

**Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System  
POLICY COMMITTEE  
800 Cushman Street, City Council Chambers  
City Hall, Fairbanks, Alaska  
Meeting Minutes – August 15, 2012**

**1. Call to Order**

Steve Titus called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

**2. Introduction of Members and Attendees**

<b>Attendee</b>	<b>Representative Organization</b>
* Bill Butler, for Mayor Isaacson	City of North Pole
* Jerry Cleworth	Mayor, City of Fairbanks
* Alice Edwards	Director, Division of Air Quality
* Luke Hopkins	Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
* Mike Musick	Member, FNSB Assembly
* Chad Roberts, Vice Chair	City of Fairbanks
* Steve Titus, Chair	DOT & PF
** <sup>+</sup> Donna Gardino	MPO Coordinator, FMATS
** Jessica Smith	Transportation Planner/Assistant, FMATS
<sup>+</sup> Joan Hardesty	Division of Air Quality
<sup>+</sup> Ethan Birkholz	DOT & PF
<sup>+</sup> Bruce Carr	Alaska Railroad
<sup>+</sup> Mike Schmetzer	City of Fairbanks
Linda Mahlen	DOT & PF
Margaret Carpenter	DOT & PF
Bernardo Hernandez	FNSB
Barry Hooper	DOT & PF
Scott Bell	UAF
Carl Heim	DOT & PF

*\*FMATS Policy Committee Members*

*\*\*FMATS Staff Members*

*<sup>+</sup> FMATS Technical Committee Members*

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of August 15, 2012 Agenda.**

- **Motion:** To approve the August 15, 2012 agenda. (Cleworth/Roberts).
- Mayor Hopkins asked to add under Item 10 FMATS MPO Consultation with DOT – MAP-21
- **Vote on the motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**5. Approval of July 18, 2012 Minutes.**

- **Motion:** To approve the July 18, 2012 Minutes. (Roberts/Edwards).
- **Vote on the motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**6. Committee Reports**

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

Ms. Gardino provided an update on all FMATS activities, details of which are included in the Coordinator's Report in the meeting packet.

**b. FMATS Art Selection Advisory Committee Report**

Ms. Gardino detailed the question and answers from potential applicants. August 27<sup>th</sup> is the deadline. On August 28<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Smith will hold a "juror training" for the Committee. A short list of up to 5 finalists will be asked to submit a more detailed proposal. There will be a public hearing on safety and maintenance. There will be an opportunity for the Policy Committee to approve the selected artist by November 21<sup>st</sup>.

Mayor Hopkins asked if the historical plaques will be included in this project. Ms. Gardino said that would be a separate effort. She noted various phone calls and efforts to continuing the historical plaques projects.

Mr. Musick commented that he is very pleased with the effects of the art committee, including the grading changes at the greenspace.

**c. Boundary Subcommittee Report**

Ms. Gardino presented Ms. Carpenter and Ms. Mahlen's schedule and Mr. Spillman's boundary map as found in the meeting packet. Ms. Gardino noted the boundary needs to be set to be able to begin the LRTP update, due in August 2014.

Mayor Hopkins asked what would happen to projects that are outside of the new boundaries. Ms. Gardino said she did not know, but would address that issue in the future.

**d. Local Planning Approval MOU Subcommittee Report and Recommendation (Action Item)**

Ms. Gardino outlined the subcommittee's progress regarding a review of the LPA MOU. She noted that the subcommittee recommendation and the Technical Committee action item.

- **Motion:** To request the State of Alaska DOT & PF, the Fairbanks North Star Borough and FMATS review and update the Memorandum of Understanding for Highway Project Review Process and associated FMATS agreement in an attempt to reflect the current planning environment and to streamline the process. (Hopkins/Musick)
- **Discussion:** Mayor Hopkins noted that the recommendation from the subcommittee and the technical committee are a little different. Ms. Gardino noted that FMATS was added to the

discussion, and Mr. Schmetzer confirmed. Ms. Gardino said that a lot of the projects that go to the LPA are FMATS projects. She believes there is ample opportunity for public input.

Mayor Cleworth spoke in favor of the motion.

Mayor Hopkins asked if the two agreements would be approached separately. Mr. Gardino said there were no details regarding how to complete the process/review.

