

**FAIRBANKS METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM
POLICY COMMITTEE**

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

**Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2008**

1. Call to Order

Chair Steve Titus called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

The following were present:

- * FMATS Policy Committee members
- ** FMATS Staff members
- *** FMATS Technical Committee members

NAME	REPRESENTING
* Steve Titus, P.E.	DOT&PF, Regional Director, Northern Region
* Mayor Terry Strle	City of Fairbanks
* Mayor Jim Whitaker	Fairbanks North Star Borough
* Luke Hopkins	FNSB, Assembly Representative
* Chad Roberts	Fairbanks City Council Representative
* Mayor Doug Isaacson	City of North Pole
* Tom Chapple	DEC, Director, Air Quality Division
*** Ethan Birkholz	DOT&PF, Planning Manager
*** Joan Hardesty	DEC
*** Bob Pristash	City of Fairbanks
*** Glenn Miller	FNSB, Transit Director
*** Mike Schmetzer	City of Fairbanks
*** Bruce Carr	ARRC
*** Bernardo Hernandez	FNSB, Director Community Planning
** Jeff Roach	DOT&PF, Fairbanks Area Transportation Planner
** Alexa Greene	DOT&PF, Fairbanks Area Assistant Transportation Planner
** Todd Boyce	FNSB Planning
Dave Bloom	DOT&PF, D&ES Chief
Jerry Colp	City of Fairbanks
Chris Eshleman	Fairbanks Daily News Miner
Jo Schlotfeldt	DOT&PF
Bill Stringer	
Donna Gardino	DOT&PF, Northern Area Planner

3. Public Comments

None

4. Approval of the March 19, 2008 Agenda

- **MOTION** to approve the March 19, 2008 agenda. (Isaacson/Strle). No opposition. Approved.

5. Approval of February 20, 2008 Policy Committee minutes

- **MOTION** to approve the February 20, 2008 minutes as presented. (Isaacson/Hopkins) No opposition. Approved.

6. Committee Reports

a. FMATS Technical Committee

Ethan Birkholz presented updated descriptions and purposes of the FY2008 CMAQ additional \$2.24 million Air Quality Study allocation. This information refined the scope of the allocation and the obligation status.

7. Old Business

None

8. New Business

a. Coordinator's Office Update

Steve Titus thanked Mayor Strle, the committee and staff for their work in establishing the position, advertising and working through the hiring process to select the candidates. He introduced Donna Gardino, the new MPO Coordinator. Donna Gardino has been a Northern Region Planner for several years. She holds a MBA in Organizational Management and a BS in Business. Her new position begins April 2, 2008 and she will have an office at Fairbanks City Hall.

b. Policy & Technical Committee Bylaws Amendment No. 1

Ethan Birkholz introduced Policy and Technical Committee Bylaw changes for a first reading and discussion. A number of changes to the bylaws are needed in order for the coordinator's office to operate legally. Other proposed changes include election of Chair and Vice-Chair, the meeting schedule, publicly accessible meeting minutes, and submittal of agenda items. This will be an action item at the next Policy Committee meeting.

c. STIP Draft Amendment 17

Ethan Birkholz presented spreadsheets regarding the STIP Draft Amendment 17 projects for the Northern Region, descriptions, costs and funding sources. Another report broke down the STIP by program, year and region. Luke Hopkins requested information comparing Amendments 13 and 17 for the Northern Region. Information will be sent to FMATS members by the end of the week. Comments are due to the State by April 14.

d. TIP Obligation Status

Ethan Birkholz reported on projects and project phases not ready for FFY08 obligations. Several projects need funding which can be obligated with funding programmed for projects not ready for obligation in FY08.

The City of Fairbanks submitted a request for \$21,000 to complete the design for the Wendell Street ADA project. The project is CMAQ funded, which could be converted to CTP funding. That would free up \$400,000 in CMAQ funding which could then be added to the Borough PM2.5 project.

Illinois Street – under Phase 3, \$250,000 up to \$4 million can be obligated in 08 from the University Ave grandfathering and \$1 million from CTP. Demolition of the existing buildings in the ROW is expected to begin early 2009 and road construction later in 2009.

