



POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Main Conference Room, State of AK DOT&PF, 2301 Peger Road, Fairbanks, AK

Meeting Minutes – September 17, 2014

1. Call to Order

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

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

Attendee

*Luke Hopkins, Chair
 *Bryce Ward, Vice Chair
 *John Eberhart
 *Rob Campbell
 *Guy Sattley
 *Perry Walley
 *Cindy Heil for Alice Edwards (via telephone)
 **+Donna Gardino
 **Deborah Todd
 **Aaron Buckley
 **Linda Mahlen
 **Margaret Carpenter
 +Brian Lindamood
 +Joan Hardesty
 Meadow Bailey
 Shelley Potter
 +Michael Schmetzer
 Tom Snider
 Andrew Ooms (via telephone)
 Cheryl Hamilton
 Mike Vanderrmeer

Representative Organization

Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
 Mayor, City of North Pole
 Mayor, City of Fairbanks
 Acting 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 Planning
 Alaska Railroad
 DEC, Division of Air Quality
 DOT&PF Information Officer
 DOT Planning
 City of Fairbanks
 Fairbanks Resource Agency
 Kittelson & Associates
 IE Creative
 IE creative

****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 September 17, 2014 Agenda

Motion: To approve the September 17, 2014 Agenda. (Sattley/Eberhart).

Discussion: Mr. Campbell commented that last month there was discussion about forming a committee to develop policies for the Policy Committee. Mr. Campbell stated that there had been a vote on that motion and it had failed due to lack of a substantial number of people at the table and inquired if there had been any thought of adding that item to the agenda this month.

Mayor Hopkins stated that it could be added under informational items, but would not be a discussion about forming it or as an action item because it had not been noticed properly.

Mr. Campbell inquired if Mayor Hopkins had reconsidered his intent or something he was trying to refine before he brought it forward again. Mayor Hopkins stated that it had been his intent to have that as an item on the agenda for a future Policy Committee meeting and it could certainly be included next month but was something he had not been able to deal with in the past thirty days. Mr. Campbell stated that he would like to request inclusion of that item as an action item next month.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Approval of the August 20, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the August 20, 2014 meeting minutes. (Eberhart/Ward).

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 presented the highlights from meetings and other activities FMATS had participated in from the monthly report included in the meeting packet.

7. Old Business

None.

8. New Business

a. FMATS FFY14 Coordinator's Office Budget Amendment #1 (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained the reason for the budget amendment stating that she would like permission to move \$1,000 from the Materials and Supplies Account to the Training Account so she and Mr. Buckley could attend the Transportation and Land Use Training Conference hosted by the DOT in Wasilla.

Motion: To approve the FFY14 Coordinator's Office Budget Amendment #1. (Eberhart/Ward).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

b. CMAQ Program NPRM (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained that she drafted comments that were due on October 2, 2014 regarding assigning weighting factors for PM^{2.5} non-attainment areas which would entitle Fairbanks to a larger funding allocation.

Motion: To forward the letter on the CMAQ NPRM. (Sattley/Eberhart).

Discussion: Mr. Sattley commented that the point of one of the paragraphs in the letter was that the non-attainment area was way larger than the boundaries of the MPO. Ms. Gardino stated that the area was double.

Mr. Sattley stated that the letter was fine for whatever purpose it served but the underlying problem was that the non-attainment was ridiculously large and the long-term solution would be to shrink the non-attainment area since the non-attainment area went out the Steese and everywhere which irritated him and he just wanted to express his frustration.

Mayor Ward asked Ms. Gardino about the statement that the State was only able to set aside the PM^{2.5} money in areas that the State determined and did that rule out the need for the CMAQ Board to still give recommendations to the State.

Ms. Gardino stated that ultimately the State made the decision, but FMATS had a process that was required by law to have this written agreement, but in the end the Borough Mayor made the recommendations to the State and they had the final say. Ms. Gardino stated that it just seemed that they were just emphasizing the point that they were using a cooperative process.

Mayor Ward stated that he did not see the correlation that the State would use their process.

Mr. Campbell inquired if there was any kind of performance measure on the air quality item or any performance that had to be accomplished to either sustain the funding or risk a penalty. Ms. Gardino stated that she would defer that question to Ms. Heil of DEC. Mayor Hopkins stated that yes there were penalties.

Ms. Heil stated that it was FHWA money and they had requirements and they had tightened up the requirements for what they could use the money for and reporting requirements to show what they used the funding for but there were a lot more hoops that they had to jump through in order to have eligible projects and you had to show emissions benefits. Mayor Hopkins stated that he would like to have the last paragraph amended.

