

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

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

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, June 1, 2017
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: 4:16 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
Chuck Ogden, Treasurer
Rene Wood, Commission Development Committee Chair
John Duval, At Large
Roger Bolton, At Large

A quorum is present.

Others Present:

Sarah Hudson, Tyringham Alternate

Staff Present:

Nat Karns, Executive Director
Marianne Snizek, Office Manager
Bill Compton, Senior Planner

II. Approval of Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting of May 4, 2017

Rene Wood moved to approve with modifications; seconded by Chuck Ogden. Unanimously approved with two abstentions.

III. Financial Reports

A. May Expenditure Report

Everyone reviewed the completed expenditure list for May.

Roger suggested the code and name of the funding source be added to the Expenditure Report. We will see what we can provide at the next meeting.

Rene Wood moved to approve the May Expenditures as presented; seconded by Chuck Ogden. 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.

Nat explained North Adams will pay BRPC shortly. North Adams had to produce invoices to MassDOT after BRPC invoiced North Adams for the work. North Adams also had to submit some additional forms to get paid from MassDOT.

The CDBG invoices is a lengthy process to process claims in DHCD's system. Sheffield is not tardy on any of these invoices.

C. Other – None

IV. Delegate and Alternate Issues – None

V. Committee Reports

A. Regional Issues Committee – Nat explained there will be a meeting in mid-June to continue the review of the land use bills.

B. Other – None

VI. Items Requiring Action

A. Approval of Berkshire County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The Executive Committee was authorized to give final approval to the 2017 Berkshire County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy by the full Commission. There were some comments and corrections suggested at the May 18th Commission meeting. Attached are the changes made which are also now reflected in the full document.

Bill Compton explained the public comment period and the next steps in the process. The CEDS was posted in the Berkshire Eagle and on BRPC website for public comment. BRPC received one public comment request for a copy of the CEDS, comments and edits from a member of the CEDS committee, a comment from a Commission member from Lenox as well as comments made at the Commission meeting on May 4, 2017. The list of projects has been updated by deleting projects that are complete and adding the New England Log Home site. Bill also explained "Adaptive Reuse of Great Estates" has been added as a new category for large initiatives in the region. "Broadband for All" is another topic added to the CEDS document.

The next CEDS meeting will be next week to review all the comments and new categories.

The comments received, the proof of publication, proof of the announcement on BRPC website and BRPC's self-evaluation will be appendices to the CEDS. Also, the minutes from tonight's Executive Meeting will also be sent to Economic Development Administration (EDA).

All comments will also be inserted into the CEDS document as well.

John asked who is responsible to make sure the recommendations and ideas in the CEDS are implemented? The responsibility is the BRPC staff, the Executive Committee, the Commission and our Economic Development partners, for example, 1Bershire. Bill explained the CEDS is an ongoing five-year process and in the Annual Report investments in the county are tracked. The Commission approves the CEDS Annual Report.

This year each community will receive copies of the Annual CEDs Report. Another suggestion for improvement was raising awareness between communities and about other

regional activities are that are happening with other organizations. Nat explained this is Bill's responsibility to be a liaison.

A motion was asked for the approval of the CEDs.

Chuck Ogden moved to approve the Berkshire County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy with modifications on behalf of the Commission; seconded by Rene Wood. Unanimously approved.

B. Approval of Letter of Support for H.2932, An Act Establishing the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership

The Executive Committee is requested to approve a letter supporting H.2932, the state legislation needed to create the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership. A presentation was made at the January Commission meeting on the Partnership. The City of North Adams and all towns within the Partnership area in the county have been approving similar letters and it seems to be appropriate for the Commission to also be on record in support. A draft letter and a copy of the legislation, which is sponsored by Rep. Kulik and co-sponsored by Sen. Hinds and Reps. Cariddi and Mark, are attached. For further information, contact Assistant Director Tom Matuszko at 442-1521, ext. 34 or tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org.

Rene suggested a small modification and to copy Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) on the letter.

Chuck Ogden moved to approve the Executive Director to send the modified letter of support for H.2932, An Act Establishing the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership on behalf of the Commission; seconded by Rene Wood. Unanimously approved.

C. Approval to Submit Grant Application to Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources Affordable Access Regional Coordination Grant Program

The Executive Committee is requested to authorize the Executive Director to apply to DOER's new Affordable Access Regional Coordination Grant Program and to sign any resulting agreements or contracts. We are probably applying to DOER for this new program in order to build BRPC's capacity to serve as a resource to municipalities or other community-based organizations to increase energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities for low incoming housing in the county. This application will also provide training and education to local housing organizations and housing unit owners to promote access to affordable energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities, such as maximizing incentive and rebate programs and streamlining renewable projects such as community solar or third party solar PV. No match is required.

Nat explained this is a new grant program for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs that directly benefits the lower income population. In the past, the higher income population has received the benefits. No one knows how to deal with renters, landlords and a population that are struggling daily who cannot do simple improvements like installing insulation behind electrical outlets. The grant is available to Regional Planning Agencies and Council of Governments. The funding is approximately between \$500,000 to \$600,000. Nat believes the money is bond money. The grant is to figure out how to tackle the problem. Then BRPC would work with organizations to make the program work.

