



## **POLICY BOARD**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**March 18, 2020 • 12:00 – 1:00 P.M.**

**FAST Planning Office, 100 Cushman Street, Suite 205, Fairbanks, AK**

**Teleconference Call in #: (907) 308-3810 Bridge ID #3278**

*Please note: Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, all public meetings at Fairbanks City Hall were cancelled until the end of April 2020, so this abbreviated agenda meeting was held via teleconference at the FAST Planning Office.*

#### **1. Call to Order**

Mr. Anderson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

#### **2. Introduction of Members and Attendees**

##### **Attendee**

\*Bryce Ward (via telephone)  
\*Michael Welch (via telephone)  
\*Jim Matherly, Vice Chair (via telephone)  
\*Ryan Anderson, Chair (via telephone)  
\*Jerry Cleworth  
\*Alice Edwards (via telephone)  
\*Frank Tomaszewski (via telephone)  
\*\* Jackson Fox  
\*\*Olivia Lunsford (via telephone)  
\*\*Deborah Todd  
\*\*Randi Bailey (via telephone)  
\*\*Don Galligan (via telephone)  
+ Sarah Schacher (via telephone)  
+ Kellen Spillman (via telephone)  
Jennifer Eason (via telephone)  
Martha Markey (via telephone)  
Susan Bashore (via telephone)  
Bob Bashore (via telephone)  
Alex Gagne-Hawes (via telephone)

##### **Representative Organization**

Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough  
Mayor, City of North Pole  
Mayor, City of Fairbanks  
Director, DOT&PF Northern Region  
City of Fairbanks City Council  
Director, DEC Division of Air Quality  
FNSB Assembly  
FAST Planning  
FAST Planning  
FAST Planning  
DOT&PF Planning  
FNSB Planning  
DOT&PF  
FNSB Planning  
DOT&PF Planning  
Holmes Road Resident  
Holmes Road Resident  
Holmes Road Resident  
Citizen

*\*FAST Planning Policy Board Members, \*\* FAST Planning Staff Members, + FAST Planning Technical Committee Members*

#### **3. Approval of the March 18, 2020 Agenda**

**Motion:** To approve the March 18, 2020 Agenda. (Welch/Edwards).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

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

**4. Approval of the February 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** To approve the February 12, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. (Welch/Edwards).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

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

**5. Committee/Working Group Reports (including the Chair's Report)**

**a. Staff Report and Technical Committee Action Items**

Mr. Fox provided highlights of all FAST Planning activities including meetings, briefings, conferences, teleconferences, seminars, open houses, workshops, training, presentations, public outreach, forums, trips, and field trips he or his staff had attended or participated in since the last meeting. Mr. Fox noted the following:

- The Stakeholder Group meetings for the 5th Avenue Reconstruction Project are concluded and the group developed concepts for one- and two-way traffic options which were handed over to the City of Fairbanks Engineering and DOT Preconstruction to hold an Open House event in April 2020 but that might be an online meeting.
- Attended the Open House event for the Draft 2020-23 STIP document. Comments are due March 20, 2020.
- A Special Technical Committee Meeting was held on February 25, 2020 following receipt of the bids for the Tanana Loop and South Chandalar Drive Intersections project that came in high which resulted in an overall increase of \$456,600. Mr. Fox was able to find the money from unprogrammed funds in the TIP and use of Offset money. The Technical Committee approved that increase so the project can go to construction in the summer of 2020.
- Held kickoff meeting for the Non-Motorized Plan Update during the February 13, 2020 Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting. They are the designated working group for the plan update.
- Drafted a comment letter for the Draft 2020-2023 STIP.
- Finished the Annual Audit with Kohler Schmitt and Hutchison and received final audit reports for each member of the Policy Board and was on the agenda for this meeting but now has been delayed until the April meeting.
- Mr. Fox presented the Draft 2020-23 STIP comments to the Chamber Transportation Committee.
- Completed the TIP Project Nomination for Holmes Road Reconstruction Project and sent it to the Technical Committee members to score and the results from that effort were that the Holmes Road Reconstruction Project was now the highest scoring motorized project nomination with the opportunity to receive funding in the future through a TIP Amendment. Mr. Fox stated that the Technical Committee made a recommendation to the Policy Board to add the project to the TIP as an Illustrative project.
- Selected PDC Engineering for the Road Service Area Expansion Plan and initiated scope and fee negotiations and hoped to start that Plan before the end of April 2020.

