



POLICY COMMITTEE

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

Meeting Minutes – June 15, 2016

1. Call to Order

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

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

Attendee	Representative Organization
*Bryce Ward, Chair	Mayor, City of North Pole
*Karl Kassel, Vice Chair	Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
*John Eberhart	Mayor, City of Fairbanks
*Frank Ganley for Ryan Anderson	Director, DOT&PF, Northern Region
*Janice Westlind	FNSB Assembly Member
*David Pruhs	City Council Member, City of Fairbanks
*Lee Borden for Denise Koch	DEC, Division of Air Quality
**+Donna Gardino	FMATS MPO Coordinator
**Alicia Giamichael	FMATS Transportation Planner
**Deborah Todd	FMATS Administrative Assistant
**Margaret Carpenter	DOT&PF Planning
**Linda Mahlen	DOT&PF Planning
**Rich Felsing	FNSB Planning
+Jackson Fox	City Engineer, City of Fairbanks
Kellen Spillman	FNSB Planning
Shelley Potter	DOT&PF Planning
Bill H'ao	Bettisworth North

**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 June 15, 2016 Agenda

Motion: To approve the June 15, 2016 Agenda. (Kassel/Westlind).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Approval of the May 18, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the May 18, 2016 meeting minutes. (Pruhs/Westlind).

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 and highlights for all meetings, briefings, open houses, workshops, and presentations she and FMATS staff attended or participated in since the last meeting.

b. Coordinator's Office Reorganization Update

Ms. Gardino stated that she did not have any updated information.

7. Old Business

a. Green Streets Policy Approval (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that they had put the Green Streets Policy out for public comment, the comment period closed on May 20, 2016, and no public comments had been received. Ms. Gardino stated that some minor changes were made at the Technical Committee Meeting and their recommendation had been to approve it.

Motion: To approve FMATS Green Streets Policy, as presented.
(Borden/Westlind).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

b. FMATS Transportation Alternative Program (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that Page 21 contained an email from DOT Headquarters outlining the funding available through the Statewide Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Program. Ms. Gardino stated that as their subcommittee developed the program they decided to do an abbreviated solicitation this summer for the \$227,744 they would lose if it was not obligated by August, 2016. Ms. Gardino stated that they hoped to issue it as soon as it was approved and had email lists to help get the word out. Ms. Gardino stated that they had proposed a 9.03 percent non-federal share. Ms. Gardino stated that the due date for project applications was noon on July 18th, 2016. Ms. Gardino stated that they would have a subcommittee consisting of Margaret Carpenter of DOT&PF Planning, Alicia Giamichael of FMATS, Lee Borden from DEC, and Mark Peterburs from the Alaska Railroad, who were not eligible to receive the funding, review those proposals. Ms. Gardino stated that they would bring the eligible proposals that were chosen to the Policy Committee on July 20, 2016 for approval. Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS planned on doing round two of the TAP Program solicitation. Ms. Gardino stated that they would be reviewing the application submissions to determine eligibility by using the five criteria set out in the meeting packet. Ms. Gardino stated that the eligibility requirements were: 1) Could they pay the non-federal share; 2) Would they commit to maintenance; 3) Were they eligible; 4) Was the project eligible; and 5) Could they get an agreement in place and submit a check to them by August 15, 2016. Ms. Gardino stated that if they passed the five criteria then they would be looked at to determine if they fit the three project requirements of: 1) Was the project a part of an existing plan or project, 2) Did the project address existing gaps to essential services; and 3) Did the project extend an existing facility, plans for or creates an ADA-compliant facility. Ms. Gardino stated that unlike the State program, FMATS would accept applications that were plans only. Ms. Gardino stated that team would review the applications and provide a recommendation to the Policy Committee. Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS would be conducting a pre-proposal workshop on July 7, 2016 from 2 to 3 p.m. in the FMATS Conference Room to provide information and answer any questions applicants had since it was such an abbreviated time frame.

Motion: To approve the FMATS Transportation Alternatives Program and release it for bid with the five criteria and three sources of evaluation, as amended. (Pruhs/Westlind).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

c. Metropolitan Transportation Plan Scope of Services Draft (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that this had been included in the meeting packet last month and was for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update that was due January 30, 2019. However, the TIP Conformity was based on their plan and the TIP was due September 2018. Ms. Gardino stated that she needed to discuss it with the State and see what the timing of their work was.

Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS might continue on the path for the MTP with the January 2019 date and do an interim TIP so that they did not have a timing problem with performance measures and other things.

Motion: To approve the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Scope of Services, as presented. (Westlind/Kassel).

Discussion: Mayor Ward stated that he wanted to pass the gavel to Mayor Kassel for discussion purposes and so he could potentially make some amendments and asked Mayor Kassel if he accepted the gavel.

Mayor Kassel accepted the gavel and gave Mayor Ward the floor.

Mayor Ward stated that after going through it, he had some concerns with the items that were added. Mayor Ward stated that Phase 2, Task I about the Alternative Growth Scenarios and it was his understanding that it addressed advantages of when businesses were opened and closed that potentially alleviated some of the congestion issues. Mayor Ward stated that he thought that in a bigger community it might have more merit, but was concerned about the additional cost to the plan with no possible long-term benefit to the MPO. Mayor Ward stated that on Task 4.2 regarding having additional meetings: he thought that would add additional costs. Mayor Ward stated that he understood that they were trying to work more closely with the Planning Commission and the Borough on the land use issues when it came to transportation but it seemed like a very robust schedule. Mayor Ward stated that if they had people that were most likely out of state, it cost about \$3,000 every time they came up here. Mayor Ward stated that if there was a way to have those items added as an Addendum so they could see the cost; or removed or pared down the number of meetings; they would reduce the cost.

Mayor Kassel stated that this was a challenging topic right now for planning authority and authorization for different things. Mayor Kassel stated that he thought that the community needed to look at it on a number of different levels with what their process was. Mayor Kassel stated that they were regulated in a variety of ways by state law and his preference was to operate within the law and it tended to help them in the long run. Mayor Kassel stated that it was a challenge for them with some of their planning responsibilities delegated to them to just waive or ignore them and was not sure what the answer was. Mayor Kassel stated that he personally believed in having a very open and transparent government and a complete public process where the community could legitimately weigh into the process so they understood the guidelines of what they could and could not comment on. Mayor Kassel

stated that the community needed to decide what the law was and what philosophy they wanted to operate under. Mayor Kassel stated that in the lower 48 they had a lot more codes, regulations, and structure than we had here. Mayor Kassel stated that we preferred to have a lot more freedoms which was nice on one hand, but the flip side of that was that when the law restricted them from doing something they had to respect that. Mayor Kassel stated that part of this issue was similar to other issues they were dealing with in that before he would have been willing to relinquish having those meetings with the Borough but would need to more closely scrutinize what the laws were and what the Borough's expectations were. Mayor Kassel stated that it was his understanding that those meetings were essential to the public process. Mayor Kassel stated that it was expensive and he completely understood that. Mayor Kassel stated that there was a possibility that the Borough could delegate some of the responsibilities to the Cities but in doing so, to be responsible, they might delegate the entire authority. Mayor Kassel stated that on one hand it was a plus, but on the other hand there was an expense to each of the cities to do that. Mayor Kassel stated that there would be three planning authorities instead of one and there could be multiple planning jurisdictions on a particular project that crossed municipal boundaries, so it might fall under several different rules. Mayor Kassel stated that it got complicated very rapidly when they tried to do that. Mayor Kassel stated that it was a challenge for the Borough to delegate part of a responsibility if the decision was made by somebody other than the Borough Assembly on an issue and it did not go through the Planning Commission or Assembly. Mayor Kassel stated that the process did not exist for whoever that was delegated to. Mayor Kassel stated that if the process was gone, the Borough was essentially in violation of some state laws, as well as the trust of the public, if there was not a legitimate process involved in the decision making. Mayor Kassel stated that it was a difficult decision and a valid issue. Mayor Kassel stated that he was not sure what the long-term answer was and it was something that needed to be worked on in this community.

