

KYLE HANLON, Chair
SHEILA IRVIN, Vice-Chair
MARIE RAFTERY, Clerk
CHARLES P. OGDEN, Treasurer

NATHANIEL W. KARNS, A.I.C.P.
Executive Director

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, May 3, 2018
At the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Office
1 Fenn Street, Suite 201, Pittsfield, MA 01201

I. Call to Order

A. The meeting is called to order at: 4:00 p.m.

Chair Kyle Hanlon started the meeting by reading a statement regarding the open meeting law. BRPC records all meetings. Others may record the meeting after informing the chair. Any documents presented must be left with the chair of the meeting.

B. Roll Call:

Kyle Hanlon, Chair
Sheila Irvin, Vice-Chair
Marie Raftery, Clerk
Chuck Ogden, Treasurer
James Mullen, Regional Issues Committee Chair
CJ Hoss, Commission Development Committee Chair
Roger Bolton, Environmental Review Committee Chair
John Duval, At-Large
Sam Haupt, At-Large

A quorum is present.

Others Present: None

Staff Present: Nat Karns, Executive Director
Thomas Matuszko, Assistant Director
Marianne Snizek, Office Manager

II. Approval of Minutes

A. Executive Committee Meeting of April 5, 2018

Jamie Mullen moved to approve; seconded by Sheila Irvin. Unanimously approved with three abstentions.

III. Financial Reports

A. Expenditure Report

Everyone reviewed the completed expenditure list for April

Chuck Ogden moved to approve the April Expenditures as presented; seconded by Roger Bolton. Unanimously approved

B. Accounts Receivable Report

Staff is continuing to follow up on aged receivables over 90 days. None of the aged receivables are at risk.

C. Other – None

IV. Delegate and Alternate Issues - None

V. Items Requiring Action

A. Approval to Potentially Submit Grant Application(s) to the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs for Planning Assistance Grants

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit one or more Planning Assistance grant applications to the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements. No BRPC match is required. EOEEA announced the opening of this year's grant round. Staff lead on this project is Assistant Director Tom Matuszko.

The application is due May 11th.

We are currently working on possible applications for the following:

- North Adams – Zoning Bylaw
- Adams – Rewrite Stormwater Bylaws to be compliant with the Federal Permitting Requirements
- Pipeline – Roads and Noise Bylaws

Jamie Mullen moved to approve the Executive Director to submit a grant application for one or more Planning Assistance grant applications to the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs and to sign any resulting contracts on behalf of the Commission; seconded by Chuck Ogden. Unanimously approved.

B. Approval to Submit Grant Application to AARP Community Challenge Grant Program

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the AARP Community Challenge Planning Grant Program and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements. No BRPC match is required. These Challenge Grants are small "quick-action" grants to make communities livable for people of all ages to improve housing, transportation, public spaces and other community elements that support a more livable community. BRPC proposes to purchase ADA compliant seating, chess tables and outdoor exercise equipment for adults to place in parks close to the center of up to three municipalities in Berkshire County. These amenities are expected to increase use of parks in these municipalities by all ages. Staff lead on this project will be Public Health Program Manager Laura Kittross.

Per Marianne, the grant is less than \$10,000. Tom explained this grant is related to Age Friendly.

Jamie Mullen moved to approve the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the AARP Community Challenge Planning Grant Program and to sign any resulting contracts on behalf of the Commission; seconded by Chuck Ogden. Unanimously approved.

C. Approval to Submit Grant Application to the EPA Healthy Communities Grant Program

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit a

grant application to the EPA Healthy Communities Grant Program and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements. BRPC's Healthy Communities, Healthy Homes, Healthy Families project will help address indoor environmental hazards within Berkshire County homes that pose public health risks to sensitive populations by offering education through professionals that are already in the home such as personal care / health care attendants, health inspectors, etc. Residential health hazards such as mold and dampness, other asthma and allergy triggers, injury hazards, pests, and other causes of poor indoor air quality will be targeted. There is a 5% match requirement which will be met through existing Berkshire County Public Health Alliance resources. Staff lead on this project will be Public Health Program Manager Laura Kittross.

Marianne reported the grant is approximately \$25,000. Tom explained this is a resubmission of last years application.

Jamie Mullen moved to approve the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the EPA Healthy Communities Grant Program and to sign any resulting contracts sign any resulting contracts on behalf of the Commission; seconded by Chuck Ogden. Unanimously approved.

D. Approval to Modifications to Personnel Pay Plan

The Executive Committee was requested to approve two modifications to the Personnel Pay Plan. The change to the plan would be to create two levels of Office Assistant: an Office Assistant I and Office Assistant II. The distinction between the two levels is to recognize additional experience and ability to make non-routine decisions with or without significant supervision. This will add to our ability to retain or attract well-qualified individuals. Because we operate with a low ratio of administrative staff to planning staff, the ability of the three administrative staff to take responsibility for their work and to work with a minimum of supervision is important to us. The salary levels set are based on the 2017 Compensation Survey for comparable positions conducted by the Employers Association of New England for western Massachusetts.