**Amendment to the Motion:** To strike FMATS and all parties review the FMATS agreement. (Hopkins/Musick)

Mr. Musick asked why this amendment was necessary. Mayor Hopkins voiced concerns regarding the Borough's legal interpretation of the Highway Review process. Mr. Titus asked for clarification: The State and the Borough would need to have an MOU between them, although FMATS could be in the discussion, but would not need to be a signatory. The other agreement (associated FMATS agreement) would be inclusive of all parties.

Mayor Cleworth said he thinks it's important to have FMATS as a part of the discussion. Mr. Roberts asked Mayor Hopkins about the law regarding DOT and Borough. Mayor Hopkins clarified the law's notes about the local government planning authority. The Borough legal department interprets this as the Planning Commission. Mayor Cleworth responded by reading the 1988 contract that seemingly excludes the two cities. Mayor Cleworth suggested the local planning review be handed over to the FMATS Technical Committee, which includes representatives from both cities and the Borough. Mr. Musick said it seems Mayor Hopkin's amendment is undoing the amendment for legal reasons. Mayor Hopkins responded that as the legal review reads the law, it clearly states the Borough and the DOT should discuss the Highway Review process. Mayor Cleworth said the discussion is between DOT and Borough, facilitated by FMATS. Mayor Hopkins reiterated that he believes this should be clear before there is a discussion.

Mr. Titus asked the other members of the committee for their opinion. Committee members (Butler, Roberts, Musick) were all in agreement that FMATS should be present. Mayor Hopkins said he was OK with the agreement review as long as DOT and Borough would sign, but FMATS would simply facilitate.

Ms. Edwards said it appears everyone seems to understand.

*Mayor Hopkins withdrew his amendment, seconded by Mr. Musick.*

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

## 7. Old Business

### a. Illinois Reconstruction Update

Ms. Gardino provided an update. The greenspace looks good and the road is up to borrow grade and they are bringing in D1. The second request for funding (change orders 10 – 18), approximately \$469,000 has been processed. There are RFPs out for acceleration of the signal system and reducing the impacts of the Noyes Slough Bridge reconstruction.

Mr. Titus noted the media dialog and public input concerning traffic delays downtown. He said the DOT is listening to concerns from the public. One of the many considerations was the signalization and could it be accelerated in the project as it is not required to be completed until next summer. Contractor said he could do final paving, striping, signalization up to just beyond Minnie Street this season (through October). This would allow all traffic to be flowing the way it was designed for final construction. Schedule, performance, and budget are all considerations, but this would be a good improvement.

Mr. Musick asked about the situation on Noyes Slough Bridge – will the road remain closed? Mr. Titus said that next spring/summer a new bridge would be put in, and the DOT is looking at the safety, traffic control, etc. to expedite this construction as well.

Mr. Butler asked if there were any efforts to express the DOT's response and actions. Mr. Titus said he is working with Meadow Bailey to insure this communication after the change order has been completed and signed.

Mr. Cleworth asked if the subcontractors have been on board with these accelerations. Mr. Titus said yes, the subcontractors are all cooperating and finishing as quickly as possible. Mayor Hopkins noted that this is great news, the discussion here today from Mr. Titus.

**b. Match Policy Discussion on Preventive Maintenance Projects**

Ms. Gardino noted the outcome from the Technical Committee and that the match needs to be made from each entity and not to pull funds from FMATS general funds. She noted the email to Ethan Birkholz from the FMATS Technical Committee regarding the match policy. Mr. Titus noted why this was good.

Mayor Hopkins noted the Borough's idea of a PM project as requested. He asked if there was ever a case when the match is not asked for. Ms. Gardino noted the clarification of the match policy has not been made by the DOT. Each project can be interpreted differently. Currently there is no update from DOT & PF headquarters.

Mayor Cleworth asked Mr. Titus' input on how a policy can be changed or improved, and is he relaying these concerns to the DOT. Mr. Titus said he is in the dialog and the DOT is working on the policy – and Mr. Birkholz would know better. Mr. Birkholz said there have been questions, concerns, etc. from HQ, but there has not been any decisions or revisions sent. They have not been very clear about what they are going to do. Mayor Hopkins commented that this is a sudden change of interpretation. Mr. Birkholz noted that the reason this all came about is because some of the other regions were not requiring a match. This was not a problem in the Northern Region, but because of the other regions, they had to review the match policy, which subjected Northern Region to find out what the match is for and the clarity, etc.

Mr. Titus said he would ask Jeff to make a presentation – Ms. Gardino noted it is already on the agenda.

