



POLICY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2023 • 12:00 – 3:00 P.M.

FAST Planning Office, 100 Cushman Street, Suite 215, Fairbanks, AK

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

Zoom Meeting Telephone Number: 1 (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 821-4131-3484

1. Call to Order

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

Attendee	Representative Organization
*Bryce Ward, Chair	Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
*Jerry Cleworth	Fairbanks City Council
*Joe Kemp	Acting Director, DOT&PF Northern Region
*Jason Olds	Director, DEC Air Quality
*David Pruhls	Mayor, City of Fairbanks
*Brett Rotermund	FNSB Assembly
*Michael Welch	Mayor, City of North Pole
**Jackson Fox	FAST Planning
**Olivia Lunsford	FAST Planning
**Corey DiRutigliano	FAST Planning
**Deborah Todd	FAST Planning
**Randi Bailey (absent)	DOT&PF Planning
**Don Galligan	FNSB Planning
+Kellen Spillman	FNSB Planning
+Danny Wallace	City of North Pole
Susan Bashore	Participant
Bob Bashore	Participant
Martha Markey	Participant
Megyn Flory	RESPEC
Tania Clucas	Morris Thompson Cultural & Visitors Center
Kimberly Diamond	FNSB Parks & Recreation
Andrew Ooms	Kittelson & Associates
Savannah Venetis Fletcher	FNSB Assembly
Kathleen Thompson	Alliance CPAs, LLC

***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 15, 2023 Agenda

Motion: To approve the March 15, 2023 agenda. (Cleworth/Rotermund).

Motion: To move Items 8c and 8d under New Business to before Item 7a under Old Business. (Rotermund/Kemp).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the February 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the February 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes. (Cleworth/Rotermund).

Discussion: Mr. Fox noted that all the public comments received regarding the College Road Crosswalk were included in the minutes section of the meeting packet.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

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

a. Staff Report and Technical Committee Action Items

- DOT has kicked off the Interior Alaska Transportation Plan Working Group and Mr. Fox participated in their first meeting. The Plan is looking at all modes of transportation across a large area in the Interior all the way to the Canadian Border. The Plan is not only for the highway network, but also for aviation, rail, and barge transport/landings. The Plan specifically excludes the urban area of Fairbanks and North Pole. Mr. Fox is participating as the representative for the Regional Planning Area within the Borough but outside the urban area.
- Mr. Fox participated in two Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan meetings, and they expect to have a public review draft by mid-summer.
- FAST Planning held a special Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting on March 7, 2023 to wrap up the design concepts for the Bike Lane Signing & Striping Pilot Project. The concepts were then submitted to the City of Fairbanks so when they begin designing this project, they have some recommendations.
- The letter to the U.S. EPA on the partial disapproval of the PM2.5 Serious State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the PM2.5 Non-Attainment Area was submitted to the EPA and a second letter was drafted regarding the lowering of the PM2.5 emissions standards.
- The FY2022 FAST Planning Audit was completed by Alliance CPAs and a report will be presented to the Policy Board.
- The 990 Income Tax Return was prepared by Alliance CPAs and will be presented to the Policy Board for filing with the IRS.
- Mr. Fox gave a presentation to the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee on hot topics at FAST Planning.

- FAST Planning will have a booth at the Interior Alaska Builders Association Home Show at the Carlson Center.
- Mr. Fox transmitted the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Air Quality Conformity Analysis to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for review.
- The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Carbon Reduction Program received a total of 28 project nominations. Mr. Fox performed an eligibility review of all of the project nominations and only one nomination was determined not eligible. The project nominations have been sent to the Technical Committee for scoring. The scoring process is expected to be completed by March 17, 2023.
- At the March 1, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting they:
 - Recommended approval of the Air Quality Conformity Analysis
 - Recommended approving the letter to the U.S. EPA regarding reconsideration of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter.
 - Recommended to the Policy Board the current design of the College Road Crosswalk should remain with Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) and a camera be installed to collect data on pedestrians using the crosswalk and vehicle yield rates when the lights are flashing. The installation of the RRFB will occur this summer.
 - Recommended Policy Board approval of the Letter of Support written by the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee for House Bill No. 8 pertaining to electric bikes (e-bikes).

6. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)

- **Susan Bashore** commented about Holmes Road. Ms. Bashore commented that she was born and raised on Holmes Road. Ms. Bashore commented that it used to be a nice dirt road that her dad built and maintained and then, lo and behold, progress happens and now everyone thinks it is a four-lane highway, and it is not. Ms. Bashore commented that she would really encourage them to continue to move forward and upgrade Holmes Road. Ms. Bashore commented that one of the things that she noticed when she was doing some research on the construction and upgrading of Holmes Road is that at one time it was a three-phase project. Phase 1 was from Badger Road down to Dennis Road. Phase 2 was Dennis Road to Lakloey. Phase 3 was from Lakloey down to the other end at Peede/Badger intersection. Ms. Bashore commented that as she continued her research, she found out that Phase 3 had been suspended. Ms. Bashore urged that if they are going to break this project up, please give Phase 3 the consideration that it really deserved way back then. Ms. Bashore commented that is the narrowest part of the whole road. It is the most dangerous part of the whole road. Folks have been killed on that road. Pedestrians are in danger of

their lives on that road. Cars, trucks, tow trucks, and everything else go in the ditch on that road. Ms. Bashore commented that one of her pastimes is to count the number of places where it is obvious somebody might enter the ditch when they are driving down that road. It keeps you awake. Ms. Bashore commented that people go fast. They do not care. Especially in the wintertime. They do not care that it is narrow. Ms. Bashore commented that she really enjoys the wintertime because DOT does a wonderful job of keeping the road wide and that does help, but we have children that ride bicycles on that road and they want to go down to Badger Gas, they want to go down to Badger Plaza. Ms. Bashore asked, "Do you want your children riding bicycles on that road? Do you want your grandchildren riding bicycles on that road?" I suspect not. Ms. Bashore commented that she cannot ride a bicycle on that road anymore. Ms. Bashore commented that she can still ride a bike, but it is not safe. There is no room to get away from traffic. Ms. Bashore commented that she really urged them to keep this project in the forefront and make those roads safe. They are going to use it. Ms. Bashore commented that you are not going to stop them so you might as well do what we can to make it safer.

 **Bob Bashore** commented that he is a Holmes Road resident, and he says "ditto." Mr. Bashore commented that he was here to support this project on behalf of himself and his neighbors and appreciates all their consideration in doing that.

 **Martha Markey** commented that she and her husband built that road. Ms. Markey commented that her husband had a road grader, one that you tow behind a dozer, a dozer, and a cable that was 100 ft. long. When he got in a bad spot, he would drop it to a hundred feet, and when he got in good soil, he would bring it back up so it was only 50 feet and pull it out. Ms. Markey commented that it has come a long way from then and it has been a long time. Ms. Markey commented that they moved down there in 1956. Ms. Markey commented that kids do better talking than her so she would just say "hang in there".

 **Mayor Pruhs** asked Ms. Markey if she would say that was probably one of the most heavily used arterial, that connects the first Badger Road exit nearest Fairbanks to the one in North Pole because he uses that all the time as a shortcut.

 **Ms. Markey** stated that it is.

 **Mayor Pruhs** commented that it is probably one of the most heavily used arterial road other than Badger Road in that area.

 **Ms. Bashore** commented that it is not the only road. You could go over to Bradway.

 **Mayor Pruhs** commented that there is no bike path. It is 40 miles an hour and it is paved.

 **Mr. Bashore** commented that it was not really quicker to go around Badger.

 **Mayor Pruhs** agreed that it was not.

- **Mr. Bashore** commented that it takes the same amount of time to go down Holmes as it does to go around. Mr. Bashore commented that they see cars at one intersection and then see them again all the time. People speed.
- **Mayor Pruhs** commented that it has a 40 mile an hour speed limit and yet it is a straight line, so how often do you do 40 miles an hour on it?
- **Mr. Cleworth** stated that Holmes Road has really no shoulder on it does it?
- **Mr. Bashore** commented that it did not. Particularly at that end, the eastern end.

