ms. Schacher stated that this was notoriously swampy ground and they might have some sort of anchoring for the pole. Ms. Schacher stated that she did not know the details but she did know that GVEA typically used contractors to do that work so they were getting estimates from their contractors and in turn giving DOT estimates and they also had their oversight costs as well.

Mr. Cleworth asked Ms. Schacher if since they had no diagrams of the bike path or where the pole was but wondered if there other options.

Ms. Schacher stated that they did everything that they could to avoid it, but she could tell him that in this case after having driven Birch Hill, as with most roads, the powerlines were parallel to the road so the options would probably be to swing the path into the road which was an undesirable situation for a separated bicycle facility. Ms. Schacher stated that she knew they were also dealing with some pretty high fill conditions in some places on Birch Hill, so it might not be possible. Ms. Schacher stated that she could tell him that DOT did not make a habit of moving those facilities because it was fun and easy for anyone. Ms. Schacher stated that they did everything they could to try to avoid situations like that because it was just more cost, time, and effort, and the utility companies did not want to do it either.

Mr. Cleworth stated that he understood that but thought the price was crazy and thought they were taking advantage of DOT. Mr. Cleworth asked Ms. Schacher if when she said they were swinging the bike path into the road whether she meant actually into the lane of traffic or onto the shoulder.

Ms. Schacher stated that it would be adjacent to the road. Ms. Schacher stated that they could do that similar to an attached bike path which had other considerations as well because if they created a sidewalk, effectively they still

had to maintain a separation between the shoulder of the road and the facility. Ms. Schacher stated that bike paths took up space and that was the reality.

Mr. Cleworth asked Ms. Schacher if the project was currently under construction. Ms. Schacher stated that DOT was seeking authority to advertise for construction right now.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To approve \$260,000 for Phase 7 of the Birch Hill Bicycle and Pedestrian project using funding from Phase 4. (Kassel/Lawrence).

Discussion: Mayor Kassel stated that he seconded Mr. Cleworth's concerns about the cost of the project and thought it was extremely high.

Mr. Lawrence stated that he also concurred with what Mr. Cleworth said, but was in favor of this project. Mr. Lawrence stated that he thought it was a good project and would get a lot of use, so that was why he would vote for it.

Mayor Ward asked Ms. Schacher if there was a reason why this could not be included in the bid.

Ms. Schacher stated that there was no reason other than it was the utility companies discretion as to the contractors they used. Ms. Schacher stated that usually fiber handling was considered specialized. Ms. Schacher stated that they commonly did concurrent utility relocations, particularly underground like waterlines, but this pole was in the way of construction so had to be done in advance. Ms. Schacher agreed that it could be entertained if all the utility companies affected gave them the design they were working on and incorporated it into their contract to have their contractor do it. Ms. Schacher stated that would be another way to find out what the true costs were but they would still be paying the utility company to participate in the inspection.

Mayor Ward stated that when costs were getting at high as this one, and he understand that there were other things that went into it as well, but he thought this seemed excessive.

Ms. Schacher stated that was the reason that they tried to avoid right-of-way relocation. Ms. Schacher stated that she could assure Mayor Ward that while there was sticker shock with this price, the DOT did not just blindly pay the bill and monitored each billing that came in very carefully.

Mayor Ward stated that he did not know what utility companies were involved but if the utility companies continued to charge excessively they might want to consider going to a competitive bidding process. Ms. Schacher stated that she would carry that back and talk with their utilities staff about that.

Vote on Motion: Five in favor. (Kassel, Lawrence, Schacher, Matherly, Koch). Two opposed. (Ward/Cleworth). Approved.

b. FMATS Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that the Municipality of Anchorage had a bike and pedestrian advisory committee. Ms. Gardino stated that they had a bike and pedestrian advisory committee before that they established during the non-motorized effort, but most of the previous members had not responded to their recent emails when asking for count volunteers. Ms. Gardino stated that they definitely needed to define what the roles and responsibilities would be for the committee and also give them a definitive scope because they were not

making decisions for the Policy Board, but would make recommendations to the Technical Committee that would go through the Policy Board. Ms. Gardino stated that they had provided an interactive map where people had made comments. Ms. Gardino stated that if they had not been on the map, they encouraged them to get on it because this was defining the deficiencies so they could come up with future projects to address those deficiencies. Ms. Gardino stated that she was really excited that so many people had been on their map already. Ms. Gardino stated that she thought having a bike and ped committee would help them in their planning process.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To establish an FMATS Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. (Lawrence/Schacher).

