



POLICY BOARD MEETING

Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2021 • 12:00 – 2:00 P.M.

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

Web Conference at: <https://fastplanning.us/keepup/zoom/>

Zoom Meeting Phone Number: 1 (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 893 7590 8261

1. Call to Order

Mr. Anderson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

Attendee	Representative Organization
*Ryan Anderson, Chair	Director, DOT&PF Northern Region
*Jim Matherly, Vice Chair	Mayor, City of Fairbanks
*Bryce Ward	Mayor, FNSB
*Michael Welch	Mayor, City of North Pole
*Aaron Gibson	Fairbanks City Council
*Alice Edwards	Director, DEC Division of Air Quality
*Frank Tomaszewski	FNSB Assembly
**Jackson Fox	FAST Planning
**Olivia Lunsford	FAST Planning
**Deborah Todd	FAST Planning
**Randi Bailey	DOT&PF Planning
+Kellen Spillman	FNSB Community Planning
+Judy Chapman	DOT&PF Planning
+Sarah Schacher	DOT&PF Preconstruction
+Bob Pristash	City of Fairbanks Engineering
• Carl Heim	DOT&PF/BPAC
Ivet Hall	DOT&PF Preconstruction
Laura Minski	FNSB Parks & Recreation
Brian Charlton	FNSB Parks & Recreation
Michael Lund	DOT&PF Construction
Ryan McGovern	Citizen

**FAST Planning Policy Board Members, ** FAST Planning Staff Members, + FAST Planning Technical Committee Members, • Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Members*

3. Approval of the March 17, 2021 Agenda

Motion: To approve the March 17, 2021 Agenda as presented. (Welch/Edwards).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the February 17, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the February 17, 2021 Meeting Minutes as recorded.
(Welch/Edwards).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

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

a. Staff Report and Technical Committee Action Items

Mr. Fox noted the following updates:

- Mr. Fox attended the regular monthly MatSu Pre-MPO Steering Committee serving as an ex-officio member providing advice. Mr. Fox noted that they were looking at setting up an MPO in Wasilla-Palmer area and the Steering Committee took some votes on their organizational structure such as setting up an independent organization for their MPO and having a nine-member policy Board consisting of two additional seats with one for the transit provider and one for the Alaska Railroad.
- Mr. Fox attended and presented at the Chena Riverfront Commission Meeting regarding the status of the Chena Riverwalk project.
- Mr. Fox attended briefings sponsored by the US Census Bureau on redefinition of Metropolitan Statistical Areas terms. Mr. Fox explained that in his communications with the National MPOs there were no concerns as far as our MPO designation or cost allocations based on those new definitions.
- Drafted a Letter of Support for the FNSB Grant Applications to the Alaska Federal Lands Access Program.
- The close of the Non-Motorized Plan Update is March 19, 2021. There were comments made on social media and the FAST Planning Website on the interactive map for commenting directly on specific projects.
- Ms. Lunsford did a social media campaign to fill the two vacant seats on Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and FAST Planning appointed a member and the other member will be appointed by Mayor Welch for the City of North Pole
- Submitted Scope of Work for the Motorized Transportation Plan Update to DOT to begin preparation of Request for Proposals.
- Drafted proposed boundary adjustments for the Metropolitan Planning Area to include the Chena and Tanana Lakes Recreation Areas into the FAST Planning boundary.
- BPAC made a series of motions regarding the MPO Boundary change. One motion suggested delaying until the 2020 Census data was received and the other motion was instead of following the PM^{2.5} area boundary, it should follow the dike. The recommendation by BPAC was to approve the boundary change with those adjustments.

6. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)

No public comment.

