

MVP for Transportation Technical Committee Meeting

MEMBERS

Adeyemi Alimi, ADEC
Alex Strawn, MSB (**Chair**)
Ben White, Alaska DOT&PF
Bob Charles Jr., Knik Tribe
Brian Lindamood, ARRC
Brian Winnestaffer, Chickaloon Native Village
Clint Adler, Alaska DOT&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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Phone Conference ID: 942 096 921#

Minutes

Tuesday, January 14th, 2025

2:00 – 4:00pm

Meeting Location

Musk Ox Farm

12850 E Archie Road, Palmer Alaska 99645

Hayloft / Classroom

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 pm.

Members Present

Alex Strawn, MSB
Tom Adams, MSB
Clint Adler, Alaska DOT&PF
Julius Adolfsson, Alaska DOT&PF
Alimi Adeyemi, ADEC
Crystal Smith, MSBSD
Erich Schaal, City of Wasilla
Jude Bilafer, City of Palmer
Lawrence Smith, Trucking Industry Advocate
Stuart Leidner, Mobility Advocate
Randy Durham, MSB TAB
Ben White, Alaska DOT&PF
Jennifer Busch, Public Transit
Dan Tucker, RSA Representative
Brian Winnestaffer, Chickaloon Native Village

Members Absent

Brian Lindamood, ARRC
Bob Charles Jr., Knik Tribe

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Visitors Present

Kim Sollien, MVP MPO

Elise Blocker, RESPEC

Jason Biernat, High Street Consulting

Donna Gardino, Gardino Consulting Services

Adriana Herrera-Furr, High Street Consulting

Adam Bradway, Alaska DOT&PF

Julius Adolfsson, Alaska DOT&PF

2. Consent Agenda (Action Item)

Motion to approve the Consent agenda (Winnestaffer), seconded. Passed unanimously.

- a. Approval of the January 14th, 2025 Agenda
- b. Approval of the December 10th, 2024, Minutes

3. Staff/Committee/Working Group Reports

• Staff Report

a. Schedule of topics

Kim Sollien provided a staff report. Quarterly reports are beginning and will be submitted to Alaska DOT&PF by the end of the month. MVP swag has been purchased and will be brought to the Mat-Su Transportation Fair. MVP is working with the borough GIS team to create a map for the fair with the boundary. Formal proposals for IT, insurance and the like will be ready for the Policy Board meeting next week. The first transit roundtable was canceled due to low attendance availability, but Kim is in the process of rescheduling. The Musk Ox Farm will be rented for the next 6 months and MVP is in negotiations with RESPEC for office space to sublet. Membership checks are coming in, and the bank account will be opened next month. The MTP contract is in the works and tightening up presentation for peer review. The executive session will occur during the Policy Board meeting for Kim Sollien's position.

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

None

5. Action Items

None

6. Old Business

None

7. New Business

a. STIP Amendment #2 Update

Kim Sollien provided a staff report stating that STIP amendment 2 is not out yet. MVP is waiting. Hoping for a presentation to show what has changed.

Ben White: Heard they are doing a review of the draft. The commissioner is out of the country. The plan is to have it very soon. We likely won't have a lot of time before it goes out for public review.

Adam Bradway: We are reviewing projects to make sure that projects within the MVP boundary are designated as such, and other administrative updates. Clean up as much as we can before public review.

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b. **Transportation Alternatives Program Manual presentation – Julius Adolfsson, Alaska DOT&PF**

Julius Adolfsson and Jason Biernat presented the Transportation Alternatives Program Manual.

Kim Sollien: Will the state allocate funds directly to MVP?

Julius Adolfsson: Yes.

Tom Adams: The Borough has benefited from awards. Is there any expectation of what those sub allocations would look like?

Julius Adolfsson: It will follow federal PL formulas and federal apportionment for that category.

Adam Bradway: The STIP right now has MVP receiving \$500,000-600,000 as TAP funding.

Tom Adams: This is a significant reduction.

Adam Bradway: That's in perpetuity. You can still apply for funds outside the boundary.

Tom Adams: Inside the boundary, the only project that could be nominated would have to go through MVP. Is that correct?

Julius Adolfsson: Through the federal guidelines – you can still nominate projects, but funding would be unlikely for funding outside the boundary.

