



POLICY COMMITTEE

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

Meeting Minutes – July 15, 2015

1. Call to Order

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

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

Attendee

*Bill Butler for Bryce Ward, Chair
 *Luke Hopkins, Vice Chair
 *John Eberhart
 *David Miller
 *Guy Sattley
 *Perry Walley
 *Denise Koch
 **+Donna Gardino
 **Deborah Todd
 **Alicia Giamichael
 Linda Mahlen
 Margaret Carpenter
 Lee Borden
 Amber Courtney
 Margarita Bell
 Kellen Spillman
 Patrick Cotter
 Jackson Fox
 Patrice Lee
 Mark Peterburs
 Dave Hetman
 David Guttenberg

Representative Organization

Mayor, City of North Pole
 Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
 Mayor, City of Fairbanks
 Northern Region Director, DOT&PF
 FNSB Assembly Member
 City Council Member, City of Fairbanks
 DEC, Division of Air Quality
 FMATS MPO Coordinator
 FMATS Administrative Assistant
 FMATS Transportation Planner
 DOT&PF Planning
 DOT&PF Planning
 DEC
 City of Fairbanks
 City of Fairbanks
 FNSB Planning
 PDC Engineers
 City of Fairbanks
 Citizen
 Alaska Railroad
 DOT&PF
 Alaska State Representative

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

3. Public Comment Period (3 minute limit)

Ms. Patrice Lee stated that she was there as a citizen to talk about Fox Water Spring. Ms. Lee stated that as she was frequently on the drumbeat for health and safety in their community, she thought it was a cultural and historical place that had great value to their community. Ms. Lee stated that she had put out a petition and had now received over 2,000 signatures either online or on paper. Ms. Lee stated that what was heart rendering to her was the number of people who had written on the back of the petitions and attached notes and letters requesting that Fox Spring not be closed. Ms. Lee stated that one lady had even written a prayer saying not to take her water because she was old, depended on Fox Spring for her water, people helped her pick up her jugs, she did not have money to buy water, it cost her too much to drive in, and they don't deliver where she is. Ms. Lee stated that she was there to speak for the petitioners and request that they be able to buy enough time to

figure out a solution of what would best keep it open, public, and free. Ms. Lee stated that she realized that they needed to figure out the financial end of it and wondered if the DOT could first reexamine their budget to keep the spring open long enough to find a better way. Ms. Lee inquired if the Borough could examine some of the options that had been floated about. Ms. Lee stated that if not DOT or the Borough, maybe the Rotary or Lions Club, or another group. Ms. Lee inquired if it was possible to have some sort of sponsorship or it could possibly become an historic landmark. Ms. Lee stated that there were avenues for all of that but they needed time to figure that out. Ms. Lee stated that all over Africa people were trying to put in sources of clean, reliable drinking water. Ms. Lee stated that their biggest fear was that someone would come along and privatize the water. Ms. Lee stated that water like clean air should be available, where possible, for everybody. Ms. Lee stated that it was a State resource and she urged DOT to put forth the idea that they needed time to figure out a solution that would best benefit the people, because people mattered.

Mayor Hopkins asked Ms. Lee if the petition she spoke of was submitted and where and to whom it had been submitted.

Ms. Lee stated that she would be submitting the petition to Kevin Smith of DOT, but was experiencing some glitches because it was 199 pages long, so she might send it digitally so he got it all by the deadline.

4. Approval of the July 15, 2015 Agenda

Motion: To approve the July 15, 2015 Agenda. (Sattley/Walley).

Discussion: Mr. Miller inquired if discussing Fox Spring was an appropriate item for the Policy Committee to discuss and thought it was more appropriate as an information item.

Amendment to the Motion: To move the Fox Spring Discussion under Informational Items. (Miller/Sattley).

Discussion: Mayor Eberhart asked for clarification from Mr. Miller as to why the item needed to be moved to informational items.

Mr. Miller stated that he did not believe that FMATS was the committee that should be discussing Fox Spring.

Vote on Amendment to the Motion: Four in favor. Three opposed. (Sattley, Eberhart, Hopkins).

Amendment to the Motion: To switch the order of Items 8i and 8j. (Koch/Miller).

Discussion: No further discussion.

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

Amended Motion: To approve the July 15, 2015 Agenda, move the Fox Spring discussion under Informational Items and switch the order of Items 8i and 8j.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Approval of the June 17, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the June 17, 2015 meeting minutes. (Walley/Sattley).