***New Business Items 8c and 8d (Auditors Report and 990 Tax Return) were moved up in the Agenda to before Old Business Item 7a.**

7. Old Business

a. Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) and Carbon Reduction Program Update

■ See <https://fastplanning.us/cmagapps/> to view project nominations

Mr. Fox explained that a total of 28 project nominations were received for the CMAQ and Carbon Reduction Program funds. Mr. Fox explained that the nominations are being scored by the Technical Committee and of the 28 projects, only one project was not clearly shown to be eligible for either of the funding programs. Mr. Fox stated that the preliminary determinations were forwarded to DOT who forwarded on to the FHWA. The Air Quality Conformity consultants, Trinity Consultants, will prepare the emissions reduction calculations. The scoring deadline is March 17, 2023. Mr. Fox explained that he will develop a ten year funding plan and FAST Planning will begin funding projects using the \$3 million they are allocated. Mr. Fox explained that a web page was created for all the project nominations on the FAST Planning website. Mr. Fox explained that included in the applications was the request for 21 new electric vehicle charging stations throughout Fairbanks and North Pole. Mr. Fox explained that he has shared this information with the Alaska Energy Authority who have the electric vehicle program funds. Mr. Fox explained that there is a new discretionary grant program through the U.S. DOT for electric vehicle charging station that will be applied for to fund those charging stations.

b. Approval of 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Air Quality Conformity Analysis (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained that the Draft Air Quality Conformity Analysis performed by Trinity Consultants was released for public comment from January 22 to February 21, 2023. The only comments received were from the Federal Highway Administration. Mr. Fox noted that there was an Interagency Consultation meeting held in conjunction with the public comment period that included the FHWA, FTA, U.S. EPA, State DOT, Fairbanks North Star Borough, FAST Planning, and Trinity Consultants to verbally explain the findings of that Analysis. Mr. Fox explained that at that meeting, It was determined that all emissions would fall below the current EPA emissions budget.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To approve the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan [MTP] Air Quality Conformity Analysis. (Rotermund/Welch).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

c. Adoption of 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update (Action Item*)

Mr. Fox explained that there was an amended motion on the table from the January meeting requesting approval of the Air Quality Conformity Analysis prior to approval of the 2045 MTP. Mr. Fox explained minor updates were received and addressed in the MTP and shown on the table on Page 98 of the Meeting Packet. The revised 2045 MTP is also on the FAST Planning website.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To adopt the 2045 MTP Update and make Barnette Street Reconstruction, Project MR-49, into a short-range project. (*This motion was postponed from 1/18/23 meeting).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

d. Adoption of FFY2023-27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (Action Item*)

**Agenda Items Postponed from Previous Meeting; Members of Public Wishing to Speak on These Items Can Provide Testimony During Regular Public Comment Period Under Agenda Item #6.*

Mr. Fox explained that this item also had an amended motion on the table to approve the FFY2023-27 TIP and include the Barnette Street Reconstruction project as an Illustrative Project. Mr. Fox explained that comments were received and addressed and included in the table on Page 118 of the Meeting Packet.

Public Comment: No public comment. (*This motion was postponed from 1/18/23 meeting.)

Motion: To approve the FFY2023-27 TIP [Transportation Improvement Program] as presented and include Barnette Street as an illustrative project in the TIP.

Discussion: Mr. Cleworth asked about Phase 3 of the Holmes Road Project.

Mr. Kemp commented that he would assume in Phase 3 they were working on the advance right-of-way and utility issues.

Mayor Ward explained that he thought there was a previous project on Holmes Road, where they only did the first portion of it. Mayor Ward commented that if you have

been on Holmes Road from the back side of Ft. Wainwright to a little past Dennis Road, it has widened shoulders and then they narrow back down. Mayor Ward commented that it sounds like the project was never fully completed so the remaining portion of Holmes Road was brought back to FAST Planning for consideration in the TIP. Mayor Ward explained that it was an uncompleted project from at least two decades ago.