Discussion: Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Gardino who she anticipated would be on the committee. Ms. Gardino stated that they had not established that yet, but they did have a working group for the bike lane discussion and thought that might be a good working group they could use to identify who would be on the Bike and Ped Advisory Committee. Ms. Gardino stated that they would have representatives from the Technical Committee, Access Alaska to provide a strong voice for the people who were mobility challenged, volunteers that counted bike and peds, as well as other citizen groups. Ms. Gardino stated that the Policy Board members would also be non-voting members.

Mr. Cleworth stated that he was always hesitant to establish committees, especially permanent committees, unless there was a compelling reason to do so because once established, they were there for life and it was very difficult to get rid of a committee. Mr. Cleworth stated that they had them before and if there was a compelling reason to do so, then so be it. Mr. Cleworth stated that currently when DOT or the City of Fairbanks designed a project, they had the Complete Streets concept that they utilized and that incorporated pedestrian and bicycles facilities that they all had to run through the gamut and make sure that they were working on that. Mr. Cleworth stated that without seeing what the responsibilities were for the committee, he foresaw problems with that. Mr. Cleworth stated that if you had a group that looked at a project, came back and made recommendations and then engineering got involved and said it looked good on paper, but technically they had to do something else, conflicts came up and then they had the right to come before the Policy Board to request changes to the design. Mr. Cleworth stated that kind of built in a conflict there that he hoped did not happen. Mr. Cleworth stated that the construction season was so short and the less complications they had to get them done, the better. Mr. Cleworth stated that he thought they needed to see what was envisioned as the parameters on the committee, whether they were going to have a life expectancy, whether it was going to be longstanding or for a year, or they were going to renew it annually. Mr. Cleworth stated that he saw problems but saw some plusses too and thought they could be of help with some projects where folks were at a loss as to what they wanted to see. Mr. Cleworth stated that he did know that when it came to bicycle paths, there were two very strong schools of thought. Mr. Cleworth stated that for recreational family riders, they tended to like to use the bike path but the serious bicyclists liked to be on the road and they had an inherent conflict between the two user groups. Mr. Cleworth stated that was something that

maybe a committee could solve or work on. Mr. Cleworth stated that he would like to postpone it until they figured out who the members would be, define what the roles and responsibilities were, if they were compatible with the DOT and City processes and not cause a delay, and how this conceptually was going to work. Mr. Cleworth stated that he did not want to create something where they got into a potential conflict with their own committee.

Mayor Kassel stated that as their community grew, this got to be a more and more important consideration. Mayor Kassel stated that there was a growing bike population and they were not all on the same page or riding the same bike. Mr. Kassel stated that there were a lot of different ideas about how they went about doing these sorts of things. Mayor Kassel stated that he very much appreciated the comments from Mr. Roberts and his testimony. Mayor Kassel stated that he thought they did need to take a close look at bike lanes, bike paths, and sidewalks, and how they all interacted. Mayor Kassel stated that he thought there could be a huge value to this committee. Mayor Kassel stated that he thought it could be very important to have the expert bikers or a variety of bicyclists contribute opinions on design considerations. Mayor Kassel stated that he had some of the same reservations that Mr. Cleworth pointed out as well. Mayor Kassel stated that he would like to see more substance as to the roles, responsibilities, and make up of this committee with some sort of mandatory review process at some time in the future. Mayor Kassel stated that he thought it would be a huge value. Mayor Kassel stated that he thought they should try to go in this direction but going forward thought they needed a little more direction before they approved it.

Mr. Lawrence stated that he thought the concept of having this advisory committee was a good one. Mr. Lawrence stated that as Ms. Gardino pointed out, the comments on the website showed that 80 percent of them had to do with bicyclists and pedestrians. Mr. Lawrence stated that he wanted to point out that one incorrect thing that Mr. Roberts had said was that the percentage of bicycle users in the summer in Fairbanks was small. Mr. Lawrence stated that he thought the idea of the committee had a lot of merit. Mayor Ward stated that they could task the Technical Committee with coming up with the purpose and direction for the committee were.