**c. Administrative Assistant (Action Item)**

- **Motion (postponed from last meeting):** To approve a half-time Administrative Assistant for FMATS. (Birkholz/Edwards).
- **Discussion:** Ms. Gardino listed the apparent duties of the office which will require herself and Ms. Smith to concentrate on the planning efforts. Ms. Gardino said administration help could free up the time for Ms. Smith to focus more on planning duties as listed. Mr. Titus clarified the budget. Mayor Hopkins asked what the budget was for FY12. Ms. Gardino said it was \$346,000. Mayor Hopkins asked what the MAP-21 would mean for the MPO. Ms. Gardino said they did not know at this point. Mr. Titus and Mr. Birkholz also noted they simply did not know. The committee discussed what the duties of the assistant would be, and if some of these duties could be absorbed by the Borough.

Mr. Roberts noted the hesitations regarding the budget being so tight. He brought up the fact that the Borough receives \$131,000 for a planner. The state does not receive as much in FMATS funding. Mayor Hopkins noted that the Borough's budget has already been cut. Mayor Cleworth asked for clarification, saying the position is fully funded by FMATS. Mayor Hopkins said there are other actions and duties that are tied to the FMATS funding. Mr. Hernandez noted that Mr. Spillman is able to help FMATS when time allows. Mayor Hopkins asked if it could be a temporary position. Ms. Gardino noted that a quote was done for a temporary assistant and provided details. The details included the that the agency could not guarantee the same worker for every week, which would not be ideal for the type of work and learning curve needed for the necessary tasks at FMATS.

Mr. Butler spoke in favor of the position. Ms. Edwards spoke in favor of the position. They both noted that having professional staff to complete these clerical duties loses productivity of the professional and is costly to the organization. Mr. Titus noted how everyone deals with things – and the purpose of this motion. He noted how hard everyone works with FMATS. He noted historical budgets, and projections for 2.5 FTE. He sees the budget is tight, but his experience with Ms. Gardino is that she can make a tight budget work. He'd like to try this "experiment." He spoke in favor. Mr. Musick spoke in favor. Mayor Hopkins if this position would be a benefited, union position. Ms. Gardino said that it would.

- **Vote on the motion:** Five in favor. Two opposed (Cleworth, Hopkins). Approved.

**8. New Business**

**a. FFY13 Coordinator's Office Budget (Action Item)**

- **Motion:** To approve the proposed FFY13 FMATS Coordinator's Office Budget. (Hopkins/Edwards).

- **Discussion:** Mr. Musick asked if the budget included the half-time assistant. Ms. Gardino confirmed yes. Mr. Roberts asked what Contractual Services referred to. Mayor Hopkins asked about the match funding. Ms. Gardino clarified.
- **Vote on the motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**b. Preventive Maintenance Project Delay for FFY12**

Ms. Gardino noted this was Mayor Isaacson's concerns that we have missed a year of construction because of project delay. Mr. Butler noted the perception of a bureaucracy that does not get things done. Mr. Titus noted that this is a real concern. He referred to Mr. Hooper in the room, who explained federal process delayed the start of project to October (last year). They should be able to beat the construction season next year.

**c. North Pole Bike Trail and Connection Project PH2 Increase (Action Item)**

- **Motion:** To approve \$5,000 for PH2 of the North Pole Bike Trail and Connection Project PH2 (using offset funding). (Roberts/Cleworth).
- **Discussion:** Mr. Titus noted the pre-approval of the DOT in order to move the project forward.
- **Vote on the motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**d. Approval of the FFY13 – 14 UPWP (Action Item)**

- **Motion:** To approve the FFY13 – FFY14 Unified Planning Work Program. (Edwards/Musick).
- **Discussion:** Ms. Gardino noted that the UPWP was out for public comment until July 20, 2012. There were no public comments made. Ms. Gardino noted the only change made was the addition of a Title VI Implementation plan.

Mr. Roberts asked for clarity of the Borough's FMATS funding. Ms. Gardino said this funding was structured before she was MPO Coordinator, and did not know the history. Mr. Hernandez noted the cost of updating and maintaining the GIS base maps and operation of the GIS system for the DOT. This was established prior to the MPO. Mayor Hopkins echoed that the funding is used for ArcGIS licensing fees, IT functions, and operational costs of maintaining the ArcGIS mapping system within the FMATS area, as well as the planning/GIS positions needed to complete these tasks. Mayor Hopkins also noted the local transit that is the Borough's responsibility. Ms. Gardino clarified that the transit funds are a separate budget item which receives funding from the FTA, not from FHWA.