Mr. Cleworth asked if the original dream was to widen the road and shoulders to include a bike path or if they looked at actually building a separated bike path.

Mr. Fox explained that this project would fund Phases 2 and 3, which is the remainder of the whole road from where it left off to the Badger Road connection.

Mr. Fox explained that at this time what is envisioned as a widened shoulder on either side of the road and not a separated path. Mr. Fox explained that the reason for that is because DOT Maintenance has stated that they will not commit to maintaining a separated path on Holmes Road. Mr. Fox explained that it also requires a lot more right-of-way acquisition for the path, so it was DOT's preference to move forward with the widened shoulders. Mr. Fox explained that as this design and preliminary engineering progress, there would have to be public meetings for discussion of the two different alternatives.

Mr. Cleworth asked Mr. Fox if the right-of-way we had right now was not enough to do a widened shoulder.

Mr. Fox explained that he believed that there are some parcels or strips that would have to be acquired even for the widened shoulder option.

Mr. Kemp commented that it does not show any right-of-way work until 2026.

Mr. Kemp explained that they would complete the design, figure out what they need, and then go after the right-of-way to accommodate that. Mr. Kemp explained that usually they were not big fans of separated paths anymore because there is just not the funding or the ability for them to plow that in the winter. Mr. Kemp explained that with a widened shoulder was much cheaper for them to build so they could plow that all at once and make it a much safer place for people to walk.

Mr. Cleworth commented that he was glad to hear that because it was so much easier to maintain.

Mr. Cleworth commented that going back to his favorite subject, the pedestrian crosswalk on College Road; he was going to vote for this plan and defer to DOT Engineers on that. Mr. Cleworth commented that he would say that he thought they were making a mistake having that kind of light system on a four-lane road he thinks is dangerous. Mr. Cleworth commented that he would say that because he has blown through two of them in the Seattle area because he never saw them because he was blocked by other vehicles. Mr. Cleworth commented that knowing that we were going

to be monitoring this and there could possibly be an upgrade later, the conservative in him wants to say let's do it once and do it right, but he would leave it up to DOT Engineering. Mr. Cleworth explained that he would not want them second guessing what they do at the City, so he would not second guess them. Mr. Cleworth explained that he agreed with what Mr. Nabielski said at a public hearing a couple meetings ago that if you do something there it should be a (inaudible).

Mayor Pruhs commented that he looked at the aerial and basically it seemed like we were spending public money so that group there could expand their parking lot. Mayor Pruhs commented that they have plenty of area there to expand and it looks like they have a septic system there, so he wondered if this was the best use of public money. Mayor Pruhs commented that he hoped they would take a look at that and tell him whether or not he was correct or incorrect because they were spending money for basically 16 uses a year.

Mr. Rotermund asked Mr. Kemp if it would be feasible to perhaps put in "prepare to stop" lights or "prepare for pedestrian flashing lights" that could be further down the road that might warn people that somebody had pushed the button there.

Mr. Kemp explained that he would have to talk to Nathan Stephen who was the new Traffic/Safety Engineer. Mr. Kemp explained that he thought that was the point of the flashing lights. Mr. Kemp commented that the funny thing was that the best time that you could see those things would be in the winter when they were not going to be used. Mr. Kemp commented that the best thing was the camera there that could monitor and see if people are stopping there. Mr. Kemp commented that at any time, even at intersections, a crosswalk is dangerous. You go in there and people are not paying attention and they are on their phone. Mr. Kemp added that driver inattention is a serious thing. As a pedestrian you always have to look out. Even more so when there is a crosswalk that is not an intersection. Mr. Kemp commented that people are going to have to watch out because they are not expecting it there. Mr. Kemp commented that he went back after our meeting last month and talked to the Traffic folks who were whole-heartedly in favor of it. Mr. Kemp explained that DOT Traffic & Safety said that it met all six criteria for having a crosswalk. Mr. Kemp commented that it will benefit the walking and biking community.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