7. Old Business

a. Chena Riverwalk, Stage III-Update on Chena Riverfront Commission discussion/action and new correspondence from Alaska Railroad Corporation

Mr. Fox explained that he received a copy of the letter from the Alaska Railroad to the City of Fairbanks reinstating their land use permit for the Chena Riverwalk Project. Mr. Fox explained that Railroad had previously terminated the permit and he supplied documents to the City explaining that the project was fully federally funded as of February 2017, so the City sent a letter asking the Railroad to reinstate the permit. Mr. Fox provided a presentation to the Chena Riverfront Commission on the history of the Chena Riverwalk project and what had transpired between the City of Fairbanks and the Alaska Railroad. Mr. Fox reminded the Policy Board members that with the Federal funding we had, we needed a longer-term land lease interest to construct the trail such as a permanent easement or long-term lease to get that constructed between the footbridge at Pioneer Park and Peger Road. Mr. Fox explained that at the Chena Riverfront Commission meeting, a motion was passed to write a letter to the Borough Assembly, Borough Mayor, City Council and City Mayor to bring the project to construction. Mr. Fox stated that they also supported reduction of the project footprint and possibly offering to resurface the pedestrian path and adding pedestrian lighting if the Railroad agreed to those improvements as well as paying for a long-term land lease if the Railroad was not agreeable to providing the lease at nominal or no cost to the community. Mr. Fox explained that a Borough Resolution of Support for the project had been prepared for approval by the Borough Assembly and possible calendaring in April 2021. Mr. Fox stated that he would share it with Mayor Matherly so he could sponsor a similar Resolution for the City of Fairbanks for City Council approval.

b. Resolution of Support for Alaska Administrative Code (AAC) Revisions (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained that a vote on the Resolution of Support was postponed at the previous Policy Board meeting to provide DOT more time and opportunity to thoroughly vet the proposed revisions developed by the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Mr. Fox explained that in his discussions with DOT, the Resolution had been reviewed and they proposed two modifications to the Code revisions. Mr. Fox explained that if the proposed changes were made, it was his understanding that DOT would support the proposed revisions.

Public Comment Period: No public comments.

Motion: To adopt the “Resolution in Support of Revisions to Alaska Administrative Code to Improve Safety for Pedestrians and Bicyclists using the Transportation Network.” (Welch/Matherly).

Discussion: Mr. Anderson thanked all the members for the extra time to review and discuss the revisions.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

8. New Business

a. Fairbanks Area 2021 Construction Program – Guest Presentation by DOT&PF

Mr. Anderson introduced Michael Lund and Sarah Schacher of DOT&PF who gave a presentation about the 2021 Fairbanks Area Construction Program.

b. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Boundary Adjustment for Chena and Tanana Lakes Recreation Areas (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained that the meeting packet contained a draft transmittal letter to the Governor for the two proposed boundary adjustments to the Metropolitan Planning Area that would annex in the Chena and Tanana Lakes Recreation Areas. Mr. Fox explained that every 10 years in coordination with the Census a new boundary was drawn. Mr. Fox explained that the last time a boundary adjustment was made was in 2012 following the 2010 Census. Mr. Fox explained that there was interest from Mayor Ward to adjust the boundaries. Mr. Fox stated that the boundary adjustment had to be approved by the Governor as well as the Policy Board. Mr. Fox explained the two proposed boundary adjustments for the Chena Lakes and Tanana Lakes Recreation Areas following the PM^{2.5} boundary area. Mr. Fox explained that boundary adjustments would open up new FAST Planning funding opportunities for projects in that area. Mr. Fox explained that one drawback of adding the two recreation areas into our boundary would be that it would make the Borough ineligible to apply for Community Transportation Program Funding through DOT which was a specific funding that was afforded to communities outside the MPO. Mr. Fox explained that the other thing to be mindful of was the fact that in 2022, FAST Planning would be going through another boundary adjustment when the 2020 Census Data came out. Mr. Fox stated that the boundary was not linked to the Operating Agreement so that Agreement would not need to be amended to make the boundary adjustments. Mr. Fox stated that Federal regulations stated that interim boundary adjustments could be done as needed.

Public Comment Period: No public comment.

Motion: To request the State add the Chena and Tanana Lakes Recreation Areas as defined in the packet to the MPO. (Ward/Welch).