Rene Wood moved to approve the Executive Director to submit a grant application to DOER for the Affordable Access Regional Coordination Grant Program on behalf of the Commission; seconded by Chuck Ogden. Unanimously approved.

D. Other - None

VII. Executive Director's Report

A. Report on New Grants and Contracts

All three EPA Brownfields grant applications submitted in December were awarded funding for \$300,000 each:

- Regional Assessment
- Assessments in North Adams. BRPC will be the administrator.
- Assessments in Great Barrington. BRPC will be the administrator.

Also, Williamstown received funding for a clean-up grant for a project by Berkshire Housing Development Corp. We believe this is for the Photec Mill site for the affordable housing project. BRPC does not have anything role in this project.

B. Status of District Local Technical Assistance, Community Compact, and Efficiency and Regionalization Programs in State Budget

As always seems to be the case, the State Senate has not funded the line item for the DLTA program (1599-0026), which also contains funding for the Community Compact and the Efficiency and Regionalization programs. The Governor's and House's budgets fully funded these items at \$2.8 million, \$2.0 million, and \$2.0 million respectively. As soon as the Budget Conference Committee is named, we will send the Commission members and our communities a request to educate the Conference Committee members regarding the importance of these programs to your communities and the region.

Nat stated he would get information out on who to contact for letters and emails to support these programs. Once again DLTA funding is a bargaining chip. Senator Adams Hinds did sign on to these funds.

C. Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors Annual Meeting – June 15-16, Crowne Plaza, Pittsfield

D. 5th Thursday Dinner for Planning & Zoning Boards – Topic is Large Scale Solar - June 29th, Mazzeo's Ristorante, Pittsfield

E. New Planning Board Member Training – Nat instructed if anyone knows of new planning board members to please send them to Shannon at szaleski@berkshireplanning.org.

F. Other – EPA Rest of River

Nat explained next Thursday there was going to be a public hearing with the Environmental Appeals Board in Washington DC for verbal arguments. EPA has stated in a memo from E. Scott Pruitt, EPA Administrator, there will be a 90-day stay and they are in negotiations with interested parties whether an agreement can be made. We are not aware of any discussions locally or at the state level. The attorney representing the five municipalities opposed the delay before the 5 pm deadline. If the hearing had been held the EPA Administrator would not have had the authority to do this.

We do not know what the negotiation are about but know GE wants less dredging; a local landfill and GE wants to walk away from any future liability. We need to wait and see what happens then to see if there are any legal actions that can be taken.

The EPA Administrator also has removed anyone else from having any authority to make decisions regarding remedies on superfund sites of Fifty million dollars or more.

VIII. Old Business

A. Executive Director Replacement Status Report

Kyle reported this is in a holding pattern until school gets out.

B. Other - None

IX. New Business

A. Summer BRPC Meeting

We will need a Summer Commission meeting in July or early August to vote on officers for FY 2018. The Regional Issues Committee should have a draft letter regarding the land use reform legislation and given the legislative calendar, it would be better to act on these as soon as possible. We will determine if there are one or two other agenda items to include.

Schedule of Meetings

Nat asked about scheduling the Executive Committee and Commission meetings. After a discussion, it was decided the following meetings would be held at BRPC on the following days:

- June 29, 2017 Thursday at 4 pm if an Executive Committee meeting is needed.
- July 27, 2017 Thursday at 5:30 pm Commission Summer meeting
- September 28, 2017 Thursday at 7 pm Commission meeting

B. 2017 Kusik Award

It is not too soon to be considering possible recipients for the 2017 Charles Kusik Award. Nat informed all the form for nominations will be sent soon.

C. Airbnb - Legislative hearing at Lenox Town Hall

Nat discussed the Legislative hearing at Lenox Town Hall on Monday will be about taxing and regulating temporary lodging like Airbnb. Nat asked if BRPC should make an appearance?

Rene felt there was no position the Commission could take but thought BRPC should make an appearance and state the Commission has concerns on the issues of Airbnb but at this time we do not have a position. BRPC could provide comments in the future. BRPC could also thank representatives for coming.

Rene Wood moved to have Nat or Tom attend the Legislative Hearing on behalf of the Commission; seconded by Roger Bolton. Unanimously approved.

X. Adjournment

Chuck Ogden moved to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Kyle Hanlon. The meeting was adjourned at 5:32 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

2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Seeking Public Comment

Large Scale Solar Flyer

Modifications to draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy reflecting discussion at 5/18/2017 BRPC meeting

2017 Berkshire County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Draft Letter Supporting H.2932, An Act Establishing the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership

H.2932, An Act Establishing the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership (Rep. Kulik, Sponsor; Sen. Hinds, Reps. Cariddi and Mark, Co-Sponsors)

New Grants and Contracts received 5/4/2017 to 6/1/2017\

2017 MAPD Annual Conference, Pittsfield June 15 to 16

Additional CEDs comments