Mayor Isaacson reminded the committee there is a ditching project in North Pole, which was put off, but with storm water ordinances coming in, it is important to have the work done. If this can still be done under preventive maintenance this summer, it will be better. He will ask Bill Butler to bring the funding request to the next Technical Committee meeting.

e. Wendell Street ADA Cost Increase

Ethan Birkholz presented a Project Development Authority (PDA) Revision Request from the City of Fairbanks for \$20,976 for the Wendell Street ADA. The Technical Committee passed this request via email and forwarded it to the Policy Committee for approval. The additional funding is needed to finish the preliminary design. The project will go out to bid this summer for construction next summer. Funding will come from existing FMATS project deobligations.

- **MOTION:** To approve a design phase funding increase of \$21,000 for the Wendell Street ADA project. (Strle/Isaacson) No opposition. Approved.

9. Public Comments

Bruce Carr commented regarding the Van Horn project available money to obligate. This is a procurement action. Staff needs to look creatively at the difference between a procurement action, such as a contract obligation report, and a planning/programming document. When a TIP is created, it has to be fiscally constrained, but the money is not obligated; it is just a plan. However, when a procurement action is completed, there are completely different rules. You cannot obligate more than the contractor bid. However, you do not have to change the TIP.

Ethan Birkholz responded that TIPs have to be approved by the Federal funding agencies, which will not happen unless the TIPs are fiscally constrained. After the bid opening, a revised TIP is submitted showing the money under bid is obligated to change orders or elsewhere. The committee submits an administrative modification for this to happen.

Donna Gardino commented there are some projects at the City, which may be considered for preventive maintenance. If there are projects people have in mind, bring them to the MPO Coordinator.

Bill Stringer asked about the current status of University Avenue. If it is being delayed quite a bit, has the surface of the road been considered for improvement?

Dave Bloom responded that a design study report is in progress and an environmental document was approved some time ago. DOT&PF has authority to appraise and acquire, but there is not enough money to build at this time.

Steve Titus said the surface is rutted and broken and money is needed for preventive maintenance. An overlay from curb to curb with new asphalt would be torn up if the funding came in for the whole project, which would not be good use of the money.

Mike Schmetzer gave an update on the Morris Thompson Center, which is scheduled to open in July. This will be a world-class facility for Fairbanks. The City of Fairbanks is trying to coordinate the Wendell Street design with the site work for the Center, including a bus shelter. They are about three months ahead of schedule and under budget. The goal is to improve pedestrian traffic around the Center and focus on getting visitors into the business corridor.

10. Other Issues

a. Phillips Field Road update

Dave Bloom gave an update on Phillips Field Road. The environmental document will be reevaluated this spring to allow design of a resurfacing as a preventive maintenance project in 09.

Luke Hopkins asked if it is a preventive maintenance project, how much can the shoulders be widened? Can it be done interfacing with Railroad property? This would be a fix for a while, but the pedestrian and bike traffic seems to be a critical concern. He asked that the Committee be kept apprised of this projects progress to see how FMATS could help address pedestrian and bicycle uses.

Steve Titus responded that when there is additional information on the Phillips Field Road project, the Committee will hear it. DOT&PF is doing several overlay and pavement preservation projects because the department does not have the money to recondition most of them.

11. Informational Item

a. Safe Routes to School

Ethan Birkholz emailed questions to Steve Soenksen regarding the Safe Routes to School grant program and presented the responses. Interest

has to develop through the schools and PTA. The MPO could be involved to facilitate. As the Borough is in charge of schools, it may be up to them to decide if they want to make things happen.

Luke Hopkins asked if the application deadline could be extended, as it would be difficult to get information out before the deadline. The MPO could write a letter to suggest they extend the date.

Mayor Jim Whitaker responded that there is some question as to who would actually implement whatever would be forthcoming with the grant and how all that would work. This information will help FMATS evaluate this program. He will take this to the borough grants coordinator to request an extension, and then contact the school district and report back quickly.

Ethan Birkholz said someone would have to communicate with the schools to see which schools are interested and feel they have a need for the grant.

Mayor Strle felt that if there was a way for FMATS to get the word out to the schools it should happen.

Mayor Isaacson suggested working with School Superintendent Nancy Wagner regarding projects where their schools could benefit this year. The schools may have projects ready for grant funding.

Steve Titus commented that Mayor Whitaker's suggestion to ask the FNSB grants coordinator and report back is the path FMATS should take.

12. Adjourn

Isaacson/Roberts) No opposition. Approved. Adjourned at 11:55 am.

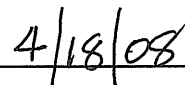
Next Scheduled Policy Committee Meeting is April 16, 2008 at 10:00 am.

Approved:



Steve Titus, Chair
FMATS Policy Committee

Date:



4/18/08