Mayor Ward stated that he thought that the MPO and the Borough were working together to address some of the local planning authority issues. Mayor Ward stated that with things currently being what they were, was it prudent for them to say that all the items needed to be done by the Consultant. Mayor Ward asked if it would be amenable to specify that two of the meetings were with the Consultant or the Borough and the rest of the meetings be done with existing staff members so there was still the opportunity for the Borough and the Planning Commission to have the resources available to answer some of the questions. Mayor Ward stated that he thought they were making good progress but did not want to make it prohibitively expensive.

Amendment to the Motion: To specify that some of the work sessions can be supported by the existing staff. (Ward/Pruhs).

Discussion: Ms. Gardino stated that because they required a licensed engineer; they chose the most qualified applicant and then they began the negotiations. Ms. Gardino stated that the applicant then gave them an estimate by task of how much everything was going to cost and then they

decided what savings would be generated by doing the work themselves.

Ms. Gardino stated that was part of what the negotiations were about.

Mayor Kassel inquired if they wanted to let Ms. Gardino determine, as far as presentation to the committees, whether it would be done by staff or a consultant.

Ms. Gardino stated that she would not be alone at the table and there would be a negotiation team. Ms. Gardino stated that the State managed the contract and she was a participant in that negotiation. Ms. Gardino stated that the State managed the contracting portion of it and she managed the project. Ms. Gardino stated that once the contract portion, which was led by the State, was completed; she managed the consultant who did the work. Ms. Gardino stated that she was not the lead on the negotiations and typically Ms. Mahlen of DOT was the lead.

Mayor Kassel asked for clarification if that meant the negotiating team made the decision of whether they would use a consultant or in-house staff to do the presentations to the Technical and Policies Committees. Ms. Gardino stated that Mayor Kassel was correct.

Vote on the Amendment to the Motion: 4 in favor. 3 opposed. (Eberhart/Pruhs/Westlind). Approved.

Discussion: Mayor Ward stated that he wanted to revise Phase 2 Task 1, Identification of Alternatives. Mayor Ward stated that in the second sentence his concern was whether it was really a benefit to the community.

Mayor Ward stated that he wondered if the \$20,000 price tag could be awarded out separately and used as a bargaining chip. Mayor Ward stated that he wondered if they could have conversation with the potential awardee on what they thought the benefits would be for the community and maybe it was not worth the additional cost to the plan.

Ms. Gardino stated that a scenario analysis was in the new planning rules for when they were doing the long range plan. Ms. Gardino stated that it could be separated out as a subtask or worded separately and they could ask the consultant whether they thought it was of value and how they proposed to do those growth scenarios or the method they would use.

Amendment to the Motion: To create a new subtask to propose alternative growth scenarios (second sentence under Task II.1) and to identify the methods by which these will be developed. (Ward/Westlind).

Discussion: Mayor Kassel inquired if he was understanding correctly that they were going to take the second sentence under Phase II-Task 1 and make it a new Task 2.2 and renumber the others and add at the last sentence "and identify the method used." That was verified.

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

Amended Motion: To approve the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Scope of Services, as presented, specify that some of the work sessions can be supported by the existing staff, and create a new subtask to propose alternative growth scenarios (second sentence under Task II.1) and to identify the methods by which these will be developed.

Vote on Amended Motion: None opposed. Approved.

d. Earmark Repurposing Recommendation (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that after the last Policy Committee meeting Commissioner Luiken had contacted her and suggested that the Governor wanted to make sure that they were working with the local community when repurposing earmarks. Ms. Gardino stated that the Commissioner told her that there was a \$250,000 earmark originally intended for the O'Connor Creek Bridge in Lemeta and they intended to use it for the utility phase of the University Avenue Widening Project. Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS had commented that they could potentially use that money on the Noble Street project or the FMATS Improvements project. Ms. Gardino stated that she called Commissioner Luiken and they agreed to let them use that earmark for the Noble Street Upgrade project.

Motion: To repurpose the O'Connor Creek Bridge earmark to the Noble Street Upgrade Project. (Kassel/Westlind).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

e. FFY17-18 Unified Planning Work Program Draft (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that the UPWP was the FMATS two-year planning document that explained what they planned to do for the next two years. Ms. Gardino stated that the draft had not changed except for revisions to some budget items.