Amendment to the Motion: To amend the letter from “should” to “must” in the second to the last sentence. Add the following sentence to the beginning of the last paragraph: “FMATS has established a cooperative process to plan and evaluate CMAQ projects.” (Hopkins/Walley).

Discussion: No further discussion.

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

Amended Motion: To forward the letter on the CMAQ NPRM and to amend the letter from “should” to “must” in the second to the last sentence. Add the following sentence to the beginning of the last paragraph: “FMATS has established a cooperative process to plan and evaluate CMAQ projects.”

Vote on Amended Motion: None opposed. Approved.

c. MTP Amendment #1 (Action Item)

Ms. Gardino explained the extension received on the interim MTP through January 31, 2015 and there was a recommendation to approve MTP Amendment #1 from the Technical Committee. The Amendment was for additional meetings and work done by the Consultant to come up with a final project list and finalize the MTP.

Motion: To approve Amendment #1 of the MTP using \$68,000 from federal offset funding. (Walley/Sattley).

Discussion: Mr. Campbell stated that it appeared that they were expanding the scope of the contract extensively over what was originally anticipated and inquired what that did to the product delivery schedule.

Ms. Gardino stated that the schedule had been delayed due to the lack of the Travel Model in early June and there had been a lot of back and forth coordination trying to obtain the travel model. Ms. Gardino stated that they were still shooting for the end of January, but what might complicate the schedule somewhat was doing the alternative analysis based on the final project list.

Mayor Hopkins asked Ms. Gardino about Task #6 Alternative Analysis and Preferred Plan where it discussed additional support to develop alternatives including additional coordination and wonder where the alternatives came from.

Ms. Gardino stated that the alternatives came from the Policy and Technical Committees and they had a draft proposed plan but if comments were received about removing projects that were quite significant from the plan and if they did that they would have to rerun the model. Ms. Gardino stated that the Consultant was not driving the plan, the Committees were because every time a project was moved in, a project had to be moved out to keep it fiscally constrained. Ms. Gardino stated that every change potentially could affect the model, but a lot of the changes to projects would not affect the model such as sidewalk improvements.

Mayor Hopkins inquired about what had been done so far at FMATS toward the developing and funding the 2040 plan.

Ms. Gardino stated that they had established the project and had been working through the whole process. Ms. Gardino stated that they had an open house, developed draft goals and objectives, literature was researched

for all crash data, developed the model, and researched the different plans to come up with the draft project list.

Mayor Hopkins inquired who the “we” was that Ms. Gardino was referring to that developed those plans before it got to Technical Committee.

Ms. Gardino stated that they had a Design Charrette which included people from the Technical Committee, City Engineers, Borough, which was part of the “we” who developed the projects. Ms. Gardino stated that they had several meeting where there was discussion of the Long Range Plan and all that input had come together to come up with this plan.

Mayor Hopkins asked Ms. Gardino about the necessity for the additions to subtasks and where those subtasks originated from Ms. Gardino stated that it had come from discussion with the Consultant and Mr. Ooms from Kittelson was on the telephone if Mayor Hopkins wanted to discuss it with him.

Mayor Hopkins stated that he heard that the Consultant worked with the Technical Committee and asked if it was discussed with them. Ms. Gardino stated that it had been discussed with the Technical Committee after it came to them as staff. Mayor Hopkins stated that he was surprised that those changes were not incorporated early on. Ms. Gardino stated that part of it was that they were going longer, they were having to do more reports and have more meetings to discuss it.

Mayor Ward inquired how many MTP Amendments there had been. Ms. Gardino stated that there had been no amendments and this was an amendment to the Consultant contract to develop the new MTP and this was the first amendment to the new consultant contract.

Mayor Ward inquired how many MTPs there had been with consultant contracts. Ms. Gardino stated that there had been two that she was aware of, one in 2005, 2009 and then the current one. Mayor Ward stated that his comment was that this was not something that they did every day. Ms. Gardino stated that it was done every four years.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

d. Draft MTP Project List-Call for Comments

Ms. Gardino explained the memo in the packet with the project list and funding sources in the draft MTP and the comments that were received after review by the Technical Committee. Ms. Gardino stated that the goal was to come up with a list of projects so they could develop the Air Quality Model.

Discussion: Ms. Gardino stated that what would help them was to get a read on what the Policy Committee thought about the project lists.

Mr. Sattley inquired about the meaning of the three columns and whether they were supposed to make comments on them.

Ms. Gardino stated that she had moved a few things around that seemed reasonable at the Technical Committee.

Mayor Ward inquired if all the projects that were inserted were either part of the old MTP or had been nominated. Ms. Gardino stated that the source of the projects came from several places and she would let Mr. Ooms from Kittelson explain further.