- Prepared a TIP Administrative Modification that may turn into a full TIP Amendment with other funding needs from 2021 and it had been delayed until April 2020.
- Developed a CMAQ Funding Plan but that was delayed until the April 2020 meeting.

## 6. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)

**Susan Markey-Bashore:** Ms. Bashore asked how the current situation affected the progress of the Holmes Road Reconstruction Project and whether there were deadlines that would be at risk from the amended meeting.

Mr. Fox explained that there was nothing pressing with the initiation of the Holmes Road Reconstruction Project but needed a formal action from the Policy Board to include the project in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Fox explained that the decision was simply being delayed until April and at that time they would do an amendment to the TIP and if there was a positive vote by the Policy Board, it would likely be put in the funding plan possibly in April or May. Mr. Fox stated that he did not see any concerns with the project being moved to April.

**Alex Gagne-Hawes:** Mr. Gagne-Hawes wanted to address was making sure the buses were kept running and sanitary and encouraged the FAST people to think about how they could run buses with better time and maybe free.

Mr. Gagne-Hawes stated that he wanted to congratulate the City government for thinking of the future and the City of Fairbanks needed to step up and provide the infrastructure. Mr. Gagne-Hawes commented that we should not forget bikes and pedestrians because they were inevitably the transportation of the future, but in the case of a true emergency, we would be walking and anything we could do now to keep those things moving as we were not going to be able to wave our wand any more. Mr. Gagne-Hawes commented that the Venice canals and air had achieved amazing environmental cleanups by just stopping the driving. Mr. Gagne-Hawes thanked everyone for their hard work and said he looked forward to hearing what was next.

## 7. New Business

### a. Draft 2020-2023 State Transportation Improvement Program Comment Letter (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained that Page 13 of the meeting packet contained the comment letter for the Draft 2020-23 State STIP and went over the items in the Draft STIP that he was concerned about one by one and explained his comments for each item. Mr. Fox stated that comments on the Draft STIP were due on Friday, March 20, 2020.

**Public Comment:** **Alex Gagne-Hawes** commented that it was a lot of information and thanked Mr. Cleworth for trying the deal with the acronyms of where the money was. Mr. Gagne-Hawes stated that he trusted the institutions all wanted the money spent on transportation rather than illegal bribery or whatever. Mr. Gagne-Hawes thought there was a foundational duty to be accountable for documentation and every public servant should be able to produce a record of where they spent their money especially if they wanted the public to comment on it so that was a very legitimate argument. Mr. Gagne-Hawes stated that the ferries benefitted Fairbanks and if some of their money went to build a ferry, he was going to ride on that ferry one day.

Mr. Gagne--Hawes stated that it was a shared State plan and they didn't necessarily have to get a mile of road for every buck or whatever.

Mr. Gagne-Hawes stated that was his biggest reaction to it and it sounded like they were on the right track but just because the Dunleavy Administration was reckless, incompetent, unaccountable, and being recalled that didn't mean that they the people of Alaska didn't deserve documentation of where their money went and thanked Mr. Fox for getting that hard data.

**Motion:** To send the Draft 2020-23 STIP Comment Letter as presented to DOT&PF. (Cleworth/Welch).

**Discussion:** Mr. Cleworth stated that in the Technical Committee action items the motion recommended support of sending the comment letter to DOT adding support for the Rosie Creek Road Construction Improvements project and asked whether those in opposition were opposed to the letter in its entirety or just the Rosie Creek Road project.

Mr. Fox stated that the opposition was for the main letter and sending it to DOT. Mr. Fox stated that it related to the tone and length of the letter. Mr. Fox stated that some thought that it was beating up on DOT and others thought the length of the letter was valid and they were all important concerns they would like answers to and how they could collaborate with DOT to improve the process and was not meant to slam DOT but thought there were improvements that could be made to improve the process for everyone in the State of Alaska.

Mr. Anderson stated that there were some conflicts in the letter that could be worked out at the staff level and some of the comments they were more than willing to elaborate on. Mr. Anderson stated that regarding the scope of it or the level of detail was a discussion they had.

Mayor Welch stated that considering how broad the scope was, it showed some incredible thinking skills but questioned if it was too broad or too lengthy how much consideration it would be given at a State level and whether it could be condensed any further.

Mr. Fox stated that comments could be deleted from the letter but did not know if for each individual comment they wanted to make each one more general.

Mr. Fox stated that Comments 9, 10, 11, and 13 were project-specific comments that could be removed for discussion with DOT staff. Mr. Fox stated that ultimately, he was looking for more transparency and better public involvement with the STIP.