Motion: To replace the original motion and refer back to the Technical Committee to consider and report on what the purpose, duties, and composition of the committee would be. (Lawrence/Matherly).

Discussion: Mr. Cleworth stated that he thought they just needed to be clear and they were probably going to ask why there were doing this. Mr. Cleworth stated that the criticism he heard from engineering was that they did not like design by committees. Mr. Cleworth stated that it needed to somehow fit in with the design process so that it did not slow it down and that was his main concern.

Ms. Schacher stated that a good idea for this committee might be to establish some sort of charter or something that established what their role was and who made the final determination, and, if they came up with something that was outside the scope of the project plans, who overruled that and how that could be mitigated.

Amendment to the Motion: To include duration in the report.
(Lawrence/Matherly).

Amended Motion: To refer back to the Technical Committee to consider and report on what the purpose, duties, composition, and duration of the committee would be.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

c. Cowles Street Reconstruction Scope Modification (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that when they visited Cowles Street, they knew intersection improvements were necessary. The termini needs to be changed to include “through” the intersection and the new scope would be to reconstruct the intersection from 1st Avenue through East Cowles.

Ms. Schacher stated that the project scope would be more simply worded and those points would be used for backup.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To approve modifying the scope of the Cowles Street Reconstruction project to the following: Reconstruct Cowles Street from 1st Avenue through East Cowles to include sidewalk, drainage, intersection, and illumination improvements. (Lawrence/Kassel).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

d. Noble Street Upgrades Phase 4 Authority (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that there was a weekly meeting for the Noble Street construction project and she attended so she could keep up with any changes during construction. Ms. Gardino stated that there had been some changes that she had approved to date which totaled about about \$107,500 which was half of her approval authority which was currently \$250,000. Ms. Gardino stated that on this project, the bids came in over \$900,000 below the Engineer’s Estimate and so far things were going really well. Ms. Gardino stated that she had looked at the current approval authority and recommended that they increase the approval authority limits for the Noble Street project only to prevent construction delays.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To increase the Phase 4 Authority Limit for Changes on Noble Street Upgrades to the following: Staff \$750,000, Technical Committee \$1,000,000, and Policy Board >\$1,000,000. (Cleworth/Kassel).

Discussion: Ms. Gardino stated that the weekly meeting was at 10 am on Wednesdays, so she would be able to provide the Policy Board with regular updates on all the change orders to date and where they were at on the Noble Street project.

Mr. Lawrence stated that the example Ms. Gardino picked was having to provide fencing to prevent people from falling into holes. Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Schacher why that amount for fencing was not figured into the original bid since it was evident that it could happen if there were holes being dug.

Ms. Schacher stated that they did not always know how the contractor was going to handle certain situations and they might tackle the situation in a

different way that might end up taking less time and restrict less traffic.

Ms. Schacher stated that those details were actually worked out when the project was on the ground. Ms. Schacher stated it might not have been anticipated that there would be people in that area so she could not answer with specifics other than they did not tell a contractor how they were going to work unless they reasonably anticipated that those conditions would occur.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

e. FMATS Area Surface Upgrade FY16 Phase 4 Increase (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that in late March, the DOT came to her with a non-financial PDA request to move funding from one place to another within the project. Ms. Gardino stated that it was then discovered that an additional \$31,834 was needed due to the additional time and work in the City of North Pole. Ms. Gardino stated that the engineering percentage was higher than it normally would be and they had not caught the error until recently.

Ms. Gardino stated that it had not gone through the Technical Committee as it had not been received until after that meeting. Ms. Gardino stated that Ms. Schacher might have more information than she did.

Ms. Schacher explained that the areawide surface upgrade projects were complicated since they had to establish who paid what match. Ms. Schacher stated that the error was that when they started the project, DOT staff were inadvertently charging to just the one line of coding and should have been distributing their time as it pertained to the area they were working in so that the agency paid the allocated portion for their allocated portion of the engineering costs. Ms. Schacher stated that the other thing that had happened was that the City of North Pole had some crack sealing work that was fairly low cost but was pretty intensive and had to be inspected intensively. Ms. Schacher stated that it got pretty labor intensive and the crack sealing amount was overrun, and that compounded with the new accounting system glitches had resulted in cost overruns that were not discovered until the project was constructed and they needed to be paid now.