Discussion: Ms. Koch stated that she had some corrections to the minutes beginning with Page 4 where it stated: “once they reached compliance assuming....that in 2014 and so far in 2015...the word “State” should be corrected to the “City of Fairbanks” had a clean data year”. The second correction in the next paragraph was to strike the term “clean air designation” and replace it with “the “PM_{2.5} standards”.

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

6. Committee Reports

a. Coordinator’s Office Report and Technical Committee Action Items

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

b. Approval of the Policy and Procedures Document (Action Item)

Motion: To approve FMATS’ Policy and Procedures Document.
(Eberhart/Walley).

Discussion: Ms. Gardino stated that the draft document had been issued for public comment in May and no public comments were received. Ms. Gardino stated that as they approved new policies, they could be approved at that time, the document would be updated, and those new policies would be incorporated.

Mr. Miller had two comments for the document: Mr. Miller stated that on Page 18 the statement was incorrect and should say “DOT estimates were prepared based on the scope of work and not on the amount of anticipated funding as stated; and suggested amending it to read: “estimates based on scope of work and not on amount of available funding”.

Ms. Gardino stated that it had been a poorly worded statement and not what was meant; but Mr. Miller was absolutely correct and his statement was much clearer.

Mr. Miller also suggested that on Page 22 there was a conflict regarding maintenance agreements and DOT procedure was that a Maintenance Agreement had to be in place before Phase 2 and suggested revising it.

Ms. Gardino stated that the Policy Committee motion approved on 3/20/13 stated that they only needed a tentative agreement in place until they were far enough into the design phase to know what they would be maintaining, so that was why FMATS had been operating under the agreement that only a tentative maintenance agreement was necessary prior to design of a project and a full blown agreement was necessary to build the project.

Mr. Walley stated that he recalled that discussion and having a final agreement was going to hold up several projects and that was why they decided to go with a tentative agreement for a project.

Mayor Hopkins stated that had happened on a couple of Borough projects and did not know whether that was a change that had been rolled out. Mayor Hopkins asked Mr. Miller if that was a policy change.

Mr. Miller stated that he was not convinced that they had the right policy in their procedures. Mr. Miller stated that they did have a history of not getting a maintenance agreement done before the project started and after-the-fact it got kind of messy. Mr. Miller stated that what he would like to see going forward was that they quit breaking up all the roads into pieces and parts and agree which roads were whose responsibility because it was not efficient. Mr. Miller stated that he did not have a problem with the language here.

Ms. Gardino stated that she was planning on having a Seasonal Mobility Task force meeting this summer and would try to address that concern.

Mayor Hopkins stated that for the last few projects where they had to wait and wonder what the design was, changes, and then had to wait and see what the maintenance agreements were, it seemed that recently those maintenance agreements seemed to have been worked out.

Mr. Sattley asked Ms. Gardino if this was the document that contained three blank sections and what those sections were, and the story behind why they were approving them now with them missing.

Ms. Gardino stated that it was Sections 8, 9 and 10 and they could eliminate those sections, but knowing that those sections were being worked on she had decided to include those with the caveat that those were not in there yet. Ms. Gardino explained that it would be an ongoing document and would never really be finished, so policies would be added as they were approved.

Mr. Sattley inquired if those sections had to go to thirty day approval.

Ms. Gardino stated that they would have to go through the thirty day approval.

Mr. Sattley inquired if there was a time crunch on approval of the document.

Ms. Gardino stated that they were just trying to make sure they had things put in writing so they had a go-to document for when people moved on and historical memory was gone.

Mr. Sattley inquired which of the three sections was currently in the works.

Ms. Gardino stated that the Complete Streets Policy Subcommittee meeting was on July 23rd to review that policy. Ms. Gardino stated that they also had an Enhancement Policy Subcommittee meeting, but needed to have another one. Ms. Gardino stated that she had developed the draft of the Green Streets Policy, but had decided to review them one at a time because they were a lot to look at.

Amendment to the Motion: To postpone approval until the three outstanding policies are completed. (Sattley/Hopkins).

Discussion: Mayor Eberhart stated that he was not clear because he thought that they had voted on this a couple months ago and had already approved the document with the blank sections; so he wondered if it was appearing before them again for approval because things had been added since they last saw it.