Jason Biernat: There is a choice between the competitive process with the state and the sub-allocation that delineates the way projects are selected and funded.

Tom Adams: This seems like a significant setback for those areas outside the boundary. If MSB chooses to do a competitive project within the MPO boundary, they might get dinged because it's in the boundary.

Donna Gardino: Nothing in federal regulations to prevent DOT&PF from allowing them to grant projects within an MPO boundary TAP funds within that boundary. Did I hear money itself will be transferred to MPO, and then the MPO will manage those funds?

Jason Biernat: Correct

Donna Gardino: The process will have to follow Title 23 in the development of the projects. The MPO will manage the funds and then they'll basically be reimbursing DOT for the work they're doing to develop the projects – that adds another new process, that for 500k, you're just complicating things. We have an established process already with non-TAP projects, then you're going to have the MPO ED have to reimburse seems unnecessary. It doesn't seem like an efficient way to manage those funds. To Tom Adam's concern – TAPS can be used as supplemental funding alongside other funds.

Adam Bradway: We need to clarify whether MVP is receiving or programming the funding. If we're transferring money back and forth, that's a huge administrative task, but if MVP is just programming where the money is going to, it's not a new process, it's just adding funding to existing programming duties.

Donna Gardino: We'd have to program this funding in our TIP.

Adam Bradway: FAST planning was programming the TAP funding, but they weren't supposed to be doing that without a local control plan.

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Julius Adolfsson: Taking a step back – BIL states allocate funds to small-urban MPOs. Alaska DOT&PF are able to suballocate funds to the MPOs to program into their TIPs. However, to suballocate, DOT&PF needs to see the local control plan. We've talked with FAST and MVP to figure out what they'd prefer.

Tom Adams: There's a lot of confusion about what's going to happen. During this standup period for MVP, what is our eligibility during the transition time when we don't have the sub-allocation going yet? How is that considered? Is there is plan for the future for the CTP presentation?

Julius Adolfsson: We would approach it like our last cycle, because I believe you already got the nomination. I don't know where we stand on CTP. As far as I know, we don't have a selected timeline for CTP, and I have not been as involved in that process.

Adam Bradway: Ben and I can put together a presentation.

Stuart Leidner: As the person who is on this committee, it will be good to build capacity so we have a voice in it, and we can vet the projects. Have a particular interest in Bogard and how that will play into getting kids to school.

Donna Gardino: For Toms concerns, for the interim, we asked DOT to bank the funds for TAP, CMAQ, STPG, congestion, until we have an MTP and a TIP. When we have MTP and TIP, we have FY 24, 25, and 26 funds to program into the new TIP for FY27. We know the funds are good for the year they are allocated and the following 3 years. If that occurred, they would be as eligible for August redistribution. That is what the MPO has already requested for the interim years.

Julius Adolfsson: If there is any documentation that we could use, please share.

Adam Bradway: The conversation about the local control plan came up after the programming of projects, we will have to talk to Julius.

Donna Gardino: If we don't have a local control plan in place, we don't have a suballocation and don't have control over FY 24 and 25?

Adam Bradway: That's correct.

Donna Gardino: The DOT&PF will decide how they'll be used, and to be fair, DOT&PF will likely put funding towards projects that we indicated we wanted them to be used on, including TAP.

Julius Adolfsson: I will work with the federal aid office, if we have project solicitations prior to the Local Control Plan and Tip are developed, you'll still be eligible for the funds, but DOT&PF will be running the call for the projects with their project collection criteria. But you'd still be eligible for the funds.

Donna Gardino: If we aren't eligible for supplication, then the borough and cities should be eligible to submit projects while the MPO is getting its plans together.

Jason Adolfsson: (Posted figure in the chat – suballocation chart) Until the plan is in place, the state program is the default. FHWA has a local control section that has more details on this.

Tom Adams: The borough was awarded two projects (PF Pathway and Outer Springer Pathway). How does this conversation affect funding the future? Will we get our suballocation dollars now?

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Adam Bradway: Until MVP has a local control plan that funding is available for DOT&PF to use on those projects. Alaska DOT&PF might be spending MVP funds until that plan is available.

Tom Adams: Should MSB be focused on taking money out of different buckets?

