



## **FAST POLICY BOARD**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**August 21, 2024 • 12:00 – 2:00 P.M.**

FAST Planning Office, KeyBank Building, 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: 849-0263-4667

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

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

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

| <b>Attendee</b>                    | <b>Representative Organization</b>  |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| *Bryce Ward, <b>Chair</b>          | Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough |
| *Jerry Cleworth, <b>Vice Chair</b> | Fairbanks City Council              |
| *Chandra Clack                     | Mayor, City of North Pole           |
| *Scott Crass                       | FNSB Assembly                       |
| *Joe Kemp                          | Director, DOT&PF Northern Region    |
| *Jason Olds                        | Director, DEC Air Quality           |
| *David Pruhs ( <b>absent</b> )     | Mayor, City of Fairbanks            |
| **Corey DiRutigliano               | FAST Planning                       |
| **Jackson Fox                      | FAST Planning                       |
| **Olivia Lunsford                  | FAST Planning                       |
| **Deborah Todd                     | FAST Planning                       |
| **Randi Bailey                     | DOT&PF Planning                     |
| **Don Galligan                     | FNSB Community Planning             |
| +Kellen Spillman                   | FNSB Community Planning             |
| Al Beck                            | DOT&PF Preconstruction              |
| Ben White                          | DOT&PF Planning                     |
| Marie Heidemann                    | FHWA                                |
| James Marks                        | Alaska Municipal League (AML)       |
| Elise Blocker                      | RESPEC                              |
| Patrice Lee                        | Participant                         |

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

#### **3. Approval of the August 21, 2024 Agenda**

**Motion:** To approve the August 21, 2024 Agenda. (Cleworth/Crass).

**Discussion:** No discussion.

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

#### **4. Approval of the July 17 & July 31, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** To approve the July 17 and July 31, 2024 Meeting Minutes. (Cleworth/Crass).

**Discussion:** No discussion.

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

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

- Special Technical Committee and Policy Board Meetings were held in July to approve the Alaska DOT&PF Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Amendment comment letter and FAST Planning Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Administrative Modification #4.
- An Interagency Consultation Meeting for Air Quality Conformity was held in July for several projects in the TIP.
- A Letter of Support was drafted for the Fairbanks Children's Museum.
- The annual Employee Reviews for merit increases will be considered in an Executive Session.
- A new planning fund distribution notice was received from Alaska DOT&PF for FFY2025 which required a minor revision to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
- At the **July 25, 2024** meeting, the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC):
  - Recommended locations for future Road Safety Audits.
- At the **August 7, 2024** meeting, the Technical Committee
  - Recommended that the list of Road Safety Audit locations from BPAC be postponed until they have more data to help them make an informed decision.
  - Recommended approval of the FAST Planning FFY2025 office budget.

#### **6. Updates from Alaska DOT&PF on Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)**

Ben White explained that DOT&PF was in the final throws of trying to get the STIP Amendment completed and submitted to FHWA and FTA. They are working on the last few deliverables that must be corrected and anticipate sending the STIP to FHWA sometime this week. The FHWA and FTA have 30 days to review the document.

#### **7. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)**

No public comment.

#### **8. Old Business**

##### **a. FFY2025-26 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (Action Item)**

- **Consideration of Approving Minor Revisions to Revenue Amounts Based on FFY2025 Planning Fund Distribution Notice from DOT&PF**

Mr. Fox explained that an update was received from DOT&PF that changed the planning fund distribution to the three MPOs requiring minor revisions to the UPWP.

**Public Comment:** No comment.

**Motion:** To approve FFY2025-26 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) modification as presented. (Crass/Kemp).

**Discussion:** No discussion.

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

## 9. New Business

### a. Letter of Support for Fairbanks Children's Museum (Action Item)

- **Consideration of Supporting Federal Appropriation for Purchase of Building Where Museum Resides**

Mr. Fox explained that he drafted a Letter of Support for the Fairbanks Children's Museum to help them secure an appropriation to purchase the building they are currently in.

**Public Comment:**

**Patrice Lee** thanked FAST Planning for their letter of support. Ms. Lee commented that she thinks that the Children's Museum is an extremely important, valued, and used part of our community. Ms. Lee commented that she would like to see continued support in any way we can, including ongoing ADA requirements and maybe even an expansion for some of our disabled people who are maybe a little bit older, but they still enjoy childlike activities. Ms. Lee commented that she thinks the Museum and all its staff are doing a wonderful job. She is there often and sees how many people are coming and going, and it's just a great part of our community. Thank you very much.

**Motion:** To approve the Letter of Support for Fairbanks Children's Museum. (Cleworth/Crass).

**Discussion:** **Mr. Kemp** commented that he thought it was a good idea, but his only concern would be that right now they are a tenant, and they are paying monthly rent. His question was whether the cost of operation would go up or down if the Museum owned the building and what the contribution increase or decrease would be from this.

**Mr. Fox** explained that he was not familiar with what the current cost was to acquire the building or how much the current tenants pay.

**Mr. Kemp** commented that obviously the grant would cover the building but was not going to cover the ongoing maintenance costs for the building.

**Mr. Cleworth** commented that there is a myriad of organizations that want letters of support from the Borough or the City when they go after grants like this. He was not sure why it ended up on our plate, but it is here, so no problem.

**Mayor Ward** commented that he had conversations with the Director of the Museum, and they were looking at several options to cover the cost of funding to maintain and continue operations.

\*Mayor Ward passed the Chair to Mr. Cleworth to make a telephone call.

