

MVP for Transportation Technical Committee Meeting

MEMBERS

Adeyemi Alimi, ADEC
Alex Strawn, MSB (**Chair**)
Ben White, ADOT&PF
Bob Charles Jr., Knik Tribe
Brian Lindamood, ARRC
Brian Winnestaffer, Chickaloon Native Village
Clint Adler, ADOT&PF
Crystal Smith, MSBSD
Dan Tucker, RSA Representative
Erich Schaal, City of Wasilla (**Vice Chair**)
Jennifer Busch, Public Transit
Jude Bilafer, City of Palmer
Lawrence Smith, Trucking Industry Advocate
Randy Durham, MSB TAB
Stuart Leidner, Mobility Advocate
Tom Adams, MSB



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Minutes

Tuesday, October 8th, 2024
2:00 - 3:30pm

Meeting Location

Musk Ox Farm
12850 E Archie Road, Palmer Alaska 99645
Hayloft / Classroom

1. **Call to Order**
Meeting called to order at 2:00pm.

Members Present

Adeyemi Alimi, ADEC
Alex Strawn, MSB
Ben White, DOT&PF
Richard Martin for Bob Charles, Jr., Knik Tribe
Brian Lindamood, ARRC
Brian Winnestaffer, Chickaloon Native Village
Adam Bradway for Clint Adler, DOT&PF
Crystal Smith, MSBSD
Dan Tucker, RSA Representative
Erich Schaal, City of Wasilla
Lawrence Smith, Trucking Industry Representative
Stuart Leidner, Mobility Advocate
Tom Adams, MSB

Members Absent

Jennifer Busch, Public Transit
Jude Bilafer, City of Palmer
Randy Durham, MSB TAB

Visitors

Kim Sollien, MVP Coordinator
Elise Blocker, RESPEC
Donna Gardino, Gardino Consulting
Joni Wilm, Michael Baker International
Julie Spackman, MSB Long Range Planner
Mike Campfield, MSB Environmental Engineer
Luke Bowland, DOT&PF
Marie Heidemann, FHWA

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John Linnell, DOT&PF
Maija DiSalvo, MSB
Travis Blocker, Visitor
Sharon Johnson, Alaska Legislature
Megan Flory, RESPEC

2. Consent Agenda (Action Item)

- a. **Approval of the October 8th, 2024, Agenda**
- b. **Approval of the September 10th, 2024, Minutes**
- c. **Staff/Committee/Working Group Reports (Including the Chair's Report)**
 - **Staff Report**
 - a. **Schedule of topics**

Motion to approve the October 8, 2024, Agenda and September 10, 2024, Minutes (Winnestaffer). Passed, none opposed.

Alex Strawn requested that if anyone wanted to change any item within the Consent Agenda, that they make a motion to remove that item from the action item. No motion.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda (Winnestaffer) and seconded. No objection to approving the Consent Agenda.

Kim Sollien provided clarification on the process for the Consent Agenda. If committee members want a staff report, they will need to request one while the motion is on the floor. A staff report will not be given by default. Sollien provided a summary of the staff report included in the packet.

Adam Bradway asked whether the staff report could be a separate item on the agenda rather than included in the Consent Agenda. Kim Sollien explained that this is the format that was approved by the Policy Board in the Bylaws and the Technical Committee agenda follows the Policy Board's agenda. The bylaws could be amended, but it was done this way because the Policy Board requested less detail in the staff report.

Alex Strawn said they appreciate the details and would like to have the staff report as a separate agenda item.

Motion to move Technical Committee Staff Report separate from the Consent Agenda (Winnestaffer), seconded.

Stuart Leidner voiced opposition to this change because the agenda format is in the bylaws and members can ask questions if they have them. Tom Adams agreed with Leidner and said that the staff reports given during action items are sufficient. Adam Bradway said it was a strange set-up because staff would need to indicate to the members that the staff report should be pulled from the Consent Agenda if staff needed to give additional details. Kim Sollien reminded the members that page 3 of the packet is a "cheat sheet" with all action items, possible motions, and brief staff reports. This cheat sheet indicates that members should request a staff report during the Consent Agenda discussion if they want one. Sollien also said that the Technical Committee agenda can look different than the Policy Board agenda because the Technical Committee agenda is not defined in the bylaws.

Motion to move Technical Committee Staff Report separate from the Consent Agenda. Aye 6, Nay 7, Absent 3. Motion failed.

3. Voices of the Visitors (Non-Action Items)

None.

4. Action Items

- a. **Proxy Voting/Bylaws Amendment Proposal (Action Item)**

Motion to recommend Policy Board adopt the language on page 15 of the packet labeled "MVP Staff Proxy Voting Proposal." (Bradway) no second. Motion dropped.

Motion to recommend Policy Board remove proxy voting from the bylaws. (Winnestaffer) seconded. Motion withdrawn.

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Motion to take no action and allow the Policy Board to make a determination internally. (Leidner) seconded. None opposed, motion passed.

