



**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Minutes – September 1, 2021**  
Zoom Meeting URL: <https://fastplanning.us/keepup/zoom/>  
Telephone Number: 1 (253) 215-8782, Meeting ID: 840 5817 0297

**1. Call to Order**

Jackson Fox, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

**2. Introduction of Members and Attendee**

The following were present:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
*Jackson Fox, Chair	FAST Planning
*Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair	FAST Planning
**Andrew Ackerman	City of Fairbanks Engineering
**Bob Pristash	City of Fairbanks Engineering
**Bill Butler	City of North Pole
**Steven Hoke	ADEC Air Quality
**Kate Dueber	Alaska Railroad Corporation
**Judy Chapman	DOT&PF Planning
**Sarah Schacher	DOT&PF Preconstruction
**Jason McComas-Roe	FNSB Planning Commission
**Kellen Spillman	FNSB Community Planning
**Michelle Denton	FNSB Transportation
**John Weinberger	Fort Wainwright Planning
**Justin Burgess (absent)	AES Transportation
**Jakob Theurich	UAF
*Deborah Todd	FAST Planning
*Don Galligan	FNSB Community Planning
*Randi Bailey	DOT&PF Planning
John Netardus	DOT&PF Preconstruction
Brian Lindamood	Alaska Railroad
Andy Donovan	Alaska Railroad
Jim Kubitz	Alaska Railroad
Peter Stern	BPAC
Michael Lukshin	FHWA
* <b>FAST PLANNING Staff members</b>	
** <b>FAST PLANNING Technical Committee members</b>	

**3. Approval of the September 1, 2021 Agenda**

**Motion:** To approve the September 1, 2021 Technical Committee Agenda.  
(Denton/Pristash).

**Discussion:** No discussion.

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

**4. Approval of the August 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** To approve the August 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes. (Ackerman/Chapman).

**Discussion:** No discussion.

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

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

Mr. Fox noted the following updates:

- The Policy Board adopted the final version of Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan with the three changes noted in the meeting packet and that will be posted the FAST Planning website.
- The Policy Board approved the Transportation Improvement Program Policy change consolidating the four programs for surface upgrades, sidewalk improvements, and safety and efficiency programs into one program to make it more efficient to set up one design start and combine projects if necessary.
- The Policy Board added the College Road Crosswalk at the Farmers Market as a contingency project in the FY22 FAST Improvement Program.
- The Policy Board approved use of the remaining offset balance of \$60,000 for FFY22 Advance Construction payback.

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

No public comment.

**7. Old Business**

**a. Chena River Walk, Stage III (Action Item)**

- **Consideration of Programming Funding to Open Right-of-Way Phase in FFY2022**

Mr. Fox explained that DOT was requesting funding to begin the Right-of-Way Phase for the Chena River Walk Project to begin negotiations with the Railroad in the amount of \$224,500. Mr. Fox stated that up until now in our TIP for the Right-of-Way Phase there was a placeholder in the amount of \$2,500. Mr. Fox explained that DOT would like an additional \$224,500 as early as October 2021 so they could begin the process of pursuing a long-term land lease with the Railroad.

Ms. Schacher stated that every phase DOT established started with an estimate and sometimes things came in higher or lower but in negotiations things came out that could necessitate further fund requests. Ms. Schacher stated that DOT was looking to start the appraisal and acquisition process for the project.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Motion:** To recommend to the Policy Board approval of \$224,500 to open the Right-of-Way Phase for the Chena Riverwalk project. (Denton/Ackerman).

**Discussion:** Mr. Ackerman commented that he wanted to go on record as saying he believed this project had been complicated in the past dealings with the Railroad but wanted to go on record as saying that he believed that a lot of the

costs were beyond what the value was. Mr. Ackerman stated that he was a proponent of multi-use paths, but the cost/benefit was getting out of balance, and he thought that going forward the amount of money they spent was going to be even more than the original estimates. Mr. Ackerman stated that having said all that, he was in favor of it.

Mr. McComas-Roe stated that he echoed Mr. Ackerman's comments but was in favor of it. Mr. McComas-Roe stated that when this came back before this Committee, as he assumed it would, he would be scrutinizing it very, very closely.

Mr. Spillman commented that it was a tough situation, and he knew that there were a lot of letters over the past 30 years about potentially cost-free and that type of thing. Mr. Spillman stated that he wanted to put on the record that he wanted to remind the Borough and DOT that any land lease over five years had to go through the Borough Subdivision process.

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

## 8. New Business

### a. FAST Planning Bylaws Revision (Action Item)

- **Consideration of Adding a Public Safety Representative to the Technical Committee**

Mr. Fox explained that this item was referred by the Policy Board to the Technical Committee to add a new seat to the Technical Committee. Mr. Fox explained that Mayor Ward had interest in adding a new seat for a Public Safety representative after attending a Regional Transportation Planning Organization presentation that it was a best management practice to have a public safety representative. Mr. Fox provided an overview of options of what representatives could be added.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Motion:** To recommend to the Policy Board to have a law enforcement position on the Technical Committee. (Schacher/Denton).

**Discussion:** Mr. Ackerman stated that he could see the value of people on the street seeing that they had people that represented State police, local police officers, and fire department and just felt that they could have left it a little broader and it did not have to be someone directly related to law enforcement.

Mr. Ackerman stated that this would be a role that could consult with the Committee and would be effective in the nomination phase, or a particular design phase question came up, but not require them to be at every single meeting or make their attendance optional.