Ms. Gardino stated that the document had been approved for release to the public and no public comments were received so it looked the same as the

first time they saw it. Ms. Gardino stated that the document was not approved and was just approved for release to the public for comment.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if that meant there was a difference there.

Ms. Gardino stated that Mayor Hopkins was correct.

Mayor Eberhart inquired if Ms. Gardino could elaborate on whether postponement would cause any problems or issues.

Ms. Gardino stated that she thought there was value in having a go-to document to look up the processes that they followed, but they would follow the processes anyway, they were just not formalized. Ms. Gardino stated that she thought that the Enhancement Policy was going to take time.

Vote on Amendment to the Motion: Two in favor. (Sattley, Hopkins). Five opposed. (Walley, Eberhart, Koch, Butler, Miller). Amendment failed.

Discussion: Mayor Hopkins inquired about the CMAQ project criteria and whether FMATS or a separate body scored those projects.

Ms. Gardino stated that in the document it stated that the policies for project selection could be found in the MOA.

Mayor Hopkins requested that they consider adding a sentence under CMAQ project criteria on Page 21 that referenced that information or tied it together.

Ms. Gardino stated that there were actually two pots of money and FMATS itself received \$800,000. Ms. Gardino stated that what FMATS had been doing since the amount of money was small, was not scoring projects separately but instead applying amounts of money towards CMAQ-eligible work within projects.

Mr. Butler inquired if a footnote would be sufficient to clarify the CMAQ issue.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if Ms. Gardino anticipated inserting page numbers in the document as there were no numbers on it.

Ms. Gardino stated that they had purposely removed the page numbers so they could insert new policies and not have to repaginate the document but they could be put in.

Ms. Koch suggested that to provide clarity they could number the sections with subsections which might be helpful when referencing information in the document.

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

7. Old Business

a. Status of the 2015-2018 TIP – Comments to Date

Ms. Gardino explained that the Draft TIP was out for public review until July 24th because it had taken additional time for her to get on talk shows and the radio to present the TIP; so she decided to allow additional time for people to provide comments. Ms. Gardino explained the comments received and revisions that were made to the Draft TIP.

New Business

b. FFY16 Coordinator's Office Budget and PL Funding (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained that every August she brought a draft projected budget forward for review and approval by the Policy Committee in order to have an approved budget in place by October 1st. Ms. Gardino explained the budget and the current leave liability of \$72,000. Ms. Gardino stated that she wanted to be able to have funds available to cover the leave liability.

Motion: To approve the FFY16 Coordinator's Office Budget. (Eberhart/Sattley).

Discussion: Mr. Walley asked Ms. Gardino if the amount of \$72,000 in the projected budget of \$390,000 for salaries was for the leave liability.

Ms. Gardino stated that Mr. Walley was correct.

Amendment to the Motion: To reduce materials from \$11,000 to \$6,000; and Contractual Services from \$20,000 to \$10,000. (Hopkins/Sattley).

Discussion: Mayor Hopkins stated that he understood that the leave liability was a portion of the budget, but inquired if there were also step increases that happened automatically.

Ms. Gardino stated that FMATS did not receive step increases.

Mayor Hopkins stated that he had seen a 2.5% increase somewhere in there.

Ms. Gardino stated that there was a 1.5% cost of living increase and for next year Ms. Bell had included 1.5% as a conservative estimate for next year, but they did not know if they would get that since they did not have a contract for next year.

Mr. Miller asked Ms. Gardino if FMATS was able to move or reallocate their budget as long as they stayed within the total.

Ms. Gardino stated that Mr. Miller was correct and FMATS could reduce or increase budget items by amendment.

Mayor Hopkins stated that for the Borough budget he held it down to a very tough standard with the same mill rate and same revenue stream and thought FMATS should show that in their budget as well. Mayor Hopkins stated that he had to say no to a lot of things in Borough government and thought it was appropriate to do that here as well.

Mayor Eberhart asked Ms. Gardino if FMATS could handle that sort of a reduction in the budget for contractual services and supplies.

Ms. Gardino stated that without the \$20,000 in Contractual Services funding, FMATS would not be getting DOT assistance with the Bike and Pedestrian counts as they had in past years. Ms. Gardino stated that there were other planning funds available, they could apply for the DUUP funds, but FMATS had not received any of those funds in the past three years, so it was doubtful. Ms. Gardino stated that 80% of the materials budget was used to print the meeting packets and the toner was really expensive. Ms. Gardino stated that they could ask that entities print their own packets and that would save money.