8. New Business

a. Comment Letter to U.S. EPA on Reconsideration of National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained that he drafted a one-page comment letter regarding the second Federal Register Notice from the EPA to lower the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter emissions. Mr. Fox explained that the impact of this

action would affect many places in the U.S. Mr. Fox explained that a map showing the counties across the U.S. shows that currently 50 counties do not meet the air quality standards. Mr. Fox explained that if it went down, 62 additional communities would not meet the proposed standards. The comment letter is due to EPA by March 28, 2023.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To approve the U.S. EPA comment letter [on Reconsideration of National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter]. (Olds/Welch).

Discussion: Mayor Welch commented that he went to the UAF Wood Center for the public meeting to comment and met with the Region 10 EPA representatives. Mayor Welch commented that it seemed to him that they were still nebulous about how many microliters they were going to go to. Mayor Welch commented that it seemed that they were not going to drop the levels down that low. Mayor Welch commented that he was happy that there was a citizen from North Pole at the meeting that essentially told them the same thing.

Mr. Olds clarified that the proposal is only lowering the annual standard right now and not proposing to change the 24-hour standard, which is where we typically have our struggles. Mr. Olds commented that the winter 24-hour standard tends to be a less severe issue.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

b. House Bill No. 8 – An Act Relating to Electric-Assisted Bicycles (Action Item)

 ***Letter of Support from Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee***

Mr. Fox explained that a letter of support was written by the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the Technical Committee recommended approval by the Policy Board to pass this letter along to the House State Affairs Committee regarding House Bill No. 8. Mr. Fox explained that House Bill No. 8 is regarding defining electric-assisted bicycles or e-bikes. Mr. Fox explained that this Bill allows State agencies to define which types of motorized and non-motorized vehicles can use the paths and trails. The Bill does not provide any regulatory direction.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To endorse House Bill No. 8. (Pruhs/Welch)

Discussion: Mr. Cleworth commented that he thought an electric bike was an oxymoron.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

c. Annual Audit – Independent Auditor’s Report to Policy Board (*Moved before Old Business Item 7a in the Agenda.)

Kathleen Thompson, Alliance CPAs, presented the FFY22 Annual Audit Report to the Policy Board. Ms. Thompson noted that the only change was the look of the Audit Report because the Basis for Opinion was moved to the beginning of the report, and it used to be at the end.

d. Annual Tax Return (IRS Form 990) Review (Action Item) (*Moved before 7a in Agenda.)

 **Review of Tax Return and Authorization to File with IRS**

Ms. Thompson, Alliance CPAs, presented and explained the 2022 IRS Form 990 Tax Return for FAST Planning is an information only return. FAST Planning does not pay income taxes as it is a non-profit organization.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To accept the Annual Tax Return and Audit (Cleworth/Rotermund).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

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

 Mr. Cleworth commented that this represents a lot of work from the staff and is much appreciated.

 Mayor Pruhs commented that last Tuesday, March 7, 2023 they had the special Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting and he witnessed and saw some interesting things. Mayor Pruhs commented that one of the interesting things that came up was the issue of snowplowing on sidewalks and how property owners are supposed to do that, but they usually do not. Mayor Pruhs commented that one of the meeting participants was talking about Cowles Street. Mayor Pruhs commented that, with that in mind, he gave the directive for Public Works to start maintaining that sidewalk and they have plenty of equipment to do that on Cowles. Mayor Pruhs commented that the good news was that they got it plowed, but the bad news was that it snowed four inches. Mayor Pruhs commented that he learned something new at that meeting.

 Mayor Welch commented that today March the 15th marked the Ides of March.

 Mr. Rotermund commented that thinking back to the map of the lower 48 and the PM2.5, he could not help but think that after all the years of legislation California has had in the past, now they really truly are a green state.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:41 p.m. The next Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 19, 2023.

Approved:



Date:

4/19/23

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair
FAST Planning Policy Board