Kim Sollien explained the process for proxy voting and the reason this topic is an agenda item. Alaska nonprofits are allowed to have proxy voting, but it is not generally done because the committee member is the one who is accountable to their organization, the proxy could vote contrary to the member's wishes, and the information made available during a meeting may change the intent or context of an action item in a way that would have otherwise changed the member's vote. Page 14 of the packet explains the risks of proxy voting. Staff recommendation is that the Policy Board needs to inform staff in writing in advance of a meeting who their proxy is and what their organization's votes will be. Alternatively, proxies could be allowed to vote according to their own judgment without pre-determined votes from the member.

Tom Adams asked who is responsible for determining whether the intent of an action is changed and how a significant change is defined. Kim Sollien provided an example regarding personnel policies, in which the meeting packet indicates that staff is recommending MVP cover 95% of health insurance costs but the Policy Board discussion leads to a vote on covering 100% of health insurance costs. In this situation, it would be unclear whether the proxy could vote for their organization. Tom Adams asked for further clarification on how a significant change is defined, and whether, for example, a change from 5% to 7% would be considered significant. Kim Sollien said that this ambiguity is why she is recommending Technical Committee members not vote on organizational policy. She said it may be appropriate for a Technical Committee member to vote on the addition or removal of a project from a plan such as the TIP, but policy decisions should be up to the Policy Board.

Stuart Leidner said it was interesting that the Borough would make the recommendation written in the packet and compare it to an Assembly member designating a proxy and never attending Assembly meetings. Stuart Leidner indicated concerns about transparency and suggested that MVP will come under increasing scrutiny as time goes on. Stuart Leidner suggested not allowing proxies and asked why the Technical Committee was being asked to vote on this item. Kim Sollien clarified that the Technical Committee's roles and responsibilities allow the Technical Committee to name proxies and the Policy Board requested they be able to do the same. MVP staff reviewed examples from other organizations within the state and created draft language aligned with the Policy Board's request while placing some limits on who can be named as a proxy and how they can vote. Stuart Leidner said he understands how this conversation came to be on the agenda but is concerned from a governance perspective. Kim Sollien informed the Technical Committee that Leidner has a long history with nonprofits and reiterated that proxy voting is not typical.

Adam Bradway asked for clarification on the difference between organizational and technical items and how that would be noted during meetings. Kim Sollien said she often reviews the agenda with Policy Board members before meetings and could indicate to them which items are organizational, and which are technical.

Tom Adams asked if it was correct that the current language allows Technical Committee members to serve as proxies for Policy Board members without any guardrails. Kim Sollien clarified that the current language requires the Policy Board member to submit their votes in writing in advance of the meeting. Under the current system, the proxy would be required to abstain if the motion differs from what was written in the packet.

Dan Tucker asked whether proxy voting was allowed in state law. Kim Sollien clarified again that while proxy voting is legally allowed, it is not done because of the risks. Dan Tucker stated that the proxy should be able to make a compelling enough argument to the Policy Board to sway the other members to vote according to the proxy's organization's vote. Alex Strawn said he raised this issue because of his experience being a proxy for the MSB mayor. The mayor had to provide her votes in writing in advance of the meeting, which Alex Strawn felt was dangerous as action items could be amended from the recommended language in the meeting packet and said it is bad form to determine your vote prior to having a public discussion. Alex Strawn said he would prefer no proxy voting over a hybrid option. Leidner wrote in the meeting chat that he would prefer no proxy voting at all.

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Kim Sollien stated that from a staff perspective, that policy decisions should be left to the Policy Board. The “hybrid” option was intended to allow Technical Committee members to serve as proxy with guardrails, but Technical Committee members serve a different role and should not be making organizational decisions.

Tom Adams stated that each Technical Committee member is in a different position. Adams and Strawn are both directors at the borough and are heavily engaged with their administrations and therefore have a good sense of how their administration would vote, but other organizations may have conflict. Adams stated that sometimes not being represented at all is as much a weakness as sending a proxy to participate in a conversation that might change during consideration. He stated his intention to vote against the motion on the floor and, if the motion fails, to move to adopt the language on page 15 labeled “MSB Proxy Voting Proposal.”

Ben White noted that not having proxy voting or quorum at Policy Board meetings could delay development and approval of upcoming plans. The other two MPOs that White sits on do not frequently vote on financial or policy matters. AMATS takes 9 months to complete a TIP amendment and not allowing proxy could delay MVP’s process even further. Leidner suggested that if a proxy is needed to ensure timely adoption of plans and amendments, proxy voting should only be allowed for technical items and not allowed for any other items.

Dan Tucker stated that the controversial point in this discussion seems to be voting, but if the proxy is allowed to discuss matters with the Policy Board according to their organization’s stance but cannot sway the other members to vote with the proxy’s organization, then the proxy’s vote probably would not have made a difference anyway.

Brian Winnestaffer said he is uncomfortable with Policy Board members determining their votes before conversations occur but sees the value in having someone with knowledge being at the table to share information and make a vote. Given the risks with proxy voting, however, it may not be appropriate to allow the proxy to vote and instead they should only be present to count for quorum and to share information.

