Minutes of the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Tuesday, March 26, 2019 4:00 PM
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) Office
1 Fenn St., Suite 201, Pittsfield, MA

MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

Bryan Pounds, Chair	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (Representing Secretary Pollack)
John Duval	North Towns Representative
Kyle Hanlon	BRPC Chair
Jim Huebner	Southeast Berkshire Towns Representative
Sheila Irvin	Chair of BRTA Advisory Board
Jim Lovejoy	Southwest Berkshire Towns Representative
David Turocy	City of Pittsfield (Representing Mayor Tyer)

Others Present:

Eammon Coughlin	BRPC
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1
Justin Gilmore	BRPC
Robert Malnati	BRTA Director
Thomas Matuszko	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Derek Krevat	MassDOT Planning
Clete Kus	BRPC
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1
Mike Nuvallie	City of North Adams, Special Projects Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Pounds called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 26, 2019 (ACTION ITEM)

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Huebner, seconded by Mr. Hanlon to approve the meeting minutes from the February 26, 2019 MPO meeting.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

4. DISCUSSION ON DRAFT PROJECT LISTING FOR THE 2020-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMET PRGORAM AND SELECTION OF PREFERRED FUNDING SCENARIO (ACTION ITEM)

Ms. Koirala directed MPO members to the first handout "Berkshire MPO FFY 2020-2024 TIP Project List." Ms. Koirala proceeded to outline the TIP project development list contents, mentioning that the handout includes project costs, the year the project is planned to be programmed, project design

status and project ranking. All the projects have been reviewed by PRC. Ms. Koirala stated that today the MPO would be reviewing the TIP project scenarios and decide on which scenario to approve.

Ms. Koirala proceeded by directing MPO members to the second handout "Berkshire MPO FFY 2020-2024 TIP Development Scenarios." Ms. Koirala explained that the first 3 years of the TIP, from 2020-2022, each have only one scenario to move forward with. In 2020, the Adams, Route 8 project will move forward. The cost for this project is expected to increase – an is now estimated at about $7.6 million.

Ms. Koirala continued by stating that in the second year of the TIP, in 2021, there are two projects currently identified (Hinsdale, Skyline Trial at $6 million and Pittsfield, Merrill Road at $1.8 million). In year 2022, two projects are currently identified (Egremont, Route23/41 at $3.1 million and Pittsfield, BMC Area Improvements at $5.4 million).

Ms. Koirala asked Mr. Pounds about how any remaining money apportioned to the MPO region not used to program projects may be utilized – using STBG funds for projects other than for highway projects. Mr. Pounds replied that some regions have chosen to implement bike rack programs, some have chosen to flex the money to their Regional Transit Authorities for capital improvements –

Ms. Koirala asked if remaining money could be used to fund transit operations.

Mr. Pounds replied that operational funding would have to come from CMAQ.

Ms. Koirala proceeded to review the different scenarios for the last two years of the TIP, year 2023 and 2024. Ms. Koirala mentioned that at the pervious TAC meeting, members recommended that the MPO consider adopting scenario number one.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Hanlon, seconded by Mr. Huebner to approve the TAC's recommendation for TIP Scenario number one (#1).

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Koirala proceeded to review regional targets, TIP projects from 2020 to 2024, and sources of funding.

5. UPDATE AND DICUSSION ON THE 2020 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Mr. Coughlin proceeded to update MPO members on the status of the development of the Regional Transportation Plan. Mr. Coughlin provided a handout to MPO members that included the draft vision statement, summary of the transportation needs survey findings, along with a summary of the major recommendations to date. Mr. Coughlin asked MPO members to review the handout's contents and get back to him with any questions or comments. Mr. Coughlin proceeded to review next steps for the Regional Transportation Plan development schedule, including having a draft plan, hopefully by the next time the MPO meets. BRPC will hold a public meeting at the end of April or early May to review the draft plan with the public, the MPO will adopt the plan in June, and then the plan will move forward for FHWA approval in the fall.

6. STATUS REPORT FROM MEMBER AGENCIES

Mr. Kus reviewed BRPC's monthly activity report.

Mr. Pounds updated MPO members on the Safe Routes to School Program that was launched in the fall and applications were in by January. MassDOT had fifty-five (55) applicants and fourteen (14) applicants were selected. One project in the Berkshires was selected, that one is located in North Adams. Mr. Pounds proceeded to explain that $15 million is set aside in the STIP, with $5 million allocated yearly for 2022, 2023, and 2024. Projects still have to go before PRC and will begin to be programmed in 2022.

Mr. Malnati gave a brief update on the meeting he attended that reviewed the draft plan for Regional Transit Authorities, titled "A Vision for the Future of Massachusetts' Regional Transit Authorities." The meeting, held in Amherst, MA was very well attended and the overall message at the meeting was that having an adequate funding level will help provide ridership stability for better planning purposes, and allow RTA's to think about implementing new services rather than thinking about which services to cut to balance the budget.

Mr. Frieri updated the MPO on District 1 Projects.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

8. NEXT MEETING DATE – APRIL 23, 2019

The next MPO meeting will be on April 23, 2019.

ACTION: Mr. Huebner motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hanlon. Mr. Pounds adjourned the meeting at 4:50 PM.

<u>Materials Distributed:</u>

- Meeting Agenda
- FFY 2020-2024 TIP Project List
- Berkshire MPO FFY 2020-2024 TIP Development Scenarios
- Berkshire Region Transportation Improvement Program – Yearly Projects and Funding Source
- FFY 2020-2024 TIP Schedule
- Berkshire MPO 03/26/2019 – MassDOT District One Project Update
- Berkshire MPO Work Activity Update