Vote on Amendment to the Motion: Six in favor. One opposed. (Butler).

Amended Motion: To approve the FFY16 Coordinator's Office budget, and reduce materials from \$11,000 to \$6,000 and Contractual Services from \$20,000 to \$10,000.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

c. Location Change for Future Policy Committee Meetings (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained that the Technical Committee had made a recommendation to move the Policy Committee meetings to the City Council Chambers and change the time of the meetings to noon. Ms. Gardino explained that it was one of the goals in the Public Participation Plan to have the meetings in a convenient downtown location with adequate parking that was easily accessible to the public. Ms. Gardino stated that it had been discussed and approved by the Technical Committee previously and was voted against by the Policy Committee.

Mr. Sattley stated that he thought they should stay at DOT because the facilities were better and the coffee pot was better. Mr. Sattley stated that he felt it was more accessible to park at DOT than at the City. Mr. Sattley stated that he thought it was contrary to the proposed idea of separating the Coordinator's office from the City as employees and union members; and possibly relocating the office. Mr. Sattley stated that it was set up to be at DOT, except for the construction this summer; and favored it being at DOT.

Motion: To change the Policy Committee meeting location to Fairbanks City Hall Council Chambers. (Sattley/Butler).

Discussion: Ms. Koch wondered if they could separate the discussion of location versus time.

Mayor Hopkins stated that they could divide the question and vote on each.

Mr. Miller stated that the location was more convenient at DOT than it was at the City. Mr. Miller stated that DOT had to have Project Engineers waiting in the audience to address questions and issues that came up when they could be out there designing projects.

Mr. Butler stated that he was involved in the discussion with the Technical Committee when they made the recommendation to move the meetings so that they could be more accessible to the public. Mr. Butler stated that public accessibility was not based upon the accessibility of DOT personnel, but for public accessibility so they could attend, comment, and participate. Mr. Butler stated that there had been a lively discussion by the Technical Committee at that time and they had voted to recommend moving their meetings to the City.

Mayor Eberhart stated that it seemed to him to be more convenient to have the meetings in the heart of the City and thought that it would be more convenient for the Borough as well. Mayor Eberhart stated that FMATS had to carry lots of items to the meeting and asked Ms. Gardino if she could explain the logistics involved with those meetings.

Ms. Gardino explained that they usually had to carry a couple laptops, meeting packets, coffee, and the cups to the meetings.

Mr. Butler stated that he wanted to reiterate that the intention and purpose of the motion had been for the ease of public accessibility and not for the convenience of the committee members.

Mayor Hopkins stated that he was in favor of having the meeting in a place where they regularly had public meetings. Mayor Hopkins inquired if the City had the capability to easily record the meetings and patch in telephones with their equipment.

Mayor Eberhart stated that it was his understanding that the City had the capability to patch in telephones and record.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if the City had the capability of streaming the meetings.

Mayor Eberhart stated that he believed that the City had that capability and they could certainly look into that.

Vote on Motion: Four in favor. Three opposed. (Sattley,Koch,Miller).

Motion: To change the Policy Committee meeting time to Noon.
(Sattley/Butler).

Discussion: Mayor Eberhart stated that he thought that 12-1 seemed that it would be more convenient for some members of the public to attend the meetings than 10-12 and less likely to take as much time out of their work schedules.

Mr. Walley asked Mr. Butler if that had been the line of thinking when they decided to schedule the Technical Committee Meetings from 12-1.

Mr. Miller stated that from a budget standpoint and speaking for Ms. Koch who had to fly in from Juneau; he would propose 12:30 as a compromise to accommodate airline flight schedules and eliminate overnight stay costs which would be more financially feasible for the State.

Mayor Hopkins stated that he thought there was a flight that got in at 11:30AM.

Ms. Koch stated that she thought there was a flight that got her in at around 11:45AM if it was on time. Ms. Koch stated that she would be able to make it depending on flight delays and would be able to make it at noon, but people would have to understand that she might sometimes be just a few minutes late.

Mr. Sattley inquired if Ms. Koch had other duties scheduled at the local office when she came for the meetings.