Motion: To release the FFY17-18 Unified Planning Work Program for public comment, as presented. (Westlind/Kassel).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

8. New Business

a. Noble Street Upgrade Phase 2 and Phase 4 Increases (Action Item)

Mayor Ward asked if there was any objection to having the Phase 2 and Phase 4 increases tied into one motion and discussion.

Motion: To move \$300,000 into Phase 2 on the Noble Street Upgrade project as indicated by Ms. Gardino (from Phase 3). (Kassel/Westlind).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

b. Noble Street Upgrade Phase 4 Increase (Action Item)

This action item was satisfied under Action Item 8.e.-TIP Administrative Modification #4.

c. FMATS Improvement Program Phase 2 Increase (Action Item)

FMATS and DOT&PF have been working with UAF to apply for TAP funds to rehabilitate and construct sidewalks on Yukon Drive. Ms. Gardino stated that the Technical Committee suggested approval of \$65,000 for the topo survey of Yukon Drive in the event they received a TAP Grant.

Motion: To approve \$65,000 for a topo survey on Yukon Drive in Phase 2, using offset funds. (Kassel/Westlind)

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

d. Chena River Walk Stage III – Phase I (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained that FMATS started the project with \$400,000 of State funding but did not have enough to complete it. Ms. Gardino stated that the City proposed to use the remainder of the unspent state funds as their non-federal share and apply for TAP funds to complete Phase 1 of the project. Ms. Gardino stated that Mr. Fox was there to explain further.

Mr. Fox stated that they had received \$400,000 from FMATS to complete the survey, design, and an environmental document for the project. Mr. Fox stated that they had spent \$230,000 of that \$400,000 and had completed the full topo survey for the path which was in three segments or three different phases. Mr. Fox stated that they had completed the full topo survey, wetland delineation, and set the path alignment. Mr. Fox stated that they still needed to complete the design and the environmental phase. Mr. Fox stated that they had \$170,000 left to do that work and would like to use that as match to apply for the TAP Program. Mr. Fox stated that the most they could apply for using the 20% match was about \$680,000 and they were going to go for that full amount. Mr. Fox stated that the applications were due by the end of the month and they hoped to use the remainder as match to construct Phase 1. Mr. Fox stated that Phase 1 consisted of a 2,000-ft. path that went between Peger Road to the existing footbridge that went across the river at Pioneer Park. Mr. Fox stated that half of the path would be asphalt and the other half would be a metal-grated walkway that covered a floodplain area. Mr. Fox stated that they were able to weave the path through there to avoid wetlands as a portion of that path went through a floodplain. Mr. Fox stated that when they got to Peger Road there were a couple different alternatives. Mr. Fox continued that one of the alternatives would be to take the path underneath the Peger Road Bridge where there was an existing path, but during high water in the springtime from snowmelt and in the fall from rain events, that path was under water just like paths downtown. Mr. Fox stated that path might not be a good option but the existing pedestrian facility was on the west side of Peger Road so they had to get there somehow. Mr. Fox stated that another alternative was to build a path along Peger Road up to the Phillips Field Road intersection. Mr. Fox stated that through the NEPA process they looked at the pros and cons of the different alternatives which would help them decide which way the path should go.

Motion: To use the remaining SB230 funds, approximately \$170,000, as the non-federal share for the City of Fairbanks TAP application for the Chena River Walk. (Pruhs/Westlind).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

e. FFY15-18 Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modification #4 (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that what had precipitated this modification was the addition of the TAP Program and normally that took an amendment but DOT Headquarters had consulted FHWA and they had allowed them to use an Administrative Modification for that effort. Ms. Gardino explained the revisions that were made.

Motion: To approve FFY15-18 Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modification #4, as presented. (Westlind/Kassel).

Discussion: Mayor Ward stated that it was unfortunate that the Richardson Highway project was bumped since it was a North Pole project, but he thought that this was something they were going to see more of as the money from the State had dried up and thought they would be bumping more and more projects with the budget constraints they had. Mayor Ward stated that although he did not like it, he understood it was a necessity and part of doing business, so he would be part of the team and make it happen.

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. Cushman Street Ribbon Cutting on July 11, 2016 – 5-7 p.m.

