



## TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes – September 2, 2015

City of Fairbanks, Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street  
Fairbanks, Alaska

### 1. Call to Order

Ms. Giamichael, sitting in for Ms. Gardino, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

### 2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

The following were present:

\* **FMATS Policy Committee members**

\*\* **FMATS Staff members**

\*\*\***FMATS Technical Committee members**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
*** Alicia Giamichael for Donna Gardino	FMATS Coordinator
*** Bob Pristash (absent)	City of Fairbanks
*** Tim Zinza for Jackson Fox	City of Fairbanks
*** Bill Butler	City of North Pole
*** Lee Borden	ADEC, Air Quality Division
*** Brian Lindamood	AK Railroad Corporation
*** Judy Chapman	DOT&PF Planning Chief
*** Jerry McBeath	FNSB Planning Commission
*** Kellen Spillman for Christine Nelson	FNSB Community Planning Director
*** Glenn Miller	FNSB Transportation
*** Dave Sanches	Fort Wainwright Planning
*** Melanie Herbert (via telephone)	Tanana Chiefs Conference
*** Mary Pagel (absent)	UAF
*** Alan Hoza (absent)	Alaska West Express
** Deborah Todd	FMATS Administrative Assistant
Shelley Potter	DOT&PF Planning
** Margaret Carpenter	DOT&PF Planning
MaryAnn Nickles	Citizen

### 3. Public Comment Period (3 minute limit)

No public comments.

### 4. Approval of the September 2, 2015 Agenda

**Motion:** To approve the September 2, 2015 Technical Committee Agenda.  
(McBeath/Lindamood).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

### 5. Approval of the August 5, 2015 Meeting Minutes

**Motion:** To approve the August 5, 2015 meeting minutes as amended.  
(Lindamood/McBeath).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

## 6. Subcommittee Reports

### a. Coordinator's Office Reorganization Subcommittee

Ms. Giamichael explained the summary table in the meeting packet was created after the subcommittee meeting. Ms. Giamichael stated that the packet contained information obtained from three human resources agencies that were contacted. Ms. Giamichael stated that she had contacted other small MPOs and asked them how they were structured. Ms. Giamichael stated that of the MPOs that responded so far, only one organization had a union member and they were a part-time employee.

Mr. McBeath stated that Ms. Giamichael had a biased sample with ten MPOs from ten different states and seven of those ten were "right to work" states, with only three being from union shop states like Alaska. Mr. McBeath stated that Ms. Giamichael needed to fix that problem since it reflected an anti-union bias.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she agreed and that was why she had reached out to 47 different MPOs, and had included the ones that responded so far, but of the ones that responded, most were not with unions or not in the same situation.

Mr. McBeath provided Ms. Giamichael with a list of "right to work states".

Mr. Miller asked Mr. McBeath how many states were "right to work states".

Mr. McBeath stated that there were 25 "right to work" and 25 that were not which was an even split.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she would reach out to the ones that had not responded yet.

Mr. McBeath stated that Alaska had a history, for the last generation, of being a relatively strong union state, especially in the public sector. Mr. McBeath stated that they wanted to look at states that were comparable and whether they liked it or not, that was not likely to change any time soon.

Ms. Giamichael agreed and stated that she had included emails and some of them were going through a similar situation and some of them were not even with unions so it did not pertain to them.

Mr. McBeath stated that it was mentioned but not included that the Borough unions would be an alternative and asked if Ms. Giamichael had looked into what the costs were to become part of the Fairbanks North Star Borough unions.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she had gathered information from the DOT, the Borough, and the City of Fairbanks human resources and healthcare information and would compile a spreadsheet for them to review and compare the costs.

Mr. Miller inquired if FMATS was specifically looking at healthcare.

Ms. Giamichael stated that was the biggest thing that FMATS was looking at.

Mr. Miller stated that the Borough had three different bargaining units and thought they were all pretty consistent with respect to health benefits.

Ms. Giamichael stated that the biggest objective for FMATS was looking at healthcare which was the reason she had only included the one proposal because they were the only service that provided healthcare information so far.

Mr. McBeath stated that his guess was that FMATS would also be concerned with union dues and opt-out provisions. Mr. McBeath stated that usually the agency fee was pretty close to union dues, but it varied.

Ms. Chapman stated Mr. McBeath was correct and also the match or the options to not take the health insurance if you had a spouse that had insurance through those types of arrangements were available through some packages but not others.