Ms. Koch stated that Mr. Sattley was correct and she did have duties at the local office but scheduled those around this meeting and usually came up the night before.

Mayor Hopkins stated that Ms. Koch could also call in and vote via telephone if she were unable to attend the meeting due to incimate weather in Juneau.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

d. College Road Rehabilitation Construction Increase (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained the reason behind the requested funding increase by DOT. Ms. Gardino stated that the funding request was necessary to bring the

project up to low bid and also increase the engineering budget and other items.

Motion: To approve the \$776,112.00 of FCTP funding for the College Road Rehabilitation project. (Miller/Eberhart).

Discussion: Mayor Hopkins asked Ms. Gardino if “State” money meant money that was appropriated by the State.

Ms. Gardino stated that the funding change would come from the Federal program.

Mayor Hopkins requested that he would like to go back and have a motion from the Policy Committee made to give some direction as to when the meeting location and time change would take effect.

Mr. Walley stated that an action item was coming up to change the August meeting date, so maybe they should take that up at the August meeting.

Ms. Gardino stated that the next meeting would be at the City due to DOT construction so she assumed that it would go be enacted immediately and did not see any reason to wait.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if there was any objection by the Policy Committee to having the changes take effect for the August meeting as long as the public was given adequate notice of the changes.

Ms. Gardino stated that they made an effort to highlight the meeting location change in the public notices for the meeting so they could also highlight the date and time changes as well in the notice.

e. Gold Hill Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Construction Increase (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained that an email request was received from Carl Heim at DOT to increase the construction funding due to the need to redesign the project to match the stabilized base policy.

Mr. Miller stated that it would increase the long-term use of the road.

Motion: To approve \$500,000 in additional funding for Phase 4 of the Gold Hill Road project. (Miller/Sattley).

Discussion: Mr. Butler stated that Mayor Ward would like to receive further information and clarification about why chip seal was acceptable for use on the Hurst Road project and not be acceptable for the Gold Hill project.

Mr. Heim stated that he was not sure how the Hurst Road design related to the Gold Hill Road project design, but he was building the Gold Hill Road project to comply with standards for stabilized base in the Preconstruction Manual.

Ms. Carpenter stated that she thought the Hurst Road project was also a PM project.

Mr. Miller stated that the project was a PM or Preventative Maintenance project where they replaced the materials removed with in-kind materials.

Mayor Hopkins inquired about the funding source for the funding request.

Ms. Gardino explained the items that were receiving part of the allocation for the requested funds.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

f. South Cushman Construction Increase (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained that the reason for the requested funding increase was due to a Utility Agreement that had been in-place, but the funds had not been encumbered. Ms. Gardino stated that GHU had sent DOT the bill for that Utility Agreement and DOT did not have the funds to cover it.

Motion: To approve \$312,993 for the South Cushman Sidewalk and Drainage Improvement Project, using State funds. (Miller/Butler).

Discussion: Mr. Walley asked Ms. Gardino what the original estimate had been.

Ms. Gardino stated that the original estimate had been \$215,000.

Mr. Walley asked Ms. Gardino what type of funding would be used if this request was approved.

Mr. Gardino explained that it was all State money.

Mayor Hopkins asked when DOT had received the utility billing and how old it was.

Ms. Gardino stated that she thought the DOT received the billing in December or January, but it may have been as late as March. Ms. Gardino stated that the utilities were notoriously late in sending their billings to both the DOT and the City. Ms. Gardino stated that she and Mr. Pristash reviewed the bill with DOT to make sure the costs were valid and not for betterments, since FMATS did not pay for betterments and the DOT had taken a long time making sure that the costs were valid.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if the fund increase took care of the utilities for this project, this time; and if the funds had been obligated for the utilities on the Cushman Street project.

Ms. Gardino stated that the utility costs were figured into the original project costs for the Cushman project and they had learned from the South Cushman project.

Mayor Hopkins stated that his concern was that the State would not be giving them any more money and if there was a mistake made on a billing like this in the future, they might be left with zero appropriations from the Legislature in future capital appropriations.

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

g. STIP Amendment 16 Comments (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino stated that she only had a few comments that she wanted to propose to the Policy Committee and explained that the comments were due that day.

Motion: To forward the comments on STIP Amendment #16 to the DOT&PF. (Sattley/Walley).