Mr. Ooms explained that many of the projects came from the 2035 MTP but there had been a variety of studies and plans as well as the charrette since then. Mr. Ooms explained the project candidate list columns and provided their meanings and sources. Mr. Ooms stated that they wanted the Policy Committee to review the Technical Committee comments as well as make their own and discuss it.

Mayor Ward inquired if all the projects had been scored for the TIP. Ms. Gardino stated that they had not.

Mayor Ward stated that it seemed nebulous to him on how they would be long or short range if they had not been scored. Mayor Ward stated that he would refer back to a motion that had been made at a previous meeting regarding maintenance agreements for projects that were included in the TIP.

Ms. Gardino stated that she did not feel it was prudent to score every single project and obtain maintenance agreements for them if they were just an idea and might update the plan before they even got to the project. Ms. Gardino stated that they were scoring and modeling the projects before they were included in the TIP.

Mayor Ward inquired if in order for something to be reviewed in the TIP or UPWP it had to be included in the TIP.

Ms. Gardino stated that in order for something to be reviewed it had to be in the TIP and any kind of planning efforts had to be scored to be in the TIP.

Mayor Ward stated that he guessed his question was how projects got into the MTP whether through nominations or planning efforts.

Ms. Gardino stated that they received input from people identifying deficiencies and had a lot of different sources for the projects but tried to figure out the short-range projects first and then figure out what deficiencies rose to the top in the next four years.

Mr. Sattley inquired if the three pages added up to the amount shown. Ms. Gardino stated that the pages were added up to come up with the final amount shown.

Mayor Ward inquired if there was anything that delineated an FMATS project versus a Non-FMATS project. Andrew Ooms stated that there was a column for FMATS and Non-FMATS projects in the master list. Mayor Hopkins asked about how many additional columns we cannot see currently and could the project sources be provided? Andrew said that they could be provided.

e. University Avenue Widening Discussion of NHS Status and Funding, Discussion with State Officials (Action Item)

Mayor Hopkins stated that he had requested that this item be placed on the agenda to receive an update on the project.

Mr. Campbell gave a brief overview of the project stating that the project started sometime in 1985 and the project consisted of College Road to the Mitchell Expressway. Mr. Campbell stated that the project scope had changed over the years, but still consisted of a five-lane within the corridor.

Mr. Campbell stated that in recent times things had changed. Mr. Campbell stated that DOT had been developing that corridor recently and the busiest section was College Road to Geist and the department had identified the north end as their primary focus. Mr. Campbell stated that DOT had been working on sections of that road and the intersection of Geist and Johansen would qualify as an HSIP safety project due to the number of accidents that had occurred there. Mr. Campbell stated that the current project was the HSIP project at that intersection. Mr. Campbell stated that DOT was looking to see if they could design and expedite a smaller project using primarily State funding, but it would not include replacement of the bridge since any one thing that happened in a project, slowed the entire project down.

Mr. Campbell stated that they would address the safety components at the north end and DOT could have that ready for construction in 2016.

Mr. Campbell stated that the right-of-way component stretched the entire length of the project and they had 60 acquisitions if they went south of the bridge but if they stopped north of the bridge they could move the project forward much faster and get it completed sooner with no change to the project scope in terms of what they were looking to do. Mr. Campbell stated that he was just trying to get a project out there sooner rather than later that did not preclude other projects along the corridor.

Mayor Hopkins asked Mr. Campbell about the transfer of the project into the NHS program. Mr. Campbell stated that when MAP-21 came into existence Alaska was unique in that they could spend Federal dollars on any roads in the State and were also allowed to include major arterials for NHS funding and the Department had identified the major arterials that were eligible for NHS funding and University Avenue had been one of those routes.

Mr. Campbell stated that the short-term money DOT hoped to spend was that State-appropriated money. Mr. Campbell stated that one of the reasons they wanted to use State money first was that when the Legislature appropriated that money, the longer they held onto that money, the worse it looked for getting more money. Mr. Campbell stated that when they had that money languishing on the books it put them in a very poor bargaining position when requesting additional funding.

Mr. Sattley inquired if that money discussed was the grandfathered money and whether it came before the GO Bond money. Ms. Gardino stated that grandfathered money came before they became an MPO and was now gone.

Mayor Hopkins inquired what happened to the 19-ft. wide median in the five-lane road configuration that Mr. Campbell discussed.

Mr. Campbell clarified that he considered the median to be the fifth lane and was talking about width context and it would still be a four lane road with a median and not a continuous five-lane road.