Mayor Ward asked if since one project got charged incorrectly whether that meant that another project received a credit for that amount.

Ms. Schacher stated that unfortunately that was the case and they could not borrow from other projects because each agency provided the match so how they coded the payment for each project was different. Ms. Schacher stated that DOT was going to think about that and figure out how to be smarter with that going forward. Mayor Ward inquired if that meant that additional money would be required by the City of North Pole. Ms. Schacher stated that the City of North Pole would not have to provide additional match for that project.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To approve an increase of \$31,834 in offset funding for Phase 4 of the FMATS FFY16 Area Surface Upgrade project. (Kassel/Lawrence).

Discussion: Mr. Cleworth stated that when he and Mayor Ward had discussed this the day before, Mayor Ward had comments and wondered if he would like to reiterate those comments.

Mayor Ward stated that this seemed a little ridiculous. Mayor Ward stated that he was a contractor and this was not the first time that this had happened. Mayor Ward stated that he understood that there were issues with the State accounting system that had gone on for several years now, but it seemed to him that since this happened a year ago, he thought it should have come out sooner. Mayor Ward asked Ms. Schacher if she could address how this would be handled so it did not happen in the future and what would happen if FMATS decided not to pay it.

Ms. Schacher stated that Mayor Ward was right to be frustrated. Ms. Schacher stated that she would say that it was unusual that they found something like this out so late in the game. Ms. Schacher stated that DOT had trouble with the State accounting system and understood that had improved over time.

Ms. Schacher stated that it started out with an estimate based on an historical costs for similar work so they did not have to go back and tie up FMATS money. Ms. Schacher stated that this was an oversight where they overshot what it would cost and they should have been back here sooner, but the project was not set up correctly so it could be more closely monitored to discover those errors in real time. Ms. Schacher explained that since then, steps had been taken to administer their site administration software to get everyone on the same page with regard to coding their timesheets.

Ms. Schacher stated that if it would have to come out of State funds and there were none available right now, so they would be hat in hand to do that and did not know what the implications were to FMATS since that had never been negotiated since FMATS made a ten percent match, there was no precedent for that.

Mayor Kassel stated that he sympathized since the Borough had 108 Road Service Districts and it was a challenge to break down all the costs and get everything right. Mayor Kassel stated that he did not see the contingency amounts anywhere in the paperwork but asked if it could be taken out of that contingency fund.

Ms. Gardino stated that the match that the City of North Pole paid the 9.03 percent match and there was a 15 percent contingency so North Pole paid \$3100 and FMATS needed to pay the \$28,000 dollars.

Mayor Ward asked Ms. Gardino how much the City of North Pole had already paid. Ms. Gardino stated that she did not have that amount, but could get that to him. Mayor Ward asked Ms. Gardino if they were saying that the City of North Pole owed more money than what had already been paid. Ms. Gardino stated that she verified it before the meeting and had been assured that the City of North Pole did not owe anything more than what they had already paid.

Ms. Schacher stated that North Pole costs were just under \$200,000 so there was somewhere just under \$20,000 left of the contingency which was covered.

Mayor Ward stated that he wanted to go on the record as saying this again since he thought he said it last time this came up; that he did not want to see this again. Mayor Ward asked that the State keep their eye on this and he would be interested in putting some sort of time limit on these things in the future so that if FMATS did not receive a pay request within six months, the State would just have figure out how they were going to deal with it.

Mayor Ward stated that to go a whole year seemed excessive to him. He

stated that they needed to put some sort of side bar on this and he did not know what the ramifications of that would be, but so long as he sat here, he thought it was a reasonable thing that FMATS could maybe consider in the future.

Ms. Schacher stated she wanted to say on the record since she had also taken the hot seat for the utility costs, that DOT had a similar clause for utility companies when they were ready to close a contract that stated that if the utility companies did not submit their billings within six months, it was on them. Ms. Schacher stated that she did not work in construction, but they did try to button up their books quickly and that was what they did in the winter, but they should have caught it earlier.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

10. Other Issues.

No other issues.

