

MVP for Transportation MPO Policy Board Meeting

Representatives:

Bob Charles – Knik Tribe (**Secretary**)
Edna DeVries, Mayor - MSB
Glenda Ledford, Mayor – City of Wasilla (**Chair**)
Brian Winnestaffer - Chickaloon Native Village
Mike Brown - MSB
Sean Holland - DOT&PF (**Treasurer**)
Steve Carrington, Mayor – City of Palmer (**Vice Chair**)



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Phone Conference ID: 447 328 062#

Minutes

Wednesday, June 25th, 2025

1:30-3:00pm

Meeting Location

Alaska DOT&PF Mat Su District Office at 500 S Seward Meridian Pkwy, Wasilla, Alaska

There is limited parking at the building's main entrance; an overflow parking lot is adjacent to the south.

1. Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:31pm.

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Bob Charles – Knik Tribe (Secretary)
Edna DeVries, Mayor - MSB
Glenda Ledford, Mayor – City of Wasilla (Chair)
Brian Winnestaffer - Chickaloon Native Village
Mike Brown - MSB
Sean Holland - DOT&PF (Treasurer)
Kolby Zerkel - Palmer City Manager, Proxy for Steve Carrington, Mayor – City of Palmer (Vice Chair)

Members Absent:

Steve Carrington, Mayor – City of Palmer (Vice Chair)

Present Visitors:

Kim Sollien - MVP Executive Director
Andy Mills – AK DOT&PF
Anjie Goulding - MVP
Elise Blocker – RESPEC
Lauren Little - AK DOT&PF
Megan Flory - RESPEC
Adam Bradway - AK DOT&PF
Kaylan Wade - Chickaloon Native Village

3. Consent Agenda (Action Item)

a. Approval of the June 25th, 2025, Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda (Charles), seconded. No edits. Approved unanimously.

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b. Approval of the May 28th, 2025, Minutes

Motion to approve the consent agenda (DeVries), seconded. No edits. Approved unanimously.

4. Committee/Working Group Reports

i. Staff Report

- **Schedule of Topics**
- **MVP Financial Report**

Kim Sollien provided a staff report. Kim reports it is a very busy time and that things are going well. MVP is working with RESPEC and working on the public participation plan. Anjie Goulding met with a web designer about making our website more user friendly and more interactive to support all our upcoming public outreach. Kim and Anjie attended multiple meetings this past month: Safe Routes to School, DOT&PF & Tribal Government Coordination Meeting talking about fish passage needs with DOT&PF and the tribes, Fairbanks twice to meet with Donna and FAST. Kim and Anjie signed up for the AMPO Conference in Rhode Island in September.

Getting commercial insurance for MVP continues to be a challenge. All paperwork is submitted to the fourth provider that we have worked with. This is Combs, and I am waiting to hear back from them.

Kim Sollien called attention to the look ahead at the back of her staff report to flag what is coming up for MVP in the following months,

Sunshine Transit is trying to figure out how to cover the gap between the rural Upper Susitna area and the urban area for residents of Big Lake, Meadow Lakes and the surrounding area. We might be able to use our planning money to help cover the funding needed to cover this gap. More to come.

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

None.

6. Action Items

a. FFY2025 MVP Improvement Program Project List Approval (Action Items)

Recommended Motion: Motion to approve the FFY2025 MVP Improvement Program Project List. (Action Item)

Motion to approve the FFY2025 MVP Improvement Program Project List, (DeVries), seconded. Passed unanimously.

Kim Sollien: Since we do not have a TIP, we created a Program of Projects to program our funding. Within the Program of Projects, we set aside one million dollars for our improvement program. The improvement program is meant to be smaller projects that don't take a lot of design. We reached out to borough and cities for projects. We reviewed the submissions to make sure they fit the program's needs. We are recommending you approve the list of 14 projects to move forward for design. The list is not prioritized but will be prioritized when we move the projects to the construction phase.

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Adam Bradway: Keep in mind that the expectation from the Feds is, if we move these all forward, they expect us to build these. If we don't end up building them, we will end up needing to pay the feds back. The match for design has been paid for by the state for design, the expectation is the local areas would pay the match when we get to the construction stage.

Edna DeVries: Were all nominated projects moved forward?

Kim Sollien: No, there were a few from the borough that were determined to be bigger than what fit for this program.

- b. **Letter Requesting the Governor's Roads and Highways Board be extended and formalized in State Statute. Recommended Motion: Motion to approve sending a letter to the Governor's office (Action Item)**

Motion to approve sending a letter to the Governor's office against sunset of the board, (Brown), seconded. Vote: Yes: 1; No: 5, Abstain: 1. Motion Fails.

Brown: I would like the letter to be written requesting the Governor let the board sunset. I don't feel that the board supports local choice. I would recommend we let it sunset, as it doesn't feel like it aligns with what we are doing.

DeVries: I checked to see who is on this board, there is a person Colby on it that is from the Wasilla area, they are not involved with our MPO at all. I would like to agree with Mike Brown and write a letter requesting we let it sunset.

Motion to approve sending a letter to the Governor's office in support of the sunset of the board, (Brown), seconded. Vote: Yes: 5; No: 0, Abstain: 2. Motion passes.

