



POLICY BOARD MEETING

Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2020 • 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: 867 9370 5277

1. Call to Order

Mr. Anderson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:02 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 (absent)	Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
*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
**Don Galligan	FNSB Planning
**Randi Bailey	DOT&PF Planning
+Kellen Spillman	FNSB Planning
+Steven Hoke	DEC Air Quality
+Judy Chapman	DOT&PF Planning
+Bob Pristash	City of Fairbanks Engineering
Cindy Heil	DEC Air Quality
Tom Carlson	Trinity Consultants
David van den Berg	BPAC/Downtown Association
Peter Stern	BPAC
Donna Gardino	BPAC/Downtown Association
Ivet Hall	DOT&PF
Patty Mongold	Mt. McKinley Bank
Kara Nash	Goldies
Jennifer Keller	
Jennifer Eason	DOT&PF Planning
Michael Lukshin	FHWA

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

3. Approval of the October 21, 2020 Agenda

Motion: To approve the October 21, 2020 Agenda. (Welch/Edwards).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the September 16, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the September 16, 2020 meeting minutes. (Welch/Edwards).

Discussion: No further 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:

- **Lacey Street Reconstruction Project:** Mr. Fox met with executives at the Mt. McKinley Bank on October 14, 2020 to provide an overview of the Stakeholder engagement process and give them an idea of what the final concepts from that process would look like. October 21, 2020 was the deadline for the designer to deliver those final concepts and then a 6th and final Stakeholder meeting will be held to showcase those final design concepts to the Stakeholder Group and will invite Mt. McKinley Bank to that meeting to communicate any concerns they have regarding the project.
- **Chena River Walk Project:** Mr. Fox attended and provided public testimony at the Alaska Railroad Board Meeting. The Chena River Walk project was removed from their Agenda as an Action Item which was of benefit to us because it allowed us more time for the City and DOT&PF to communicate with the Real Estate staff of the Railroad to work out a plan to provide a long term land interest for that project along the Chena River.
- **Statewide MPO Call:** Mr. Fox participated in a Statewide MPO call between DOT Headquarters staff, Fairbanks DOT Planning staff, FAST Planning and AMATS staff. They are kicking of quarterly meetings to discuss the indirect cost allocation plan, planning funds, any influence a new MPO would have on FAST Planning if they set up a new MPO and other topics as they arise.
- **FFY2020 Audit:** Mr. Fox initiated the FFY2020 year-end audit with the same firm that completed the audit last year and their staff have been working with FAST Planning to close the books. Mr. Fox prepared a year-end summary that was included in the meeting packet.
- **Annual Winter Maintenance Forum:** The 3rd Annual Winter Maintenance Forum was held in a virtual format via Zoom on October 20, 2020 from 5:30-7 p.m. Various guest speakers including: Dan Schacher, DOT&PF Maintenance; Jeff Jacobson, City of Fairbanks Public Works; Michael Bredlie, FNSB Rural Services; Bryan Charlton, FNSB Parks & Recreation; and Michelle Denton, MACS Transit. 33 people attended the forum.
- **Project Enhancement Committee:** The call for Project Enhancement Committee members was put out on social media and the FAST Planning website. FAST Planning received 12 Letters of Interest that were emailed to the Policy Board to review and determine seat selection for their organization.
- **MPO Conference:** Mr. Fox will be presenting at the Association of MPOs annual conference and provide an hour-long presentation regarding the

transition from being a hosted agency to an independent, non-profit organization.

- **BPAC Vacant Seat:** Advertised on social media for the vacant North Pole Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) seat but received no responses to date and will continue to advertise that seat on social media.

6. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)

David van den Berg, Downtown Association of Fairbanks commented on the 5th Avenue Project reiterating that the Downtown Association hoped that the design part of the schedule could be delayed allowing time for more ideas. Mr. van den Berg stated that the City proposed a one-way alternative and while they thought that would be decent, the two-way alternative really never got a good airing and because it did not, the Downtown Association developed their own design that was a feasible roadway design. 5th Avenue could really play a key role in the circulation downtown and make it easier to navigate and get around. One-way roads did not promote circulation like two-way roads did. Mr. van den Berg stated that two-way roads would reduce out of direction travel, reduce cut-through in parking lots, and 5th Avenue was a local road, so a two-lane facility was appropriate for that, and he thought it would lead to more economic growth and circulation downtown. Mr. van den Berg stated that the alternative they came up with for a two-way, and hoped would get another look, still had generous sidewalks and furnished on-street parking up and down the corridor, much like it had now. Mr. van den Berg stated that it would accommodate MACS Transit by getting rid of some on-street parking that was problematic when they took a left turn onto 5th Avenue. Mr. van den Berg stated that he thought that the only reason the alternative was not looked at was because of the pinch point in front of the School District where the right-of-way was only 45 feet. Mr. van den Berg stated that they had enough confidence in this two-way alternative that the School District agreed, actually offered, to take an in-house survey to determine if two-way was a viable option for them. Mr. van den Berg closed by saying that the City's one-way street design included a one-lane facility with a bike lane so you had an 18-ft. street and with all that right-of-way devoted to the traveled way it also narrowed the sidewalks and was not optimizing the right-of-way. Mr. van den Berg stated that the City's design seemed to promote snow storage on 5th Avenue which was contrary to the daily needs of 5th Avenue.