Discussion: Mayor Hopkins stated that he knew they had issues with scope changes in the past and thought that the language in Item #3 was too soft and thought the general comment should be that “FMATS requested that DOT identified any scope changes in the Public Notice.” rather than “it would be helpful to identify any scope changes.

Amendment to the Motion: FMATS would request that DOT identify any scope changes in the Public Notice. (Hopkins/Sattley).

Discussion: Mr. Butler stated that it should possibly be worded that “any substantive change” would require a Public Notice.

Mr. Miller stated that it was appropriate for the DOT to list any substantive changes in scope in a Public Notice.

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

h. Date Change for the August Policy Committee Meeting (Action Item)

Mayor Hopkins explained that the change of date was to accommodate other commitments that would require most of the Policy Committee members to be out of town that week. Mayor Hopkins stated that it had been proposed to have the meeting either the week before or the week after August 15th.

Motion: To change the August Policy Committee meeting date to August 12. (Sattley/Miller).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

i. Airport Way Medians

Ms. Gardino explained that Ms. Chapman had requested this be added to the agenda and had been working with the Plant Materials Center in Palmer to find different types of plants that could be used instead of the grass that would look nice and was lower maintenance. Ms. Gardino stated that the medians were not mowed often enough and they were not looking nice. Ms. Gardino stated that there was a project in the TIP for a beautification project on Airport Way. Ms. Gardino stated that they were looking for options for how to beautify those medians.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if the medians or the chain link fence were the issue.

Ms. Gardino stated that the scope of the project was all-encompassing.

Mayor Hopkins inquired about the scope of the project work that was in the TIP and what was being done on it by DOT.

Mr. Miller stated that he knew it was out there and there had been work done on it so it was ongoing, but he did not know the particulars.

Mayor Hopkins stated that he remembered discussions about up to and in between the lilac bushes and wondered if they were currently doing anything with the median at this point that Mr. Miller was aware of.

Mr. Miller stated that he thought they should table the discussion until the next meeting until he could bring in more information.

Ms. Gardino read the project scope that was included in the TIP and stated that there was also an Airport Way Drainage Improvement project in the STIP as well. Ms. Gardino stated that she thought they probably needed to look in more depth to see what the DOT was looking at as far as landscaping for that project.

j. Future Funding for the FMATS Office Discussion

Ms. Gardino explained that DOT had added this item to the agenda. Ms. Gardino stated the FMATS budget obligations and the need for finding alternate sources of match funding in the future in order to keep receiving federal planning funds for projects.

Mayor Hopkins asked Ms. Gardino about the unobligated funding they had.

Ms. Gardino stated that they needed to have match funds in order to keep receiving the Federal planning funds that they received.

Mayor Hopkins inquired about when Ms. Gardino foresaw that money running out.

Ms. Gardino stated that she thought they were good until 2018, but after that it would be difficult.

Mr. Butler stated that in the past the funding priorities had always been towards funding projects; but he thought they needed to make the FMATS Office funding a priority to ensure that it was adequately funded. Mr. Butler stated that the FMATS office performed a valuable service and they could not do some of the things they did without them.

Mr. Miller inquired at what level FMATS funding was no longer viable.

Ms. Gardino explained that if they were not an MPO in good standing they would lose the \$9 million dollars that they received in Federal funds.

Mr. Miller inquired at what point the FMATS office ceased to exist or was no longer viable.

Ms. Gardino stated that she did not see the FMATS allocation going down but the State determined the dollar amount.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if FMATS existed prior to the Coordinator's Office.

Ms. Carpenter stated that it had been all Planners from the State and the Borough.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if they did not have an MPO did that mean there was no funding.

Ms. Gardino stated that she was sure there was a process and a grace period but she had not really looked into that.

Ms. Carpenter stated that they had looked at what would happen if they were unable to match the funding to the Coordinator's Office and if they could not match that, it could revert back to the way it was before.