Donna Gardino: That is a part of a larger conversation called the 'grandfather agreement.' When we become an MPO with a TIP and an MTP, we have to negotiate with the state on how they're going to treat all your (MSB) projects, that are still in the process of design and construction. Those were funds that were dedicated to your projects, before you were an MPO, so those will have to be negotiated at the time MVP has an MTP and TIP. This was done in Fairbanks, and the state honored paying for the increases in the costs of projects. We have to address each project that is currently in the STIP, because it will eventually go into the TIP. We need to discuss what's coming from new suballocations vs what is going to come from the CTP funding that was promised before we were an MPO.

Donna: The approach to developing the criteria is good. In the past, it has been problematic for all projects to score well. Eligible projects didn't fit well with the project type. To be able to tailor the criteria to the type of project is critical to put the projects on an even playing field.

Julius Adolfsson: Current criteria is clearly aimed at infrastructure projects; the eligibility could be tailored to other eligibility such as safe routes to school.

8. Other Issues

Kim Sollien will email the Conflict-of-Interest Policy out to others not present in the meeting.

9. Informational Items

- a. **MPO Peer Review January 28th-30th, 2025, Location: Hilton Garden Inn, 4555 Union Square Dr, Anchorage, AK 99503**

Kim Sollien: The agenda is in your packet.

Tom Adams: Is Day 3 questions and answers?

Adam Bradway: It will be a summation and will have the most collaborative conversations.

- b. **Mat-Su Transportation Fair January 30th, 2025 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM Location: Alaska State Fairgrounds, Raven Hall, 12878 E Rebarchek Ave, Palmer**

MVP has a table.

- c. **Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) – MVP and MSB**

Alex Strawn: MSB took the MOA and worked it through Finance and Legal. Sent it back to Kim who currently has it.

Kim Sollien: MVP has to have a special grant agreement to access the 1 million dollars that the state legislature gave to MVP. Until we get the agreement together, we cannot get those funds. The Policy Board has asked MVP to get an attorney – they are working on that.

- d. **MSB Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) [20241219-MSB-CSAP-Public-Review-Draft.pdf](#)**

Tom Adams: For Safe streets grants, the CSAP is in draft form. January 19th is the cut-off. There are recommended projects. Cities and the state are encouraged to review. It sets MSB up for future SS4A funding.

- e. **Transit Roundtable Update**

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Kim Sollien provided a staff report. The meeting was canceled; rescheduling is in progress. An update will be provided next month.

f. **Membership Fee Update**

Kim Sollien provided a staff report. Checks are coming in, setting up the bank account next week.

g. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update**

Adam Bradway: Negotiations in progress.

Alex Strawn: Any update on the Travel Demand Model?

Adam Bradway: This is a separate study; at this point the data is updated and the team is doing a run to get the products out. 2045 is the projected year and the level of service calculated. The model run is running right now. The State of Alaska is negotiating a statewide travel demand model that MPOs will be able to pull data from.

Alex Strawn: Is it just for MPA or is it larger?

Adam Bradway: It's statewide, so Alaska DOT&PF can go in and request the modelling for anywhere in the state. The TDM for MVP goes up to Willow, down to the Port, and out to Chickaloon.

Tom Adams: Can you project future growth, and manipulate corridors to what things will look like?

Adam Bradway: Nobody at Alaska DOT&PF has TransCAD to do a model run.

Tom Adams: MSB is interested in taking advantage of that data.

Kim Sollien: Can the R&M project help Tom?

Adam Bradway: The contract with R&M does not have much flexibility. The term contract should be up quickly. MSB could use the product to run scenarios.

10. **Technical Committee Comments**

Brian Winestaffer: Chickaloon partnered with Alaska DOT&PF and AML and wrote a grant, ATIP, planning to work closely with DOT and hire a contractor to look at a separated pathway to Eureka.

Clint Adler: Encourage everyone to look at the model in Julius's presentation.

Dan Tucker: Sorry I was late!

Tom Adams: Forgive me if I took up too much time trying to navigate how this funding is going to work. More conversations will need to be had in the future.

Alex Strawn: Appreciate these questions being asked.

11. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:39 pm.

Next Scheduled MPO Technical Committee Meeting – Tuesday, February 11 from 2:00-4:00pm to be held at the Musk Ox Farm and Microsoft TEAMS.