Mayor Hopkins stated that he had been concerned that it would push the project back and funds would go somewhere else. Mr. Campbell stated that it would accelerate the project.

Mayor Hopkins inquired if it would be worthwhile for FMATS Policy Committee to try to move the project along faster by asking other commission level individuals to talk with them about one of the worst intersections in the community.

Mr. Campbell stated that utility companies were a major component of this project and they had no real hammer on a utility company's prioritization of the project. Mr. Campbell stated that the two things that were on the critical path of this project were the right-of-way acquisition and DOT was trying to minimize the impacts and every individual with right-of-way acquisition was entitled to a process and fair treatment. Mr. Campbell stated that the other was the utilities and if anyone had any way of influencing that process, it would be fine but DOT had no influence over that. Ms. Gardino stated that it was decided that the DOT and FMATS should sit down and talk with the utilities to try to get something going but that never happened.

Mr. Campbell stated that they had a project team meeting scheduled with the utility companies the first week of October specifically to discuss this project and would have some feedback as to where that would go.

9. Public Comment Period (3 minute limit)

No public comment.

10. Other Issues

None.

11. Informational Items

a. Polaris Sculpture Unveiling Event-September 17, 2014.

Ms. Gardino explained that the Polaris sculpture unveiling event would be that evening at 7 p.m. and introduced the artists who provided a brief presentation of their creation and installation process.

Mike Vandermeer and Cheryl Hamilton from Vancouver, the artists who designed and created the "Polaris" sculpture, thanked FMATS for their

support and guidance during the project. Ms. Hamilton stated that they wanted to thank Ms. Gardino for being so helpful and HC Contractors for the installation of piece. Ms. Hamilton explained that their studio designed and built most of their artwork. Ms. Hamilton stated that their studio was located on Granville Island in Vancouver, B.C. and was very public so they had lots of people viewing and commenting on the sculpture, including some from Fairbanks. Ms. Hamilton provided photographs depicting various pieces of their work created for Vancouver, Ottawa, and Colona, BC, and elsewhere. Ms. Hamilton stated that they also did blown glass and Mr. Vandermeer had engineering and physics expertise. Ms. Hamilton stated they used American steel and fabricators to do any bending or breaking of the steel. Mr. Vandermeer stated that they sometimes made their own tools when creating a piece. Ms. Hamilton explained that about 4,000 hours was spent on polishing the spires.

Ms. Gardino stated that Festival Fairbanks was sponsoring a photo contest for selfie and professional photos taken with Polaris and would upload those and determine the best one in each category and issue prizes to the winners.

b. Yankovich/Miller Hill Road Bike/Pedestrian Facility Update

Mr. Campbell stated that the first segment of the bike trail was ready to go and the only thing pending was obtaining a maintenance agreement from the University and the project was ready to advertise.

c. North Pole Roundabout Review

Ms. Gardino explained that prior to the installation of roundabouts in North Pole, they averaged 3.5 crashes annually and that had been reduced to 1.33 crashes with zero injuries as opposed to the seven previous minor injury crashes, resulting in a 63% annual crash reduction.

d. Title VI Audit

Ms. Gardino explained that FMATS Title VI paperwork had been submitted and expected to hear back from them at which time FMATS would be interviewed and Civil Rights would complete their final report.

e. CMAQ Project Recommendations

Ms. Gardino stated that the CMAQ project recommendations were contained in the meeting packet.

f. NPRM-Planning and Environmental Linkages

Ms. Gardino explained that this information was included in the meeting packet and comments were not due until November.

g. Obligations/Offsets

Ms. Gardino explained the obligations/offset list was not included in the packet since they were at the end of the fiscal year.

12. Policy Committee Comments

- Mr. Walley stated that “Superman’s Lair” came to mind when he first looked at the sculpture and thought it was a bargain in his opinion

considering the amount of time, material costs, labor, and everything else factored in and he was excited to see it.

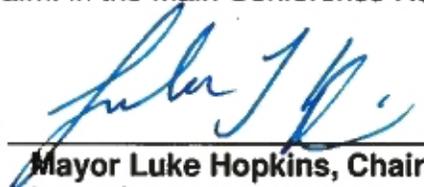
- Mayor Hopkins stated that he hoped that everyone could attend the Polaris function and also thought it was a "bargain" for the community.

13. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn. (Sattley/Walley). Meeting was adjourned at 12:33 p.m.

The next Policy Committee Meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, October 15, 2014 at 10 a.m. in the Main Conference Room, DOT&PF, 2301 Peger Road, Fairbanks.

Approved: _____


Mayor Luke Hopkins, Chair
FMATS Policy Committee

Date: _____