Mayor Ward commented that although there was quite a bit of detail in the comment letter, but he felt it was appropriate. Mayor Ward stated that when they looked at STIP development and examples around the country, they were kind of in the dark ages as to how they presented their STIP and the public process they used as a State. Mayor Ward commented that he thought there was a lot of room for improvement and thought our comments pointed out the areas where those improvements could be made. Mayor Ward stated that he was fine with those kinds of comments and they had reputation for being pretty of critical of the STIP and he was not necessarily afraid of being critical of it. Mayor Ward stated that the letter should have an amendment to the motion to request a dollar amount on the CMAQ and Freight funding.

Mayor Welch asked Mayor Ward if he was suggesting that under Comment #5, they clearly stated the need to put \$5M toward that.

**Amendment to the Motion:** To amend Comment #6 on CMAQ Funding to request a \$5 million annual allocation for the MPO. (Ward/Welch).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

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

**Discussion:** Mr. Cleworth stated that he did not have a problem with the letter and realized we were sticking up for our MPO. He asked Mr. Anderson if there was anything in the letter that he found repulsive or whether they were going to do more harm than good sending it in.

Mr. Anderson stated there was a lot of work going on behind the scenes and a lot of factors to keep things fiscally constrained. Mr. Anderson stated that he thought there were some good things in the letter that were definitely worthy of DOT consideration and did not have any heartburn overall with it. Mr. Anderson stated that he thought that the level of detail during this time was going to get it mired down and the letter would not be as effective as it could be. Mr. Anderson stated that would be part of his objection to the letter and felt it was not the right thing to do right now but he definitely respected the will of the Policy Board.

Ms. Edwards stated that her thought on the letter when she first read it was that it was very detailed and in some respects that could be good and in other respects that could be bad. Ms. Edwards stated that she probably would have preferred a shorter letter that identified some of the transparency and that some of it was good and some of it was bad, but if this was the letter that the community wanted to send with this level of detail, she was comfortable with that.

**Amended Motion:** To send the Draft 2020-24 STIP Comment Letter as presented to DOT&PF and amend Comment #6 on CMAQ Funding to request a \$5 million annual allocation for the MPO.

**Vote on Amended Motion:** Six in favor. One opposed. (Anderson). Approved.

## 8. Other Issues

No other issues.

## 9. Policy Board Member Comments

- Mayor Matherly commented that the virus was our life now for the last couple weeks and wanted everyone to be safe. Mayor Matherly stated that there were a lot of big measures being taken and we were probably overreacting on this, but in his mind we would sure as heck know if we underreacted. Mayor Matherly told everyone to stay safe and practice those things that were talked about and there were going to be a lot of updates in the next two weeks.
- Mr. Cleworth asked about Mr. Fox about the Technical Committee motion regarding Holmes Road and obviously some of those things conflicted with each other but whether the idea was to look at all those things or to bring alternatives forward to consider.
- Mr. Fox stated that the original plan that was brought forward was for the reconstruction of Holmes Road and the majority of residents on Holmes

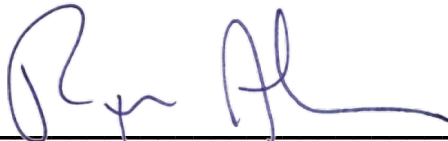
Road indicated that widening the road was what was preferred by area users and residents. Mr. Fox explained that the Technical Committee had concerns that the project was being presumptive in the environmental process without offering a range of alternatives and widened scope. Mr. Fox explained that DOT would not commit to maintaining a new separated path and significant right-of-way acquisition would have to occur with a path. Mr. Fox stated that the project was scored as a widening project and not as a separated bike path or sidewalk.

- Mr. Cleworth commented that he agreed with DOT on their reluctance to maintain a separated bike path and just widening the road.
- Mr. Tomaszewski told everyone to stay safe and love their neighbor. Mr. Tomaszewski thanked Mr. Fox and all his crew for making it a seamless meeting. Mr. Tomaszewski told everyone to be thinking of the self-quarantines as being on a vacation and get outside, enjoy some good activities, and get some fresh air.
- Mayor Welch commented that every day was a good day and the narrative had not been written for this yet. Mayor Welch wished everyone good luck in the days ahead.
- Mr. Anderson wished everyone the best and DOT was open and doing business.

#### 10. Adjournment

**Motion to Adjourn.** (Welch/Cleworth). The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m. The next Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, 2020, 12-2 p.m.

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



**Ryan Anderson, Chair**  
**FAST Planning Policy Board**

Date: 4/16/2020