11. Informational Items

a. Bike Lane Discussion and Recommendation

Ms. Gardino stated that they had this discussion at the Technical Committee about bike lanes because there seemed to be some confusion when she was at the University Avenue Open House. The DOT had planned to put bike lanes on University Avenue and then part of what they were changing was that they were not going to be bike lanes. Ms. Gardino stated that someone in the audience had asked them why and they said that the City and Borough Planners had not indicated how they wanted them to proceed. Ms. Gardino stated that she was a little bit taken aback because she had previous discussions with DOT about bike lanes on University, Old Steese, and Cowles and they had the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan that clearly stated those were preferred on many of those streets. Ms. Gardino stated that they were told that FMATS needed to do their job. Ms. Gardino stated that they had a good discussion at the Technical Committee and formed a working group to try to get some clarity on bike lane issues keeping the constraints in mind.

Ms. Gardino stated that they had talked about potentially signing bike lanes for only certain months of the year to provide seasonal use. Ms. Gardino stated that they planned a discussion at the working group meeting on May 31, 2017 to try to provide better guidance between DOT and the City.

Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Gardino to clarify if DOT said that no one at the City or the Borough brought up bicycle lanes, but wasn't FMATS the organization that was supposed to coordinate and plan and be the representative of the two cities and the Borough.

Ms. Gardino stated that she thought they just really didn't know which entity they should be naming so it was kind of weird that way. Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS was responsible for the transportation plan and had a non-motorized plan and it said so right in the plan. Ms. Gardino stated that they were doing what was in the plan until they decided to change it. Ms. Gardino stated that she did not know if there was that much confusion, but did understand that there were some operational issues with having bike lanes and people's expectations. Ms. Gardino stated that maybe they needed to provide more education or other ways that they could make sure that people

had a good understanding of those lanes and when they were going to be available.

Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Gardino if by “people” she meant DOT. Ms. Gardino stated that “people” meant “the public” because with a bike lane full of snow, people were going to complain and so how could they mitigate that if they had a bike lane. Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Gardino if he was to understand correctly that the University Avenue project was not going to include any bike lanes.

Ms. Gardino stated that Mr. Lawrence was correct and that was what the new proposal was and it would just be shoulders. Ms. Schacher stated that she would add that a shoulder was a bicycle facility and it was just not painted.

Mr. Lawrence stated that he understood that and a wide shoulder actually made more sense than a separated bike lane in a lot of cases.

Ms. Schacher stated that one of the struggles DOT had was that the Non-Motorized Plan said shoulder or bike lane and it did acknowledge that bike lanes were preferred for a bicycle facility, so it identified a network where shoulders or bike lanes were desired or that there exists a separated path. Ms. Schacher stated that in today’s budget climate they were looking at it from a standpoint where a shoulder could be both. Ms. Schacher stated that it could be snow storage, it could be a bicycle facility, or a stalled out vehicle could pull over and park there which was nonexistent on University Avenue now and would be a big improvement to have a 5½-or 6-ft. face of curb area where they did not have that now. Ms. Schacher stated that from DOT’s perspective, because this came up with the City of Fairbanks when they were designing the Old Steese as well, was who was going to go first. Ms. Schacher stated that from an engineering standpoint, it was very important that you tried to implement consistent features for driver expectations so that if you had one facility at the end of the main arterial and University Avenue looked vastly different to drivers, in particular, and why was there bike symbols there and not on Farmers Loop and College Road. Ms. Schacher stated that Mr. Roberts stated that he thought it should be done on a project by project basis.

Ms. Schacher stated what were they connecting to and was there consistency in their network and were they doing bike lanes or shoulders. Ms. Schacher stated that from agencies developing projects standpoint, no one really wanted to be the one to go first. Ms. Schacher stated that they tried it with College Road and they saw where that went, so now they were a little gun shy.

Ms. Schacher stated as they discussed in this meeting today, there was a lot of hot feelings about bikes one way or the other and what you did for them.

Ms. Schacher stated that she would say that shoulders were the safer bet because they could always advocate that shoulders improved road safety and it was not just for bikes. Ms. Schacher stated that on College Road, as she understood it, what really hung people up was that they were sacrificing vehicle lanes just for bikes and some people did not agree with that so that was where DOT was.