Mr. McComas-Roe asked if the motion stated it specifically had to be law enforcement.

Mr. Fox stated that Mr. McComas-Roe was correct.

Mr. Fox stated that if they had a law enforcement seat on the Technical Committee and they only attended six out of ten meetings per year, for example, that would not be a problem.

Mr. McComas-Roe stated that he had to agree with Mr. Ackerman that a firefighter might be more effective than a public safety officer.

Mr. Weinberger stated that a peace officer was one term, public safety officer was another term and law enforcement officer was a different term.

Mr. Spillman agreed with the comments that a public safety official would be a better representative than a law enforcement official if they were going to go that way and suggest that maybe a representative such as a volunteer firefighter might be more effective. Mr. Spillman stated that at the Borough they had several commissions with ex-officio members that gave could provide input and opinions but did not have voting privileges and thought that was an option that could be explored rather than outright adding another member that counted for quorum.

Ms. Schacher stated that she did not have a strong opinion about what they called the representative or voting but did see merit with having the lack of a presence of voting members for quorum but did not recall this body ever having an issue with quorum, so it did not concern her. Ms. Schacher stated that she wanted to explain why she stressed law enforcement and meant no disrespect to the Fire Department at all because they provided a service for our community and used our roads as well. Ms. Schacher she did not have a problem with having a Fire Department representative but did not know if they would have an opinion on orphan roads and forcing them into an opinion on whether they should adopt them into a road service district. Ms. Schacher explained that she stressed law enforcement because it came up all the time during design and just thought they would offer the best insight which did not mean that other emergency professional would not. Ms. Schacher stated that she did not think that the Alaska Highway Safety Office, who also provided a very valuable service, could provide much value to this body because the were very focused on campaigns such as distracted or anti-drunk driving that did not pertain to planning for capital projects, so she did not think they were necessarily the candidate, but was fine if someone wanted to make an amendment that made the motion broader.

Mr. McComas-Roe stated that he thought Ms. Schacher just echoed his point which was that this was not likely to be very fruitful unless, in her opinion, it was a very narrow selection of people they were talking about and if they were going to limit it to law enforcement, he could tell them that it was going to be a harder seat to fill than some folks thought it would be. Mr. McComas-Roe stated that the narrower the definition was about who occupied the seat was going to make it even more difficult. Mr. McComas-Roe stated that he also appreciated the comments that Mr. Spillman made and thought ex-officio, if they were going to continue to consider this, he thought it should be on that basis alone.

Ms. Chapman stated that she did not have a very strong opinion on it either way but thought there were situations where a law enforcement presence would be helpful in giving suggestion on something that they did not normally think about. Ms. Chapman stated that she thought having an ex-officio member might be helpful but did not think they needed to have another representative but thought they could invite them as necessary. Ms. Chapman stated that she would offer an alternative that Mayor Ward explain why he wanted to have an extra member.

**Amendment to the Motion:** To include the law enforcement representative as an Ex-Officio Member of the Committee (Chapman/Pristash).

**Discussion:** Mr. McComas-Roe stated that he agreed but an amendment to “consider” was not much of an amendment.

Mr. Weinberger stated that he thought that this was a good way to make it work for six months or a year and then making it more permanent, but there was nothing wrong with advising as an ex-officio member to start off.

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

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Main Motion as Amended:** Ten in favor. Two opposed. (Ackerman, McComas-Roe). Approved.

**Amended Motion:** To recommend to the Policy Board to have a law enforcement representative as an Ex-Officio Member of the Technical Committee.

## 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. Technical Committee Member Comments

- Mr. Spillman commented that Mr. Weinberger’s comments about subdivisions and multiple accesses into the subdivisions really hit home with a project the Borough was currently working on which was an update to an older plan they had. Mr. Spillman explained that in 1991, the Borough adopted the first Road Plan for the whole area that planned out the subdivision roads that were going in but, prior to 1991 there was no planning that went into it. Mr. Spillman stated that they were going through a process to update that Road Plan and he was putting together a working group with representatives from DOT, FAST Planning, and City of Fairbanks and would copy and paste a link to the website in the chat. Mr. Spillman stated that in the future he would like to give a presentation about the Road Plan, what it did, and how it was used that would answer some of those questions that came up.
- Mr. Weinberger commented that they all knew how the modern ways in place up here took a little longer to take hold.
- Mr. McComas-Roe asked if there had been any discussion about going back to in-person meetings.
- Mr. Fox stated that they could add that to the September Technical Committee Meeting agenda. Mr. Fox stated that the Technical Committee had not started that discussion yet. Mr. Fox stated that they had moved to hybrid meetings with the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee as a test so people could attend in person or via Zoom, but due to the COVID variant they had reverted to meeting with Zoom. Mr. Fox stated that it would be worthwhile to have that discussion and what protocols they needed to have in place for that and they could add that to the September 29 meeting agenda.
- Mr. McComas-Roe commented that he did not want to twist any arms on the subject but found it very difficult to participate fruitfully via Zoom and would welcome the opportunity to participate in person as soon as possible.

**12. Adjournment**

**Motion to Adjourn:** (Denton/Weinberger). The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m. The next Technical Committee meeting is Wednesday, September 29, 2021.

Approved:  Date: 9/29/2021  
Jackson Fox, Chair  
FAST Planning Technical Committee