**Mr. Crass** commented that he echoed Mr. Cleworth's sentiment. His kids love the place, and he is absolutely in support of them expanding. He thinks it is a great benefit to downtown having it there. He just wonders how much weight this body will carry in Senator Murkowski's deliberations on this, but he is in support of this letter.

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

\*Mr. Cleworth returned the Chair to Mayor Ward.

**b. FAST Planning FFY2025 Office Budget (Action Item)**

• **Consideration of Approval of FFY2025 Office Budget**

Mr. Fox explained the FFY2025 FAST Planning Office Budget included in the meeting packet.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Motion:** To approve the FFY2025 FAST Planning Office Budget. (Crass/Kemp).

**Discussion:** **Mr. Crass** asked about the Annual Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) included in the Budget.

**Mr. DiRutigliano** explained that the CNU looked at transportation and land use which was an area that had been lacking in our planning to develop better relationships with community planning for both public and private spaces.

**Mr. Crass** asked for more specific information about what CNU does.

**Mr. DiRutigliano** explained that CNU is an organization that has been around for 30+ years. They are based in D.C. They have a long history of being the cornerstone for community planning not just with private property but also with public spaces.

**Mr. Crass** asked about the increase of radio advertising in the budget and wondered if they had looked at streaming platforms for ads such as Spotify or Pandora.

**Ms. Lunsford** commented that she had not previously specifically looked at that, but she would look into that.

**Mr. Cleworth** asked about the AML membership and how FAST Planning would utilize that. The City was a member and the Borough. Mr. Cleworth commented oftentimes the City and Borough might be in conflict with one other so how did we, as an organization, use that? Are we trying to play an active role or just gain information from them that normally we would not get? Mr. Cleworth commented that he did not know if North Pole was a member or not but at least two of the members on the Policy Board are already members.

**Mr. Fox** explained that AML is actively growing, and Mr. Marks of AML was in charge of the Transportation Planning Division, which is a new arm of AML. With that new division and staff, they have been working with DOT and applicants across

the state for US DOT Discretionary Grants. FAST Planning would just participate in their meetings and could provide letters of opinion or comments.

**Mr. Cleworth** commented that his concern was their protocol if they were a member and if there was an issue whether the Policy Board would back them up.

**Mr. Fox** explained that he thought that was to be determined. As usual, any comments or thoughts would come from the Board, and if there was an issue for the Body, the staff would communicate the Policy Board's position to them.

**Mayor Ward** explained that the affiliates of AML provide additional information to AML in their areas of expertise.

**Mr. Crass** commented that he thought that if they were joining it, they should have a mouthpiece. Being associated with this body would allow us a little bit louder voice in things that came out of AML. He thought it made sense from a planning standpoint. We would just be an affiliate and able to provide information.

**Mr. Olds** commented that he was not opposed to this idea but did not know how we benefit unless there is something that we want to push through for this body. It seems more like we are just providing a service.

**Amendment to the Motion:** To remove \$350 from the Budget and not join the AML [Alaska Municipal League] at this time. (Cleworth/Clack).

**Discussion:** **Mr. Kemp** asked if we could do the same thing using the City or Borough's membership to attend.

**Mr. Crass** commented that he thought the object here was to support the efforts of AML as a whole and leverage this body to provide input there. He thought \$350 was cheap for the access it will grant and will allow us a better connection. There is a lot of information that could be obtained there. It is all about sharing information and it would be useful for us as members of this body.

**Mr. Cleworth** commented that he agreed with Mr. Crass, but we could also do that through the memberships that we already have in the organization.

**Mr. Crass** commented that he did not disagree but thought that this was more about this body wanting to support the work that they are doing.

**Mr. Olds** commented that it seems more like we were providing our service and expertise to them. It just seems odd to him.

**Mayor Ward** commented that he would speak in favor of AML membership. He thought as an affiliate organization we probably do contribute more to AML when it comes from a transportation planning perspective than we receive. Also, the support for the work that we have done in developing the RPOs, that was actively advocated for by AML. We put that in place with strong support from the Commissioner's Office. As we talk about development of RPOs in our own community and how that can really help across the state, there is some benefit there for communities to have better partnership with the state in our transportation

planning. This is something that he has heard from other members of AML that projects are done “to” them, rather than “for” them. We do not always get what we want when developing as a City or Borough, but we have a way of doing them together to achieve a better outcome. He would advocate for joining AML.

**Vote on Amendment to the Motion:** Four in favor. (Cleworth, Crass, Kemp, Olds). Two opposed. (Crass, Ward). Motion approved.

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Amended Motion:** To approve the FFY2025 FAST Planning Office Budget and remove \$350 from the Budget and not join the AML at this time.

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

## 10. Informational Items

### a. Obligations and Offsets

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

## 11. Other Issues

No other issues.

## 12. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Employee Reviews & Consideration of Merit Increases (Action Item)

\*The meeting went into Executive Session at 1:10 p.m. and the recording was paused.

**Motion:** To go into Executive Session for employee reviews and consideration of merit increases. (Cleworth/Kemp).

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

\*The meeting and recording resumed at 2:00 p.m.

**Executive Session Outcome:** The Policy Board agreed on a 2% increase for FAST Planning staff and the Executive Director.

## 13. Policy Board Member Comments

- Mr. Cleworth commented that College Road looks good.
- Mayor Clack commented that she enjoyed the meeting and was learning a lot.

## 14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at **2:02 p.m.** The next Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 18, 2024.**

Approved:  Date: 9-18-24

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair  
FAST Planning Policy Board