Adams stated that if the Policy Board member does not have faith in the person identified as their proxy, they should not have named that person as their proxy. He also noted that the next Policy Board meeting has been cancelled because of lack of quorum and that could be an ongoing issue.

Brian Lindamood asked why the Technical Committee was having this discussion when it seems like a policy matter that should be voted on by the Policy Board. He also noted that AMATS takes so long to approve TIP amendments because of the procedural requirements they have that MVP does not. He suggested that if the elected officials on the Policy Board cannot make their attendance and participation a priority, the Policy Board should review who the representatives are, but that is not a Technical Committee discussion. Leidner agreed it should be sent back to the Policy Board.

Kim Sollien said that there is a policy in the bylaws at this time so a decision does not need to be made on this item for business to continue. The Technical Committee could continue this conversation next month as there will be no Policy Board meeting before the next Technical Committee meeting.

5. Old Business

a. Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) Amendment #1 Update

- Alaska DOT&PF STIP Website <https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/cip/stip/>

Ben White provided a staff report on the Federal Planning Finding letter from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Authority (FTA). The STIP Amendment #1 was partially approved. DOT&PF will be developing an Action Plan for submission to FHWA and FTA in early December. Adam Bradway noted that most of the items in the letter are unrelated to MVP.

Kim Sollien said she reviewed the STIP Amendment #1 and found errors, which were discussed at the last meeting. She asked when those errors would be corrected. Bradway said DOT&PF has already begun to develop STIP Amendment #2 and that process will include those corrections. Kim Sollien asked if the comments needed to be formalized as a letter from the Policy Board or if MVP must wait for STIP Amendment #2 to be released to review for accuracy. Adam Bradway said that it is better to

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be proactive. DOT&PF will post a revised STIP Amendment #1 based on the findings from FHWA and FTA and that MVP should review that version.

Tom Adams asked if Kim Sollien could note this action in the staff report and attach the letter to DOT&PF. Sollien clarified that she had sent one letter to DOT&PF during the STIP Amendment #1 process but not all those items were addressed. She is now trying to determine whether a new letter is needed to show all the remaining errors in STIP Amendment #1. Brian Lindamood said that ARRC is in a similar situation and needs to know when DOT&PF needs comments from ARRC to correct errors. White said he would investigate it and send a date to Brian Lindamood.

Stuart Leidner asked for clarification about a statement in the letter from FHWA and FTA that said neither agency has the authority to approve or disapprove the MPOs' MTPs, so they should be removed from the STIP document. Adam Bradway clarified that the STIP and STIP Amendment #1 included the FAST Planning and AMATS MTPs in their entirety as appendices and the letter is saying they do not need to be attached in this way.

6. New Business

a. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) – Request for Proposal (RFP) Review and Update

Kim Sollien provided a staff report. The RFP has been released and will be open for three weeks.

Tom Adams asked how the RFP was being circulated. Adam Bradway clarified that DOT&PF is managing procurement and contracting for MVP. The RFP is on the DOT&PF website. Adam Bradway said this plan covers access management and project recommendations.

7. Other Issues

None.

8. Informational Items

a. Bogard/Seldon Corridor Access Management Plan Presentation by MSB.

Julie Spackman and Mike Campfield from MSB presented the slides in the meeting packet. There is a public comment period from October 9 through November 3, 2024.

Brian Winnestaffer asked when construction is anticipated to begin. Campfield said it is probably 20 years out.

There will be a public open house on November 6, 2024.

Winnestaffer said MVP should be a resource for finding this type of information and suggested sharing this information on the MVP website. Bradway clarified that in the future, these types of projects within the MPA boundary will be funded by MVP and included in the MVP MTP.

b. Articles Of Incorporation/Non-Profit Organization Paperwork Update

Paperwork has been submitted.

c. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – MVP and MSB

Staff are still working on the MOU.

d. Safe Streets for All MSB CSAP Update (Survey Results and Initial Crash Data Review Summary) Presented by Joni Wilm, Project Manager/ Senior Planner, Michael Baker

Joni Wilm gave a presentation. Public outreach yielded 912 comments. There were comments from across the borough and a summary of results is forthcoming. The team has also been conducting a crash data analysis. Wilm encouraged Technical Committee members to review the public dashboard at ss4a.matsugov.us.

Motion to extend the meeting by 10 minutes (Tucker), seconded.

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Tom Adams asked about the perception that this is a study of nonmotorized transportation when that is not the intent. Wilm said that this is a study of all modes and that most crashes in the study area are vehicle-to-vehicle. Cyclists and pedestrians are very vulnerable in crashes, so they are a priority user group for safety, but the intent is to create safe roads for all users.

9. **Technical Committee Comments**

Crystal Smith said she appreciated the presentations, and they were very thoughtful.

Alex Strawn suggested making the Technical Committee meetings 2 hours by default.

*Motion to schedule the Technical Committee meetings for 2 hours (**Adams**), seconded. None opposed.*

10. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:48pm.

Next Scheduled MPO Technical Committee Meeting – **November 12th, 2024, from 2:00pm-3:30pm** to be held at the Musk Ox Farm and Microsoft TEAMS.