Mr. Cleworth stated that the neat thing about University Avenue was the right of way width they had so they had some luxuries that normally they did not have, like on College Road. Mr. Cleworth asked Ms. Schacher if she knew how big the shoulders were in the current design concept.

Ms. Schacher stated that she believed that if you included the gutter pan for the curb face of the sidewalk, she thought it was 6-ft. from the travel width of the bottom lane to the base of that curb plus the sidewalk.

Mr. Cleworth asked Ms. Schacher how big the sidewalk was.

Ms. Schacher stated that she believed it was 8-ft. on the west side of University Avenue and 6-ft. on the east side.

Mr. Cleworth stated that he agreed with Mr. Lawrence when he was talking about the beauty of the wide shoulder and it could be accommodating, but you had to put snow there on a short-term basis. Mr. Cleworth stated that having the bike lane on the same elevation meant that when the blades came through there and cleaned it, as soon as that snow was picked up, you had the bike lane again and the serious bicyclist would be on that and using it. Mr. Cleworth stated that he thought it would be a win-win for everybody there.

Ms. Schacher stated that having a shoulder did not preclude the future addition of a bike lane. Ms. Schacher stated that the fundamental difference was the signing and striping for it and how they were carried through signalized intersections. Ms. Schacher stated that the bike lanes carried through on the vehicle lanes. Mr. Cleworth agreed. Mr. Cleworth stated that the signing got difficult because every spring you had to restripe all that and that was a significant cost. Mr. Cleworth stated that it should be the least amount of maintenance yet people knew that they had wide shoulders that could be utilized for bikes.

b. Chena River Walk Stage III Field Visit

Ms. Gardino stated that they would meet at DOT on Friday, May 19th at 2 p.m. and then proceed to the Chena River Walk with their project checklist and everyone was welcome to attend.

c. Bike to Work Week and Bike Counts

Ms. Gardino explained that 6:30-8:30 on May 23, 24, and 25, 2017, they still had eight slots to fill for bike counts if anyone was interested in volunteering.

d. MPO Reform Update

Ms. Gardino stated that the President had signed into law Bill 496 which nullified the MPO Planning and Reform Law and it was passed overwhelmingly in the House so the guidance issued was null and void and they were to revert back to the May 2016 guidance.

e. Obligations and Offsets

Ms. Gardino explained the obligations and offsets included in the meeting packet.

12. Policy Board Comments

- Ms. Koch stated that Lee Borden, the DEC representative for the Technical Committee, left DEC and his last day was Wednesday, May 10th so they were currently interviewing for that position and hoping to fill that position by mid early to mid-June. Ms. Koch stated that May 10, 2017, EPA posted their decision to reclassify the Fairbanks North Star Borough 24 hr. PM^{2.5} non-attainment area from Moderate to Serious and that was posted in the Federal Register. Ms. Koch stated that DEC was expecting that action and the significance of posting that action in the Federal Register was that it made it official and also set an effectiveness date for the action. Ms. Koch stated that

the area would be a Serious Non-Attainment Area as of June 9, 2017.

Ms. Koch stated that DEC issued a press release on Thursday, May 11, 2017 and also sent a broad set of letters to elected officials, members of the Air Pollution Control Commission, and also almost 1,000 letters to members of the real estate industry. Ms. Koch stated that the significance of the letters sent to the real estate community was that when the area was effectively designated as Serious on June 9, 2017, it would trigger restrictions that would affect residents in the non-attainment area. Ms. Koch stated that residents would be required to make sure they had a certified heating device before they could sell or lease a property in the non-attainment area. Ms. Koch stated that there would be an additional public notice that would go out and she did not know exactly when. Ms. Koch stated that as soon as they got Mr. Borden's position filled, DEC was going to reach out to commercial wood sellers and require commercial wood sellers to disclose the moisture content of the wood that they sold to consumers. Ms. Koch stated that people could still gather their own wood and purchase wet wood, but they just needed to know the moisture content of that wood before burning it.

Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Koch the timeframe for preparing the Serious SIP and whether it was still the shortened time frame or whether it had been amended.