Ms. Gardino stated that project funds had been used to update the conformity because there were insufficient planning funds.

k. Coordinator's Office Reorganization Discussion

Ms. Gardino stated that they were looking at how to make the office more sustainable. Ms. Gardino explained that they were in a situation where they were paying really high insurance costs. Ms. Gardino stated that she was having trouble retaining people due to the high health insurance costs. Ms. Gardino stated that she had tried to work with the Union and been unable to get anywhere. Ms. Gardino stated that they were looking at trying to restructure the organization in order to divest themselves from the burden of the high costs they had now. Ms. Gardino stated that they were looking at other options for FMATS to continue operating and wanted everyone to be aware that FMATS was working on this. Ms. Gardino stated that they were just a grant entity housed at the City by agreement and liked it there and would like to remain there. Ms. Gardino stated that they still needed an entity to pay the bills and get reimbursed because they operated on a reimbursable grant. Ms. Gardino stated that they would need to modify the Coordinator's Office Agreement when they came up with a solution and she just wanted to make everyone aware that they had been working on this.

Mr. Sattley stated that he thought it was unfortunate that Ms. Gardino had tangled up the location of the office physically being in City Hall with the Union insurance and the deductions and all of that. Mr. Sattley inquired if Ms. Gardino agreed that those were two separate things.

Ms. Gardino agreed with Mr. Sattley.

Mr. Sattley stated that it should be clarified that they wanted to remain in City Hall and disassociate themselves with the costs related to being in the Union.

Ms. Gardino agreed with Mr. Sattley and stated that they would like to stay if the City would have them, but with some modifications.

Mr. Sattley stated that he would assume that the City would rather continue to make in-kind contributions rather than pay a financial share.

Mayor Eberhart stated that he could not speak for City Council.

Mr. Walley inquired how it came about that the Coordinator's office fell under the IBEW umbrella.

Mr. Sattley stated that the Borough Mayor had said there was no space at the time. Mr. Sattley stated that they had been looking for a place to house the FMATS Coordinator's office and it was decided that DOT would not be appropriate due to tensions there at the time. Mr. Sattley stated that the Borough did not have the space at that time; so the City Mayor at that time, Terry Strle, volunteered that the Coordinator's office could be housed at City Hall. Mr. Sattley stated that he did not remember as an Assembly Member at the time, any discussions of the Coordinator's Office having to be part of the IBEW and were only talking about where to house the Coordinator.

Mayor Hopkins stated that his memory was that FMATS did not want to have all the contractual arrangements so there was a grant from FMATS to the City to pay for being housed in the City. Mayor Hopkins stated that if they were an employee of the City, then they had to become part of their union.

Mayor Hopkins stated that FMATS did not want to go into all the HR, supervisory, or payroll issues at that time. Mayor Hopkins stated that both the City of Fairbanks, City of North Pole, and the Borough already had those things in place. Mayor Hopkins stated that the Borough did not have the room at that time, the City of North Pole just wanted to make an in-kind donation and not be bothered with all that other stuff; so it was decided that FMATS would be housed in the City of Fairbanks.

Mr. Sattley stated that he would encourage Ms. Gardino to continue with her efforts to escape from the current situation.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if there was a subcommittee looking into this.

Ms. Gardino stated that she, Mayor Ward, and Ms. Giamichael sat down and gathered quotes for payroll and were awaiting quotes for health insurance options. Ms. Gardino stated that if FMATS could opt out of the insurance, she did not think they would have as much of an issue.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if exempt City employees were required to pay that insurance cost.

Mayor Eberhart stated that there was a special agreement with IBEW that the Union paid their insurance and pension. Mayor Eberhart stated that their insurance was not quite as expensive, but it was still expensive, and they could not opt out of it. Mayor Eberhart stated that they he thought this was the point where lawyers needed to get involved because employees could not just decide that they were going to jump out of the Union or relocate. Mayor Eberhart stated that the Union would file grievances against the City and say that this was bargaining unit work. Mayor Eberhart stated that the City already had a grievance against them for deciding not to hire a new Public Works Director.

Mr. Sattley stated that there was one further twist to this in that the parallel Mayor Eberhart gave was not exact because Ms. Gardino did not work for Mayor Eberhart. Mayor Eberhart stated that while he might not supervise Ms. Gardino he had just signed something this morning pertaining to her.

Mr. Sattley stated that he did not think that Mayor Eberhart was Ms. Gardino's supervisor. Mr. Sattley stated that Ms. Gardino worked for and answered to the Policy Committee.

Mr. Walley inquired if hypothetically the Borough came up an agreement to house FMATS and since FMATS was grant funded; the Borough took over that grant from the City; how the Union would grieve that.

Ms. Gardino stated that to her it was ultimately the Policy Committee that made the decisions about FMATS.