Mr. Spillman inquired if the IBEW had weighed in on this. Mr. Spillman stated that that at a previous Policy Committee meeting, Mayor Eberhart had been very concerned about the IBEW and potential grievances being filed against the City if FMATS left the Union.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she did not know if the IBEW knew that FMATS was looking into this seriously. Ms. Giamichael stated that she believed that the City had asked the IBEW if they would let FMATS out of the union and the IBEW had said they would not let them out. Ms. Giamichael stated that it had come to the point where it was not really the IBEW's call to make. Ms. Giamichael stated that she did not know if IBEW was up to date or knew what FMATS' current status was since they had not contacted them.

Mr. Borden inquired if there was currently no defined exit strategy for leaving the IBEW.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she had talked with a few of the small MPOs that had left their structure, and it was up to their Policy Committee to decide approve it. Ms. Giamichael stated that they had not yet determined exactly what they needed to do to get out and were looking at options to see if it would be worth doing.

Mr. Borden stated that he was thinking like Mr. Spillman and thought that even if the Policy Committee agreed to it, there would still be a potential for grievances to be filed.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she agreed that the Union might do that but believed that it was in their FMATS Memorandum of Agreement to be under the City's umbrella for what they would provide, but did not think that there had been anything signed that locked them into the Union.

Mr. Borden inquired if there was any legally binding document that was holding them.

Ms. Giamichael stated that there was no signed document.

Mr. Miller inquired if Ms. Giamichael was considered a City employee.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she was not but had a badge saying she was a City employee to get into the doors but had been told that she was not technically considered a City employee.

Mr. Spillman stated that he had previously worked for FMATS and when he received his tax returns, it said that the City of Fairbanks was his employer. Mr. Spillman stated that he had filed his tax returns using the City of Fairbanks

employment number, etc. Mr. Spillman stated that he thought that it was a really difficult question whether they were a City employee or not.

Mr. Miller agreed with Mr. Spillman and stated that he thought that was what it would boil down to if it came to a dispute with IBEW, because their contract probably clearly stated that if they were a City employee then they were a member of the Union.

Ms. Giamichael stated that FMATS did use the City's Tax ID number because they did not have one of their own, but they had different WiFi systems, did not get the emails that everybody else got, not on the City's official email list, and did not have an address book of City email addresses.

Mr. McBeath asked Ms. Giamichael who cut their checks.

Mr. Borden stated that the City cut their checks and that might be the hanging point if the City had the agreement with the Union.

Mr. McBeath stated that they were on the City of Fairbanks payroll, and the payroll determined who the bargaining contract was with; so they were considered City employees.

Mr. Lindamood stated that if that changed though; because respectfully the City was a pass-through. Mr. Lindamood stated that the City got funds from the State and then the City turned around and paid FMATS.

Mr. Miller stated that it was going to be interesting.

Mr. Lindamood stated that Mr. McBeath was correct and it would go by if the City was the TAX ID on the W-2 they got at the end of the year.

Mr. McBeath stated that he thought that was the big negotiation. Mr. McBeath stated that his understanding of the unions was limited to United Academics which was the AFT Union when he was on the faculty and that was only about 14 or 15 years; but they had bargained for membership and membership was determined by payroll and that was it.

Mr. Lindamood stated that Mr. McBeath was correct and that was pretty much the litmus test.

Mr. Borden inquired if becoming a stand-alone non-profit was a potential option to get them around the City employment issue.

Mr. Lindamood stated that he thought it was going to require a fundamental restructuring of the administration of the entire thing to be able to do that because right now the system was set up so that they were a City of Fairbanks employee which put them under the City umbrella agreement and if they were under that umbrella agreement, they were not going to get out at least not for free.

Ms. Giamichael agreed and stated that was where she was not 100 percent sure because she was told that she was not a City employee, but did have some City involvement.

Mr. Miller stated that he thought if they went back and listened to some of the early FMATS Policy Committee meetings where this was discussed, they specifically did not want these individuals to be Borough, City, or State employees because they

did not want the bias. Mr. Miller stated that basically the City just agreed to house them. Mr. Miller stated that he thought if they went back to those original meetings and listened to those discussions, he thought it would be specific that they were not City employees. Mr. Miller stated that the City would provide the housing and they would be on their payroll structure but they would not be City employees. Mr. Miller stated that he thought if this went to arbitration that would be the determining factor of whether they were or were not City employees.

Ms. Chapman stated that they could refer back to the FMATS Organizational Study and those conclusions, and also to the motions that set up the office in this way. Ms. Chapman stated that she agreed and thought it was pretty clear that FMATS was to be an independent, unbiased entity, and the City was providing certain things including office space, payroll, computer support, and things like that. Ms. Chapman stated that it was all articulated in that agreement and then other parties to FMATS were providing other things such as cash or other in-kind services and that was how they ended up where they were. Ms. Chapman stated that she did not think it was ever intended that FMATS would be a City employee, but how the union viewed that might be quite different.