The second change requested was to establish an hourly, off-site position of Project Specialist. This will change would allow part-time work on very specific projects or topics with the pay level to be determined based on qualifications and the nature of the exact work entailed.

Nat explained we would like to have two Office Assistant positions to give BRPC the ability to hire based on qualifications and our needs. When Nat started there were two administrative staff supporting five planning staff, as we have grown we have three administrative staff supporting a much larger planning staff.

Tom explained upon Nat's retirement BRPC would like the ability to have Nat work on a short time basis on a couple specific needs. One would be the Rest of River Clean-up. The Public Health program as well may have a need for assistance.

Jamie Mullen moved to approve the modification to the Personnel Pay Plan to create two levels of Office Assistant and establish and hourly off-site position of Project Specialist; seconded by Chuck Ogden. Unanimously approved.

E. Approval of Comments on H.4290: An Act to Promote Housing Choices

The Executive Committee was requested to approve submittal of a letter on the Housing Choice legislation introduced by the Governor earlier this year. The Regional Issues Committee reviewed the legislation and feels that it is appropriate to support it, with a few comments. Due to the expected time constraints to comment on the legislation, they did not want to wait to see actual proposed language and requested this immediately be drafted on put on the Executive Committee's next meeting agenda.

Jamie reported, Chris Kluchman, Housing Choice Program Director presented at their March meeting and at its April meeting the committee reviewed the Housing Choice legislation and support it, with a few suggested comments to be sent in the attached comment letter.

Marie Raftery moved to approve the Executive Director to submit a comment letter on An Act to Promote Housing Choices – H4290 as written on behalf of the Commission; seconded by Chuck Ogden. Unanimously approved.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Finance – Kyle thanked Chuck for his 15 years of service. Chuck reported the Finance Committee has approved the recommendation of the FY2019 Budget to be presented for the Commission’s approval on May 17, 2018. Chuck also reported we have about 1/3 of the \$1.4 million-dollar Retirees Health Benefits Liability in a trust fund.

B. Nominating Committee
CJ reported the committee felt with Nat’s retirement and Tom taking over as the Executive Director for FY 2019 they wanted to keep the Officers the same and find a replacement for the Treasurer due to Chuck leaving at the end of June. Next year the Committee would look at attendance for new members for FY 2020.

CJ reported the following recommendation for Officers for FY2019 to be presented to the Commission on May 17th.

Chair, Kyle Hanlon
Vice-Chair, Sheila Irvin
Clerk, Marie Raftery
Treasurer, John Duval

The next meeting will be scheduled before the Commission meeting on May 17, 2018.

C. Regional Issues Committee
Jamie reported the next meeting will be Wednesday May 16th. The committee will discuss comments for a letter on the Housing Choice Program to be sent to the Governor and the Secretary of Housing. The letter would address the program and make long term suggestions to address Berkshire County and Cape Cod’s needs.

Nat explained the program does not deal with our three largest communities needs and second home owner communities. Grant preferences in the program is an issue. One example is Pittsfield does not have a need for new housing, why should Pittsfield be penalized on grant applications under this new program.

D. Other - None

VII. Executive Director’s Report

A. Report on New Contracts/Agreements

Attached is a list of new contracts and agreements entered since the April 5th Executive Committee meeting.

B. MassDOT Capital Investment Plan 2019-2023 Public Meetings & Comment Period

Attached is the Capital Investment Plan Public Meeting Schedule, with the Berkshire public

meeting to be held at BRPC's office on Tuesday, May 22 at 5:30 p.m. This is the annual update of the plan adopted last year and public comments are invited. A copy of MassDOT's presentation will be available at www.mass.gov/massdot/cip and public comments may be submitted by email to masscip@state.ma.us. For further information contact Transportation Program Manager Clete Kus at ckus@berkshireplanning.org or 442-1521, ext. 20.

C. Status of DLTA, Community Compact, and Efficiency & Regionalization Funding for FY 2019 State Budget Process

The House has passed its version of the FY 2019 state budget with DLTA funding called for of \$2.8 million (level funding). However, the overall funding for this line item (1599-0026) is only \$4,845,000 which includes the Community Compact and Efficiency & Regionalization programs, as well as a number of specific earmarks. The Governor had supported the line item at \$10.2M in his H.2 proposal and the FY18 budget included \$11.45M. No dedicated funding was included for Community Compact and Efficiency and Regional Government. Based on the amendment as passed, there would be only \$600,000 for Community Compact and ERG to share. Given that this line item in the past has received stronger support in the House than the Senate, this is worrisome.