Donna Gardino commented that she wanted to talk about the 5th Avenue Reconstruction Project and its associated public process. Ms. Gardino stated that there were four Stakeholder meetings of two hours each, 20-25 participants, 200 hours of discussion and ideas, and the City had listened and selected a preferred alternative that was summarily dismissed in the first or second Stakeholder meeting. Ms. Gardino stated that they claimed that the preferred alternative provided a 6-ft. bike lane so that a future conversion to two-way traffic would be less costly, it considered all users, demonstrated their commitment to the Complete Streets Policy, and kept the project on schedule and budget. However, no one in the Stakeholder Group made a decision or was locked into a particular recommendation. Ms. Gardino stated that they brought ideas that they would like considered and those that they did not want considered and the end result was desired by few. Ms. Gardino stated that the current recommendation did not provide for a traffic calming roadway which in a letter to FAST Planning, the City said they desired, saying; "Given a 12-ft. travel lane and an adjacent

unseparated 6-ft. bike lane that would promote traffic calming.” Ms. Gardino stated that was wider than a freeway lane and because the design called for a 6-ft. bike lane instead of widening sidewalks on the east end, the pedestrian drew the short straw and the result was faster speeds. Ms. Gardino stated that she wondered how this happened. Ms. Gardino stated that the process was flawed, the Stakeholder meetings were a waste of time, and the alternatives produced in the only general public process in Fairbanks were highly biased. Ms. Gardino stated that the two-way alternative was presented with the elimination of parking for two blocks which she believed could have been accommodated with a different design. Ms. Gardino stated that consideration of positives discussed in the Stakeholder Meetings were not shared. Ms. Gardino stated that the one-way alternative in the survey called for a 13-14-ft. lane and it was stated that one of the cons against a one-lane roadway was that wide travel lanes and that lack of oncoming traffic might encourage speeding among motorists so that was a conflicting sentiment. Ms. Gardino stated that management came up with a preferred alternative that was not presented to the public but to the Technical Committee and they had not seen it, and it was unfavorable to the Stakeholder group, it was a one-way, two-lane roadway. Ms. Gardino stated that the Technical Committee was shocked, so the designers came up with this latest design. Ms. Gardino stated that the integrity of the environmental process was highly questionable. Yes, the owners could do what they wanted with the roadway under a solid process, but not a questionable one. Ms. Gardino stated that with this much controversy she wondered if the project warranted an Environmental Assessment. Ms. Gardino stated that she was asking the Policy Board to further request that the project go through additional evaluation and a transparent public discourse and the only delay would be to the current schedule and not to construction in 2023.

7. Old Business

a. FFY2021-22 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (Action Item)

- ***Consideration of options for application of Indirect Cost Allocation Plan (ICAP) Rate to Planning fund distribution for FAST Planning, DOT&PF, and FNSB***

Mr. Fox explained that this agenda item was postponed at the September Policy Board meeting and reminded them that this action item was to decide how to apply the State’s Indirect Cost Allocation Plan (ICAP) rate to the distribution of planning funds to FAST Planning, DOT, and the Borough. Mr. Fox stated that he came up with three different options to distribute the ICAP charges for their consideration on how to factor them in to the FFY21-22 UPWP Budget.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To adopt Option C for the Metropolitan Planning fund distribution for FFY21-22. (Welch/Matherly).

Discussion: Mayor Matherly asked Mr. Fox which option was the most equitable and would help FAST Planning the most.

Mr. Fox stated that the way FAST Planning distributed their planning funds, they did not receive enough to operate the office over the course of the year so each year we had to supplement our office budget with Surface Transportation Program funds which were the funds used to design and

construct our projects. Mr. Fox stated that his opinion was that Option C had the highest benefit to FAST Planning because it reduced the amount of money that we had to take from our project funds to operate our office. Mr. Fox stated that they had been providing funding for DOT Planning to do work for the FAST Planning office and he was not sure that it was fair because the amount of hours Ms. Bailey of DOT Planning spent assisting FAST Planning was probably in excess of \$66,000 a year. Mr. Fox stated that when the reductions were being made and this ICAP rate was being charged, the recipient of those funds was DOT who used those funds for their overhead expenses which was why it was decided because all the money that was taken from DOT was given back to DOT and it was just being used for other purposes within the DOT.

Mr. Gibson asked Mr. Fox why Option B was not considered.

Mr. Fox responded that when he presented the three options to the Technical Committee, there was no discussion of Option B after he presented it.