Ms. Koch stated that DEC had commented on that and others had commented on that as well. Ms. Koch stated that EPA told them that their comment was outside of the scope of their proposal to reclassify the area and were essentially keeping the Serious plan submission date the same which was December 31, 2017. Ms. Koch stated that it was less than six months to prepare and submit a plan that typically states got 18 months to prepare. Ms. Koch stated that it did not give them enough time to go through public process so was very problematic however, DEC was still pursuing this issue. Ms. Koch stated that EPA had requested public comments on regulations that could be repealed to reduce burden and this was one of the items that DEC brought up in their letter to EPA and were still pursuing other avenues as well in terms of having high level discussions with EPA headquarters involved to try and get that deadline extended.

Mr. Cleworth asked Ms. Koch if there were any violations noted in the downtown area this year or if they were still okay.

Ms. Koch stated that they had a certain number of months to submit their monitoring information to EPA and they had not certified it so it was not official yet. Ms. Koch stated that they had two monitors in Fairbanks roughly a half mile apart. Ms. Koch stated that what EPA looked at in terms of compliance with the National Standard was not just one year of data but a compilation of three years-worth of data that got rolled into what was called a "Design Value". Ms. Koch stated that they had one monitor being 34 and in compliance and one location that was a little above at 37. Ms. Koch stated that in general those two monitors had been trending very close in compliance with the National Standard.

- Mr. Cleworth stated that with the discussion that came up about the billing and the awkwardness of that, he thought maybe Mayor Ward or someone could come up with what they thought a reasonable timeline would be for a bill to be submitted to the Policy Committee and they could tackle that at a future meeting which made it a lot easier.

- Mr. Cleworth stated that at the last meeting they had a recommendation on the walking tour they took of the Cushman Street Bridge. Mr. Cleworth stated that they came up with some general recommendations to give to DOT and he and Mr. Lawrence had some comments on that and thought they had postponed it until this meeting.

Mr. Lawrence stated that he did not recall that.

Mr. Cleworth stated that they were just some general guidelines that they had compiled during the walking tour.

Ms. Gardino stated that they compiled everything they heard and submitted that to the DOT. Ms. Gardino stated that the DOT sent that to the Bridge Design folks to make sure that it would work given the engineering that they needed to stay within the parameters of. Ms. Gardino stated that maybe she had not gone full circle and gotten that back to him but she could check on that. Ms. Gardino stated that she had not been at the meeting, but perhaps Ms. Stevens could provide more information on that.

Ms. Stevens stated that they had talked about the actual layout of the road and wanted to determine what the actual widths were of the sidewalk and wanted to make a motion on that. Ms. Stevens stated that she had said that they could not make a motion because it was not an action item and they had not made previous motions as to what it was going to look like, so she thought they decided not to bring it up again. Ms. Stevens stated that they were probably in the meeting minutes in the packet also.

- Ms. Schacher stated that there was an Open House for the Airport Way Cushman Street Intersection Reconstruction project at Noel Wien Library from 4-7 p.m. on May 17, 2007. Ms. Schacher stated that they were soliciting for a consultant to do the design for the bridge rehabilitation and that was out on the street now.
- Mayor Kassel stated that he wanted to offer kudos to Ms. Koch and State DEC for working with them on air quality because they had been a joy to work with and incredibly helpful. Mayor Kassel stated that he also wanted to say that he was aware that with the update on their status, going from Moderate to Serious, there was a group of people in town that had started the paperwork at the Borough for a voter initiative this Fall to adjust maybe what the Borough could or could not do and it had to go through legal to get approved so there was no finished product yet, but just wanted everyone to be aware that it was on the way so the voters would have an opportunity to weigh in on the process this Fall.
- Mayor Ward stated that he appreciated Ms. Koch's comments that the Fairbanks monitors were the ones that were showing they were almost in conformity. Mayor Ward stated that the North Pole High School graduation was the previous evening and they had a great speaker talking about courage so if they had the opportunity to hear that it was a great event.

13. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn. (Lawrence/Kassel). The meeting adjourned at 1:49 p.m. The next Policy Committee Meeting is scheduled Wednesday, June 21, 2017, at 12 p.m. in the Fairbanks City Hall, Council Chambers

Approved: 

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair
FMATS Policy Committee

Date: 6-21-17