Discussion: Mayor Matherly stated that it would give the Borough a bigger footprint to seek funds. Mayor Matherly stated he knew a lot of Fairbanks folks used Chena Lakes and Tanana Lakes too, so it was good for North Pole as well. Mayor Matherly stated that it diluted the money a little bit, but it was more of a “public everybody used it” kind of thing and those were two good areas.

Mayor Ward stated that he appreciated the Policy Board taking this up for consideration. Mayor Ward stated that the original conversation revolved around Chena Lakes and some of the projects they had been working on through their CIP process and looking at a partnership with the MPO both through the funding that the MPO got and the CMAQ funding that had been incredibly beneficial for our community. Mayor Ward stated that efficiency-wise, it made sense for this area to be included and Federal law allowed it. Mayor Ward stated that he appreciated the conversation that was brought up at the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Mayor Ward stated that he saw including this in the MPO area as being a good improvement for our

community from a planning perspective. Mayor Ward stated that these were two very widely used resources by all in our Borough and he thought it made sense to have it included in the MPO.

Mr. Anderson stated from a DOT perspective he did not see any problem with it, and he thought it would be beneficial for all.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

c. Letter of Support for Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Proposals to Alaska Federal Lands Access Program (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained that the Borough intended to submit two grant applications to the Alaska Federal Lands Access Program, and he had drafted a Letter of Support so they could attach it to the two proposals. Mr. Fox stated that the first project was a planning effort to engage in a public involvement effort to gather input for a proposed new access point to Chena Lakes from Plack Road. Mr. Fox explained that the second project submittal was to pave all the gravel roads and parking areas in the Chena Lakes Recreation Area. Mr. Fox stated that there was interest in our Metropolitan Transportation Plan to have a new access point to get to Chena Lakes.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To approve the Letter of Support for the Fairbanks North Star Borough proposals to the Alaska Federal Lands Access Program. (Welch/Ward).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

d. Fairbanks PM^{2.5} Non-Attainment Area Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program – Project Status Update

Mr. Fox updated the Policy Board where FAST Planning projects stood with respect to the PM^{2.5} funding allocations. Mr. Fox explained that nominations for the projects were held in 2019 and 19 projects were nominated. Mr. Fox stated that there were a lot of projects underway which would take funding over the next few years and he summarized the status of the list of projects.

9. Other Issues

No other issues.

10. Informational Items

a. Obligations and Offsets

Mr. Fox explained the obligations and offsets included in the meeting packet.

11. Policy Board Member Comments

- Mayor Welch commented that on KJNP the previous Saturday, he was made aware that people were concerned about the amount of gravel they thought should be put in the three turnarounds and some of the other offramps coming off the Richardson Highway in North Pole. Mayor Welch stated that he mentioned to them that on the days when they were getting slicker or snow was coming down, they could not always get the roads cleared right away. Mayor Welch explained that North Pole Public Works also went out after DOT and put extra gravel down, but he was short-staffed this time of year, so it was a hard chore to keep up with. Mayor Welch commented that he had a Council member that worked for DOT, so they were pretty much aware of what went on. Mayor Welch

stated that he just wanted to make them aware that some people were voicing concerns about it being slick especially in the turnarounds around town. Mayor Welch wished everyone a good St. Patrick's Day.

- Mayor Matherly thanked Mr. Anderson, Ms. Schacher, and Mr. Lund for a good presentation. Mayor Matherly stated that he got his vaccine at Chief Andrew Isaac and got the one shot vaccine and had no side effects from it. Mayor Matherly commented that he hoped that everyone had a very safe day. Mayor Matherly stated that there was a missing girl named Natalie that had disappeared from her home on 12th Avenue in Fairbanks with her dog the day before and wanted everyone to be on the lookout for her. Mayor Matherly stated that he was sure her family was distraught and hoped they found her quickly and wished everyone a great day.
- Mr. Anderson commented that he heard that it was Mr. Fox's birthday and wanted to wish him a Happy Birthday.

12. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn. (Welch/Edwards). The meeting adjourned at 1:54 p.m. The next Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 21, 2021.

Approved: _____



Ryan Anderson, Chair
FAST Planning Policy Board

Date: 4/22/21