Ms. Edwards asked if that \$22,000 reduction in Planning funds at DOT, understanding that the funds went back to a different fund at DOT, could they as FAST Planning expect to see the same level of service if that funding were reduced because it sounded like they were getting quite a bit of service from DOT.

Mr. Anderson stated that with the reduction in \$22,000, there would be a reduction in the services provided whether it was in contracting services, planning, design work, match agreements, or coordination with FHWA. Mr. Anderson stated that the ICAP funds were overhead funds and they would not go recoup those and they would not go back to the type of funds that Ms. Bailey would be using. Mr. Anderson stated that there was no animosity because they had lots of planning work in Northern Region and there was plenty of planning work for DOT to do but they would just be working on other things.

Mayor Matherly asked if he could reconsider his vote and that request was seconded by Mr. Gibson, the maker of the motion.

Vote on Motion: Two in favor. Four opposed. (Matherly, Gibson, Anderson, Edwards). Motion Failed.

Motion: To table the matter of the Metropolitan Planning fund distribution until the next meeting in November, and between now and then get more explanation regarding the options available to us. (Welch/Edwards)

Discussion: Mayor Matherly suggested that there was no reason to delay the vote and he would vote for Option A.

Mr. Gibson stated that he was ready to make a decision on this item and move forward.

Vote on Motion: One in Favor. Five opposed. (Matherly, Gibson, Tomaszewski, Anderson, Edwards). Motion failed.

Motion: To adopt Option A. (Gibson/Matherly).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: Five in favor. One opposed. (Welch). Approved.

b. Draft Title VI Plan (Action Item)

• **Consideration of adoption of Title VI Plan**

Mr. Fox explained that the Draft Title VI Plan prepared by Olivia Lunsford was included in the meeting packet and the thirty-day public comment period concluded and ran from September 15 until October 15, 2020. Mr. Fox stated that during that public comment period, they received no public comments. Mr. Fox introduced Olivia Lunsford to go over the Draft Title VI Plan and provide a summary.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To approve and adopt the Title VI Plan for FAST Planning as presented. (Edwards/Matherly).

Discussion: Mayor Matherly stated that it was a good report and thanked Ms. Lunsford for preparing it.

Mr. Anderson stated that he seconded Mayor Matherly's comments and at DOT there was a lot of focus on Title VI and this Plan was the model, so he thanked Ms. Lunsford for all her work on it.

Vote on motion: None opposed. Approved.

8. New Business

a. New Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Dashboard

Mr. Fox introduced Ms. Lunsford to explain and provide a tour of the information and data included in the new TIP Dashboard.

b. Proposed Amendments to Fairbanks PM^{2.5} Serious State Implementation Plan (SIP) Guest Presentation by DOT

Mr. Fox explained that there was a slightly revised presentation on the screen than what was included in the meeting packet. Mr. Fox introduced Cindy Heil of DEC and Tom Carlson of Trinity Consultants to provide a presentation and overview of the amendments to the Serious SIP and how it affected the FAST Planning metropolitan area.

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. Obligations were at 100% at fiscal year-end. Offsets at fiscal year-end were \$424,000 in the red and the Woll Road Project was delayed one year which covered half that cost, and project closures were expected to return funds to cover the remaining portion of that offset.

11. Policy Board Member Comments

- Mr. Gibson thanked Mr. Fox for meeting with the stakeholders at Mt. McKinley Bank regarding the Lacey Street project.
- Mayor Matherly commented that there were two new City Council members being sworn in on October 26 and thanked the public who turned out and voted. Mayor Matherly stated that it was important that we all voted in November. Mayor Matherly explained that the City had transformed the trailer they used for absentee voting into a COVID Testing facility that would be used as a drive-through testing center this winter and it would be run by the Public Health Department and located at Public Works on Peger Road. Mayor Matherly stated that he appreciated the interactive map that Olivia Lunsford created.
- Mayor Welch commented that he was happy to hear Mayor Matherly sounding better. Mayor Welch stated that North Pole also had a drive-through trailer for COVID testing. Mayor Welch stated that he was happy that the Governor pulled through for them. Mayor Welch stated that the Testing Trailer was located behind Pagoda Restaurant and they would try to run it at least four to five days per week to provide people from Salcha, Moose Creek, and the greater 99705 area a place to go for free testing. Mayor Welch stated that the precinct for voting was sanitized and there were a lot of serious concerns right now about how we measured the Corona Virus in the state, so they needed to stay in touch with their news network.
- Mr. Anderson commented that he appreciated the testing facilities coming online right now and were preparing at DOT and running through some contingency for keeping snowplows on the street. Mr. Anderson stated that he appreciated the updates and thought they were all good.

12. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn. (Welch/Gibson). The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m. The next Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 12-2 p.m.

Approved: 
Ryan Anderson, Chair
FAST Planning Policy Board

Date: 11/18/2020