

**Minutes of the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

Tuesday, August 2, 2016 4:00 PM

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) Office

1 Fenn St., Suite 201, Pittsfield, MA

MPO Representatives/Alternates:

John Duval	North Berkshire Towns Representative
Kyle Hanlon	BRPC
Francisca Heming	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Tinlin)
Jim Huebner	Southeast Berkshire Towns Representative
Jim Lovejoy	Southwest Berkshire Towns Representative
David Mohler, Chair	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (Representing Secretary Pollack)
David Turocy	City of Pittsfield (Representing Mayor Tyer)
Laurel Scialabba	North-Central Berkshire Towns Representative
Sarah Vallieres	Berkshire Regional Transit Authority

Others Present:

Ryan Aylesworth	Town of Hinsdale
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1
Nat Karns	BRPC
Clete Kus	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Emily Lindsey	BRPC
Rene Senecal	Town of Hinsdale
Gabriel Sherman	MassDOT

**1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. Mohler 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 THE MINUTES FROM JUNE 28, 2016**

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Huebner, seconded by Mr. Lovejoy, to approve the meeting minutes for the June 28, 2016 meeting of the Berkshire MPO, as presented.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carries with one abstention (Hanlon).

**4. APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT #3 TO THE FY 2016-2019 TRANSPORTION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND AUTHORIZE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE CERTIFICATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE MPO MEMBERS**

Ms. Koirala described Amendment #3 to the FY 2016-2019 TIP to (1) increase project costs for Lanesborough bridge replacement, Narragansett Ave. over Pontoosuc Lake (#603778) to \$7,016,688 which is the total project cost, (2) add \$1,530,000 in CMAQ and HSIP funding for Center St. and W. Housatonic St. intersection improvement (#607900), and (3) add \$476,685 is Section 5310 transit funding for fleet management, operating costs, travel training, and purchase of 7 vans. Ms. Koirala noted BRPC staff had received no comments.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Huebner, seconded by Mr. Lovejoy, to approve Amendment #3 to the FY 2016-2019 TIP as presented.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carries unanimously.

**5. APPROVE THE FFY 2017 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE CERTIFICATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE MPO MEMBERS**

Mr. Kus handed out copies of the draft FFY 2017 UPWP and described the outreach that had occurred during the prior 30-day comment period. Mr. Kus described notice in the *Berkshire Eagle*, on the BRPC agency website homepage, in the BRPC newsletter *Common Ground*, and distribution via e-mail which includes several stakeholder groups (incl. EJ/Title VI outreach group). Mr. Kus highlighted the comments received from MassDOT which included minor corrections and editorial comments.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Huebner, seconded by Mr. Lovejoy, to approve the FFY 2017 UPWP as presented.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carries unanimously.

**6. APPROVE THE FFY 2017-2021 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AND AUTHROIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE CERTIFICATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE MPO MEMBERS**

Ms. Koirala provided the committee with three handouts and walked through each one. She first described the FFY 2017-2021 highway and bridge projects by year, then she reviewed the FFY 2017-2021 transit projects by year. The last handout included all comments received during the public comment period, which included similar outreach to the draft FFY 2017 UPWP.

Comments were received from: FHWA, MassDOT OTP, MassDOT District 1, and the Town of Hinsdale. Ms. Koirala provided the MPO with a brief overview of the comments and how they were addressed. She clarified that project costs now match the numbers reported by MassDOT on their project website, the former TAP is now rolled into STP, and the GHG analysis is now complete.

Several representatives of the Town of Hinsdale were present to comment following their formal comment submitted to the MPO. Ms. Scialabba expressed gratitude that Hinsdale's Skyline Trail project was in the TIP, but stressed the importance and timeliness of this project and inquired if there were any ways to expedite the project. Mr. Huebner asked BRPC staff if this had been looked into, and Ms. Koirala noted the comment had only been received days ago. Mr. Kus explained that the comment went to MassDOT first, and then later to BRPC. Mr. Frieri said MassDOT District 1 had received a letter from Congressman Neal, and noted MassDOT will work based on whatever the recommendation of the MPO is.

Mr. Karns said the project was at 0% today and it still needs to go through the design process at MassDOT, and action will be based on MPO decision, but to accommodate this request would require other projects to drop out of their slot. Mr. Karns recommended the Town stay involved in the TIP process, which occurs every year, and to stay involved in the project development process, which still involves a lot of milestones: design/engineering, permitting, right-of-way acquisition, and construction. Mr. Frieri noted the project is in preliminary design in-house at MassDOT right now. Mr. Huebner inquired about traffic counts for the roadway, Ms. Koirala noted the current counts indicate the roadway serves 180 vehicles per day. Mr. Senecal thanked the MPO for putting the project in the

TIP and supported Ms. Scialabba's comments, noting they look forward to seeing the project get going.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Lovejoy, seconded by Mr. Huebner, to approve the FFY 2017-2021 TIP as presented.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carries unanimously.

## **7. STATUS REPORTS FROM MEMBER AGENCIES**

Mr. Frieri the project status of TIP projects in FY 2015 and FY 2016 as outlined in the handout.

Mr. Kus discussed the continued monitoring of FAST Act provisions and rulemaking at the federal level. He noted potential issues for the Boston Metro area, but fewer potential issues for a smaller urban area, like those in the Berkshires. Mr. Duval inquired about how MPO members would be alerted as items in the UPWP progress, and suggested developing a matrix to track progress.

Mr. Karns noted the success of the MassDOT Complete Streets program in the Berkshires, and the partnership between BRPC and a handful of towns to develop Complete Streets Project Prioritization Plans. Mr. Karns acknowledged the work Senior Transportation Planner, Emily Lindsey.

Ms. Vallieres informed the MPO about the Community Transit Grants that were received in the region; she described one of the grants, for travel, training as an exciting opportunity for seniors to get to know the BRTA fixed route system.

Mr. Duval inquired about the bottleneck studies identified in the FFY 2017 UPWP and Mr. Kus explained the process and purpose in looking at congested intersections around the region.

## **8. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

## **9. NEXT MEETING DATE/MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Kus will alert the committee when the next meeting is proposed. Mr. Mohler adjourned the meeting at 4:48 PM.

### Materials Distributed:

- Agenda
- Proposed Amendment #3 to the FY 2016-2019 TIP
- Draft FY 2017-2021 TIP Handout: Highway and Bridge
- Draft FY 2017-2021 TIP Handout: Transit
- Draft FY 2017-2021 TIP Handout: Comments Received
- Draft FY 2017 UPWP
- MassDOT Project Status Report