- c. **Letter of Support to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Assembly in Support of applying for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding to manage Transit Services in the Urban Area. Recommended Motion: Motion to approve sending a letter of support to the MSB Assembly in support of their grant application to FTA and to manage Transit Services in the Urban Area. (Action Item)**

Motion to approve sending a letter of support to the MSB Assembly in support of their grant application to FTA and to manage Transit Services in the Urban Area (Charles), seconded. Approved unanimously.

7. Old Business

- a. **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Amendment #2 Update**

Lauren Little: We are shooting for July 15th as our approval date. Given timelines, there will not be another opportunity to look at this. But with moving to the rolling STIP, it will really show FY26 and FY27 and we can look at that when it is up.

- b. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update**

Kim Sollien: No other update besides what is in her staff report. Will share more at our next meeting.

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8. New Business

None.

9. Other Issues

- a. Thank you to our amazing consulting team, led by Donna Gardino of Gardino Consulting and Elise Blocker with RESPEC Engineering, for all their mentorship and support over the past five years as we worked to establish MVP.

Edna DeVries and Glenda Ledford echoed thanks to Donna and Elise.

10. Other Issues

None

11. Informational Items

a. MPO Quarterly meeting overview, including PL Distribution amounts for FFY26

Kim Sollien: Met with the other MPOs and got our fiscal planning funds. We are about \$10K short. We don't have to update our UPWP because we are under the \$35K that would require a formal change.

b. Transit Update

Kim Sollien: Gave this update in her staff report. Unless DeVries or the Borough has updates on this, I have nothing more.

Mike Brown: No update at this time. Working with Valley Transit to figure out a service set, with the allocated funding.

c. Safe Routes to School workshop review

Kim Sollien: No update besides what was given in her staff report. Thankful for making connections with the SRTS team. I hope to do some walks/bikes to school at the schools in our boundary area, so we can start to look at these things. Staff are brainstorming fun ways to get the board involved in these too! Stay tuned.

d. Article – The Valley's New MVP, Mat-Su Borough gets its own Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Kim Sollien: Brian, Adam and I were interviewed for this article. They did a good job talking about what an MPO is, the partnerships, and purpose. I just wanted you to have that, it's a good read.

e. Article - Dunleavy vetoes could delay \$600 million in federal highway funds.

Lauren Little: We do expect to keep FY25 year on track. There are potential impacts to Federal FY26 and FY27 if the match is not addressed when they reconvene in January. There will be some changes to FY26&27 to address the match because of fiscal restraint. This is what is causing delays to the STIP document. The STIP is with Federal Highways to make sure we have everything we need. We are working towards July 15th for STIP amendment 2 amendment.

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Kim Sollien: Why was the match vetoed? What is the ripple effect timeline with updating the STIP?

Lauren Little: Fundamentally, it's generally this match money is clean money with no constraints. Shortly after the legislature started, they had tough decisions to make. They attempted to reappropriate money, but the reappropriated money had already been spent by DOT&PF and it raised problems. Unrestricted funds that were typically used have been moved to other priorities, etc. We do expect to have a rolling STIP soon. We will implement a new STIP that will cover FY26 through FY28. We are actively working to show a full state match and showing state match being restored. We understand the concerns with the length of time it's been to see STIP amendment 2, but this is unique and not project related. OMB has a great report about the vetoes, goes by line items if you want to listen to that.

Donna Gardino: Did the funds go to ferry access in Juneau?

Andy Mills: Reappropriating funds has been an issue. I would recommend watching the May 1st Senate Transportation Committee meeting, at around 2PM, to hear the portion that covers this, and where funds were reapportioned.

f. MVP Match Letter from Ryan Anderson, Commissioner of DOT&PF

Kim Sollien: This was reviewed by Lauren Little above.

12. Policy Board Comments

Mike Brown: Can we get Technical Committee Board actions on their motions in our board packet, so that we can see what they chose in their action items.

Bob Charles: I just wanted to share some interesting and exciting news for the tribes. Authority and eligibility as a tribe for financing federal funding for MPO partners projects in the valley, DOT&PF took that to heart, and we have been working with them quarterly and have a funding plan for DOT&PF projects. More recently, the tribe has entered into an intergovernmental agreement with DOT&PF and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Interior with the tribe, in regard to the Western Susitna Access road project and are using the Tribal authority to support the project with the DOT&PF and the Knik tribe. Part of that agreement is conducting pre-construction activities beginning in the summer related to environmental work, cultural resource surveys and other pre-construction project related planning work. We're actively moving forward with DOT&PF on this project, and I would like to inform the policy board and the MPO that the MPA for MVP is almost entirely contained within the tribes' Alaska Native Village boundary that's defined by the US Census Bureau. I think in the future we'll be looking to partner with the MPO and enact the same federal funding partnerships for MPO projects.

Brian Winnestaffer: On Father's Day, I biked to Palmer from the Moose Creek Area with my kids (15, 13 and 8) to go get ice cream. We biked along the shoulder of the Glenn, my littlest got scared when a car went by and went into the dirt, crashed and ended up in the ER costing me around \$14K. Please keep fighting for a separated pathway along the highway for biking.

Sean Holland: Thanked Andy Mills and Lauren Little for the match explanation and their support.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:28pm.

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Next Scheduled MPO Policy Board Meeting – **July 23rd**, from 1:30 pm to 3:00 p.m. to be held via Microsoft TEAMS and at the Alaska DOT&PF MatSu District Office at 500 S Seward Meridian Pkwy, Wasilla, Alaska