The Senate will be taking up the budget in the next couple of weeks. Nat urge all to quickly contact Senator Hinds, Senate Ways & Means Chair Senator Karen Spilka, and Senate President Harriet Chandler to voice your support for the Senate to fully fund this line item, at least to the level requested by the Governor and, even better, to level-fund it from last year at \$11.45 million. If the House language and amounts remain, we are concerned that the Governor will veto the entire line item as he considers the final budget presented to him. If this happens, the ability of BRPC to provide assistance directly to our municipalities will be drastically reduced. For further information, contact Executive Director Nat Karns at nkarns@berkshireplanning.org or 442-1521, ext. 26.

Nat will send out an email to Committee members with information to allow members to send letters to support all three programs, District Local Technical Assistance, Community Compact and Efficiency & Regionalization. All three programs have had meaningful results for the communities and all should be kept in the budget together.

D. Request for Applications for Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs FY 2019 Planning Assistance Grants – responses due May 11, 2018

Attached is the grant announcement for this year's round of EOEEA Planning Assistance Grants. These are intended to support municipalities and regional planning agencies in their efforts to plan, regulate, and act to conserve and develop land consistent with the Massachusetts' Sustainable Development Principles. There will be a bidders conference on Tuesday, May 1 at 3 p.m. in Conference Room B42 at 436 Dwight Street in Springfield. For further information or assistance, contact Assistant Director Tom Matuszko at tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org or 442-1521, ext. 34.

E. Request for Information from MassDEP for Input on How the Commonwealth Might Expend the \$75 Million VW Court Settlement

Attached is an announcement from DEP requesting information intended to provide input on how the Commonwealth might expend the \$75 million allocation it has received from the court settlement with Volkswagen (VW) and its subsidiaries. We are working to better understand the parameters of what is being requested but it appears that it can provide an opportunity for the BRTA and our municipalities to replace older vehicles and equipment, particularly those that are diesel powered, and especially if there is a benefit to Environmental Justice communities or populations (lower income, minority, elderly, or disabled). The MPO voted at its meeting on Tuesday, April 24th, that BRPC proceed to

provide comments and seek opportunities within this program to benefit public transportation in Berkshire County. We plan on responding with information about needs in the region that fit DEP's parameters by the deadline for responses of Friday, May 18th. For further information, contact Senior Planner Lauren Gaherty at lgaherty@berkshireplanning.org or 442-1521, ext. 35 or Transportation Program Manager Clete Kus at ckus@berkshireplanning.org or at ext. 20.

Nat explained the money is for statewide allocation. At this time, there is only a request for information. BRPC contacted Pittsfield, Adams and North Adams for the information gathering stage from Departments of Public Works. The thought is to replace old diesel trucks with newer electric powered vehicles or replace equipment at Airports.

During the discussion the idea of electric charging stations would be good for municipalities.

F. Approval by EPA of Town of Adams Application for Brownfields Clean-up Funding for Hoosac Coal and Grain Site

We are pleased that Adams has been awarded funding from EPA to clean-up the contaminated Hoosac Coal and Grain site. For those of you familiar with Adams, this site contains an iconic wooden grain elevator and related buildings on the east side of Rte. 8 north of downtown Adams. The site abuts both the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail and the train track used by Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum's scenic train. The Town plans to preserve the grain elevator and create another pocket park on the site for the use of both residents and users of the rail trail. Environment and Energy Program Manager Melissa Provencher provided assistance to the Town in developing the successful grant application. For further information on BRPC's very active brownfields program, contact Melissa at mprovencher@berkshireplanning.org or 442-1521, ext. 22.

VIII. Old Business

G. Agenda Items for May 17th Commission Meeting

- **Approval of Appointment of Thomas Matuszko as BRPC Executive Director**
- **Approval of the FY 2019 budget**
- **Report of the Nominating Committee for BRPC Officers for FY 2019**
- **Appointment of Board Member to the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority**
- **Consideration of the FFY 2019-2023 Transportation Improvement Program**
- **Consideration of the FFY 2019 Transportation Unified Planning Work Program**
- **Presentation on new Socio-Economic Indicators and Updated School Enrollment Projections**
- **Consideration of Comments on the Massachusetts Housing Choice Program**

H. Executive Director Transition Planning – Nothing new to report on the transition. This is Nat's last Executive meeting.

I. Other - None

IX. New Business

X. Adjournment

Jamie Mullen moved to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Chuck Ogden. The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Materials distributed or presented during this meeting:

Agenda
Minutes
Check Registers
Aged Receivables
Executive Director's Memo
Technical Assistance Report
New Grants received
Proposed Modified Personnel Pay Plan for FY 2019
Draft Letter Supporting H.4290: An Act to Promote Housing Choices
H.4290 An Act to Promote Housing Choices
New Grants received 4/5/2018-5/3/2018
MassDOT Capital Investment Plan Public Meeting Schedule
EOEEA FY19 Planning Assistance Grants