Ms. Gardino explained that FMATS was going to have a street party and ribbon cutting on July 11 from 5-7 p.m. Ms. Gardino stated that the Cold Steel Band and the Clarence Pate Project would be providing music and there would be several food trucks providing refreshments. Mr. Gardino stated that she hoped to see everyone there.

Mr. Pruhs asked Ms. Gardino if there would be cones separating the two lanes they had on Cushman or if they were just shutting down 5th Avenue.

Ms. Gardino state that they would be shutting down 1st to 6th Avenues and there would be no cones anywhere so bring your rollerblades.

b. Consultation on the Safety Performance Measures

Ms. Gardino explained that the final rule for the safety performance measures had been rolled out and they had their first consultation with the state with the Statewide Traffic/Safety Engineer for how they were going to address those performance measures. Ms. Gardino stated that a lot of work was going to be needed in the next two years to develop those targets. Ms. Gardino stated that some of the targets that applied to FMATS and needed to be addressed were: emissions and safety.

c. New FHWA/FTA Joint Planning Rule

Ms. Gardino recommended that members place the new rules included in the meeting packet into their FMATS Information Binders under 23 CFR 450. Ms. Gardino stated that the preamble was quite thick and explained how they addressed the questions that were raised in the process.

d. NPRM – Assess Performance on the National Highway System (NHS); Freight Movement on the Interstate; Congestion, Mitigation, and Air Quality (CMAQ)

Ms. Gardino stated that the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) had been released April 22, 2016 and comments were due August 20, 2016. Ms. Gardino stated that she was working on getting more detailed information on which performance measures they needed to address.

Ms. Gardino stated that she was the lead in developing the comments on the CMAQ portion for AMPO's effort.

e. Obligations and Offsets

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

12. Policy Committee Comments

- Mr. Borden stated that he wanted to let everybody know that they had the new proposed regulations out for public comment. Mr. Borden stated that they could be found on the DEC Air Quality Home Page under Hot Topics. Mr. Borden stated that they were amending portions of the SIP to make them functionally equivalent to some more stringent local ordinances here so there were no new regulations and they were just tweaking them to bring them more in alignment.
- Mr. Ganley thanked everyone for having him at the meeting. Mr. Ganley stated that he was sitting in for Director Anderson who would be at the next meeting. Mr. Ganley stated that he thought it had been a very interesting meeting.
- Mayor Eberhart commented that the ribbon cutting sounded exciting. Mayor Eberhart stated that Cushman Street looked great and most of the comments had been complimentary and enthusiastic. Mayor Eberhart stated that it was a big improvement and he looked forward to the ribbon cutting. Mayor Eberhart thanked Ms. Gardino for all her hard work in helping organize that.
- Mayor Kassel thanked DEC for the SIP that was out for public comment. Mayor Kassel stated that it had been a challenge, to say the least, with their Assembly working on code changes. Mayor Kassel stated that the whole air quality thing had been such a moving target and had been a real challenge for everyone involved. Mayor Kassel stated that State DEC had done a good job of staying on top of things and trying to parallel their plans with the Assembly's plans even though the Borough's plans changed on a daily basis and two ordinances were going forward regarding air quality as he was chatting. Mayor Kassel stated that it was a never ending story and hopefully someday it would end when they got their air cleaned up and did not have to worry about it. Mayor Kassel thanked DEC for doing a great job.
- Ms. Westlind stated that she drove down Badger Road every day so she had been watching the progress on the Badger Road Bike Path Resurfacing project. Ms. Westlind stated that they had started at the very beginning near the first Badger exit by the Richardson Highway and were now almost up to the Badger Gate near Ft. Wainwright in the Holmes Road area, so the project was coming along.
- Mr. Pruhs thanked Ms. Gardino for the direction and oversight she gave them and stated that it was a pleasure working with her so far.
- Mayor Ward stated that he too wanted to thank everyone for being engaged and knew these things were a little bit difficult to understand sometimes and it had taken him probably a year and a half to get his head wrapped around what FMATS was so he appreciated their engagement for all their respective communities.

13. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn. (Westlind/Borden). The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m. The next Policy Committee Meeting is scheduled Wednesday, July 20, 2016, at 12 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Fairbanks City Hall, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Approved: 

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair
FMATS Policy Committee

Date: 7-20-16