Mr. McBeath stated that it would be easy enough to review that information.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she was still gathering information for health care and it had been tough to get people to respond in a timely fashion.

Mr. McBeath suggested Ms. Giamichael follow up with telephone calls.

Mr. Borden inquired if there was a potential cost savings to separating FMATS from the Union.

Ms. Giamichael stated that the biggest thing was the FMATS health care contribution and if that would change then it would be worth it.

Mr. Borden inquired if the information Ms. Giamichael received was encouraging.

Ms. Giamichael stated that from the information she had received so far, it looked promising.

Mr. Spillman inquired what the end budget ramifications would be to the Coordinator's Office budget.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she thought it would depend upon what plan was picked but did not know what the current plan cost was. Ms. Giamichael stated that she had not yet done a complete comparison.

Mr. McBeath inquired what employee organizations were currently covered by Swan.

Mr. McBeath inquired if Mr. Butler thought the Swan plan was a good program.

Mr. Butler stated that he did not know anything about them, but they could ask Swan to provide references from other interior Alaska clients.

Mr. Spillman stated that he observed all the quotes were based on covering Ms. Giamichael, Ms. Gardino and her spouse, but not the half-time position.

Mr. Spillman inquired if it was not being proposed to offer health care benefits to the half-time position.

Ms. Giamichael stated that Mr. Spillman was correct, and did not think that currently Ms. Gardino thought it necessary for the part-time employee to have the health care coverage.

Mr. Butler stated that you could have plans or policies where you had the option of opting out, as opposed to making it totally not part of the plan, and thought that was important.

Mr. McBeath stated that he agreed and thought it was a very good point. Mr. McBeath stated that he thought it was very important to have the part-time employee insurance costs factored into the costs whether they took advantage of it or not.

Ms. Giamichael stated she agreed and the part-time employee healthcare cost had not been considered, but she would make a note of that and find out what the costs would be for the part-time employee.

Mr. Butler stated that he had not been here for the discussion and inquired if the healthcare exchange had come into the discussion. Mr. Butler stated that it left employees with the option of whether they wanted to take it or not.

Mr. McBeath stated that Alaska did not have a health care exchange.

Mr. Butler stated that every state had an exchange whether it was the Fed exchange or not. Mr. Butler stated that employees who wanted it could go online and get it, and FMATS would not have to buy a plan and make it available.

Mr. Borden inquired if FMATS was comparing retirement plans.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she had asked for retirement information and then it was brought up at the meeting that if they were only wanting to change the insurance and were happy with the other services provided by the City, they could just get health care information and still continue to get the other in-kind services from the City. Ms. Giamichael stated that so far she had been reaching out to human resource agencies that provided all the services, but now she would be focus on reaching out to agencies that provided only health care.

Mr. Borden inquired if a service like Swan would take care of the FMATS leave issue that came up a couple meetings ago where there was \$70,000 worth of leave in the Coordinator's Office budget.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she was not sure if that would take care of that.

Mr. Butler stated that he thought that it would because the issue had been that the City had no leave cap amount and they would probably have a leave cap figured in their budget.

Ms. Giamichael stated that if they were to go with an agency like Swan, they would probably figure out the leave costs and rewrite the budget to figure it differently.

**7. Old Business**

No old business.

**8. New Business**

No new business.

**9. Public Comment Period**

No public comment.

**10. Other Issues**

No other issues.

**11. Informational Items**

**a. Cleaning up the 2015-2018 TIP**

Ms. Chapman explained that DOT sent the new TIP approved by the Policy Committee to Headquarters and they had responded that the numbers in the TIP did not add up and match the fiscal constraints so they were confused.

Ms. Chapman stated that Headquarters stated that they could not approve it unless it was gone through and cleaned up. Ms. Chapman stated that Ms. Potter and Ms. Carpenter had spent about three days going through it. Ms. Chapman stated that Ms. Potter had audited the document to ensure that all the numbers were rolling up to where they were supposed to and Ms. Carpenter had reviewed the match policies to make sure that they were correct. Ms. Chapman stated that Headquarters had given them two ways to do it. 1) They could go ahead and approve it with the statement that it was amended; or 2) they could send it back through FMATS for approval. Ms. Chapman stated that they had decided to send it back through FMATS. Ms. Chapman stated that they would also have to make the TIP match the STIP by adding another year so instead of the TIP being FY15-18, it would be FY15-19.

Ms. Potter stated that they had split out the formulas to ensure consistency in the funding allocations. Ms. Potter stated that it was easier to see at a glance where the funding was allocated.