Mr. Miller stated that it was not where they were housed, it was how they were getting paid that was driving the Union.

Mr. Walley stated that he would have to agree with Mayor Eberhart that there would be grievances filed.

Mayor Hopkins stated that he felt that rather than Ms. Gardino burning the midnight oil working on it, the Policy Committee should take the matter up as a body. Mayor Hopkins stated that the unfunded leave liability was coming from some pot of money and FMATS could probably contract with an entity for the human resources and it would be cheaper.

8. Public Comment Period (3 minute limit)

Representative David Guttenberg, Representative of District 4, commented about the need for stronger language in the STIP. Mr. Guttenberg stated that he had been working with the Legislature and Statewide planners about certain projects and what influence megaprojects had on Federal money coming into the state on other projects. Mr. Guttenberg stated that he thought we needed to press for an answer because it was a public policy issue and thought it was being hidden from us. Mr. Guttenberg stated that he thought it was a policy question that needed to be answered. Mr. Guttenberg stated that he thought a stronger letter was very appropriate and he would continue to push for the answer.

9. Other Issues

No other issues.

10. Informational Items

a. DRIVE Act Summary

Ms. Gardino explained the Drive Act and the impact it would have on FMATS and cited a letter from the FTA regarding the MAP-21 funding lapse and its effect on transit that would also apply to highways as well.

b. Obligations/Offsets

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

c. Discussion of Fox Spring

Mr. Sattley stated that he had asked that the item be placed on the agenda and did not understand why it was not an item that could be discussed by the Policy Committee.

Mr. Miller explained the process that DOT was going through to vacate itself from the Fox Spring. Mr. Miller stated that it could be offered to another agency, then to adjacent landowners at Fair Market Value, then offered for sale at possibly an outcry auction. Mr. Miller stated that the budget was cut 16 percent and the Fox Spring was one of the things that was identified as a costly item that needed to be cut.

Mr. Sattley inquired if there was a certification process to train personnel to test the water.

Ms. Koch stated that there was a DEC Water Quality employee that worked with DOT to test the well.

Mr. Sattley inquired about whether DOT would conceivably continue to plow the snow in the parking area at Fox Spring.

Mr. Miller stated that Mr. Sattley was correct.

11. Policy Committee Comments

- Mr. Miller encouraged everyone to take a look at the STIP that was out now for public comment and this was the first one so you did not have to look for changes and just try to understand what was there.
- Mr. Walley commented that in the last couple years they had actually had excess money coming back from projects, but this year was maybe an anomaly, but he had noticed that a lot of projects were requesting additional funding which was disconcerting. Mr. Walley commented that he foresaw cost overruns on the Cushman Street project and it would be coming before the Policy Committee again. Mr. Walley commented that as for the reorganization question; he would not be opposed to putting a subcommittee together to address the questions and implications, and would recommend proceeding with a smaller committee to look at that specific question.
- Mayor Eberhart commented that he was concerned about the FMATS reorganization because it was the City that had the collective bargaining agreement, and the implications to the City from the Union. Mayor Eberhart stated that he thought they needed to talk about it and get some legal advice and he might need to recuse himself to stay neutral if the question came up before the Policy Committee and he was in the process of negotiating a new contract for the City with the Union. Mayor Eberhart stated that he would be talking with the City Attorney to try and get some advice on the issue.
- Mr. Sattley commented that he thought it was unfortunate that they decided to move the meetings to the City because he thought it went directly opposite to what was being talked about of possibly moving the Coordinator out from under City employment and possibly separately moving the Coordinator's office out of City Hall. Mr. Sattley stated that he thought it was an opposite move, but it was what it was.
- Mayor Hopkins commented that he could not wait for Mayor Ward to return. Mayor Hopkins commented that he looked forward to information about the Dalton Highway projects and what happened to those projects because they were NHS money, and there were lots of other things planned for the Dalton. Mayor Hopkins stated that he thought it would also be good to hear about the progress of the North Chena Riverwalk project. Mayor Hopkins stated that he would probably attend the next three meetings and then there would be a new Mayor.

12. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn. (Sattley/Walley). The meeting adjourned at 12:47 p.m. The next Policy Committee Meeting is scheduled Wednesday, August 12, 2015, at 12 p.m. in the City of Fairbanks Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Approved: 

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair
FMATS Policy Committee

Date: 8-12-15