Mr. Roberts asked if there could be a reflection of these costs. He also asked how the funding is delegated throughout the Borough (i.e., by the Assembly). Mayor Hopkins said the Assembly ultimately decides how it is spent, the Policy Committee decides how much is to be delegated to the Borough. Ms. Edwards referenced page 19 of the UPWP and the budgets that are assigned through the UPWP. She noted that the UPWP outlines what duties and tasks must be performed by each entity according to that budget. Mr. Butler asked if there is a system within the Borough tracks how the monies are spent, and Mayor Hopkins noted that there were

charges for all funding used and is recorded. He believes this tracking of the monies can be done. Mr. Roberts noted the differences in the duties required of each entity, and that it would seem that the GIS functions are the most costly, however he would like to know if this is the correct allocation. He noted that now that the GIS system has been built, it may not be as costly as it once was.

Mayor Hopkins responded that he does see the difference in allocation between the entities, but does not know that the Borough and State spend only FMATS monies on the functions in the UPWP. He believes this is appropriate funding for the tasks the Borough completes for FMATS. Mayor Cleworth said that perhaps Mr. Roberts would like to see a breakdown of the position's duties and what dollars are being spent. He said he always thought this funding was for a position, but realizes it may be more complex than a position. Mayor Cleworth asked for this breakdown of where the funding is applied between position, GIS, etc.

Mr. Titus said this discussion is important, but the UPWP needs to be approved at this meeting. Mr. Roberts noted that though he did not want to postpone approving the UPWP today, he would like to see a breakdown of the funding differences in order to provide an answer other than "that's the way we do it." He would like to request a breakdown from the Borough to better justify the amount of FMATS funding at the Borough. Mr. Titus asked Mayor Hopkins if the Borough could provide this breakdown for the committee. Mayor Hopkins asked if all entities should provide this breakdown. Mr. Roberts said his concern was only with the Borough's allocation, as it was so much larger than the other entities. Mayor Hopkins said he would take care of the Borough's breakdown.

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

**9. Public Comment**

None.

**10. Other Issues**

**a. FMATS MAP-21 Consultation**

Mayor Hopkins asked for FMATS to be in consultation with DOT, as the law states. So far, there is no consultation – in the past it has only been FMATS told what is going to happen. Mr. Titus noted that Jeff Ottesen will come to speak to the Technical Committee and Chamber of Commerce. He will ask what needs to be accomplished.

**11. Informational Items.**

**a. Yankovich-Miller Hill Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Update**

Carl Heim spoke to the committee regarding the proposed schedule as found in the meeting packet. Mayor Hopkins asked a question regarding the FMATS Policy Committee request to get the acquisitions and ROW moving quickly. Mr. Heim noted that all things would be running side-by-side instead of one after another, and ROW has been asked to proceed. Mayor

Cleworth asked who would maintain this path. Mr. Heim said it would be DOT; Mr. Titus clarified that this might not be the case, as UAF may be maintaining parts of the path. Mr. Bell detailed the segments that may be maintained by UAF.

**b. UAF Report on Study for Path by the University**

Scott Bell, Associate Dean of Facilities Services, spoke to the committee regarding the Bike Path Survey. The hand out is included in the final meeting packet. Mr. Bell walked the committee through the alternatives displayed in the hand out.

**c. Surface Transportation Authorization Update**

Ms. Gardino noted the summary of MAP-21 included in the meeting packet.

**d. Obligations/Offset List**

Ms. Gardino noted the obligations have been sent to HQ. The Offset list includes \$190,000. Mr. Titus noted that if the \$190K is spent, the money has all been obligated and all monies have been spent. Ms. Gardino confirmed.

**12. Policy Committee Comments**

Mayor Cleworth thanked Mr. Titus for the progress on the Illinois Street project. He also noted his opposition to the action, and his philosophy behind his opposition.

Mr. Titus noted he was glad to be back, and apologized for having to miss two meetings. He does not foresee any additional absences.

Mr. Musick voiced kudos for the Illinois Street contractors.

**13. Adjourn**

- **Motion to adjourn.** (Cleworth/Edwards)
- **Vote on the motion.** None opposed. Approved.

Meeting adjourned at 12:18 pm.

Next Scheduled Policy Committee Meeting, 10:00 am, Wednesday, September 19, 2012 at DOT&PF Main Conference Room.

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

  
Steve Titus, P.E., Chair  
FMATS Policy Committee

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