Ms. Carpenter stated that Headquarters had noted a lot of duplications in the projects being listed and the funding allocations. Ms. Carpenter stated that they wanted to run all this back through Ms. Gardino as this was her document and thought she had done a phenomenal job with it. Ms. Carpenter stated that there were minor amounts of dollar shifting and two math errors were corrected, but the document was basically identical to the old document only with visual formatting changes to make it easier for Headquarters to review it at a glance.

Ms. Chapman stated that nothing was changed in the verbiage of the TIP and the only changes were reflected in the numbers with none of the obligated projects being affected by holding up this document. Ms. Chapman stated that she really appreciated all the attention and effort put forth by Ms. Carpenter, Ms. Potter, and the Project Control Staff. Ms. Chapman stated that they would be going over the revisions with Ms. Gardino and then presenting it at the September 16<sup>th</sup> Policy Committee Meeting for approval.

Mr. Spillman inquired about the status of the TIP Tool.

Ms. Giamichael stated that they were adding tabs and formulas to the TIP Tool and just needed additional information for the new pieces they were including.

Ms. Giamichael stated that hopefully they would have all the tabs, arrows, and new information in place by next week.

Mr. Spillman stated that he really appreciated that the document was much clearer for him and easier to read, but thought that the public would still have problems understanding and commenting on it with all the codes and acronyms.

Ms. Chapman stated that she thought the AMATS TIP was much more general than the FMATS TIP so the public did not have to scrutinize it as much since there was not as much detail to it. Ms. Chapman stated that one option might be to roll up the detailed budget sheet into something that was easier for the public to read.

Ms. Chapman stated that she thought the TIP Tool might possibly make that easier.

Ms. Giamichael stated that she thought that the TIP Tool would make things easier for the public to read, understand and hopefully would be finished soon.

**b. Federal Highway Reauthorization Status**

Ms. Giamichael explained that they were still at recess and continued funding under a Continuing Resolution until October 29<sup>th</sup>.

**c. 08.12.15 Policy Committee Action Items**

Ms. Giamichael explained the Policy Committee Action Items that were included in the meeting packet.

**d. Obligations and Offsets**

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

**12. Technical Committee Comments**

- Mr. McBeath told everyone to have a nice holiday weekend.
- Mr. Spillman stated that the Borough had hired a new Transportation Planner and were expecting her to start next week. Mr. Spillman stated that her name was Ann Burrett and she was coming from Ohio and had over ten years transportation planning experience, mostly with MPOs in Ohio, so they were excited about that since they had a backlog of both FMATS and non-FMATS projects that had taken a back seat while that position had been vacant.
- Mr. Miller stated that he wanted to announce that the Borough's Air Quality web page now had a fuel calculator. Mr. Miller stated that the reason for that had been that for the first time in eight years, it was actually cheaper to heat your house with home heating oil than with pellets, energy logs, or split, cut, dried, and delivered firewood. Mr. Miller stated that they were looking at the prices of those products in town compared to the prices of delivered home heating oil now, and it was actually cheaper to heat your house with home heating oil. Mr. Miller stated that they were promoting that on the website and the calculator enabled people to put in the cost of various things they were using and it would calculate for them what the cheapest option was. Mr. Miller stated that he thought that the cheapest thing to heat your home was still coal, but it depended upon the efficiency of the device. Mr. Miller stated that if the Borough could avoid having any exceedances from now until the end of this calendar year, their design value for the monitoring sites downtown, there was a good chance that they would fall below the level that EPA had established of 35 micrograms. Mr. Miller stated that they would still not be able to model attainment, which was a much more complicated deal, but if they could demonstrate attainment through their monitoring, it would give them a much stronger position with EPA as they moved forward with the classification they

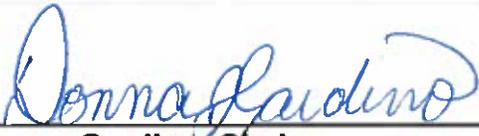
anticipated of PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Mr. Miller stated that the North Pole monitor which had been out there for three years would significantly raise their design value for the non-attainment area. Mr. Miller stated that if they could keep from having any exceedances, at least through December 31 in Fairbanks, it would help them out a lot. Mr. Miller stated that hopefully people would look at the economics of heating their homes this winter and, in most cases, it would be home heating fuel.

- Mr. Lindamood joked that they were giving up on their wood burning locomotive idea and going back to oil.
- Mr. Sanches stated that there were two apaches at Ft. Wainwright with more to come, so might see them flying around soon.

### 13. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

The next Technical Committee meeting is Wednesday, October 7, 2015, at noon in the City Council Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Hall, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, AK.

Approved:   
Donna Gardino, Chair  
FMATS Technical Committee

Date: 10.7.15