



MINUTES OF THE FULL COMMISSION - APPROVED May 20, 2021 MEETING

Virtual Meeting as allowed by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker's Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provision of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20.

I. Opening

A. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM

Chair Kyle Hanlon stated that per the open meeting law, BRPC records all meetings. Others may record the meeting after informing the chair. Any documents presented must be provided to the chair at the meeting. Pittsfield TV was recording.

B. Roll Call

The following Commission members were present:

Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate
Malcolm Fick – Great Barrington Alternate
James Sullivan – Hinsdale Delegate
Gwen Miller – Lanesborough Alternate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Pam Kueber – Lenox Delegate
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Ken Smith – Sheffield Delegate
Nancy Socha – Stockbridge Alternate
Amanda Hamilton – Tyringham Delegate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
David Zink – Windsor Delegate

Staff Present:

Thomas Matuszko – Executive Director
Marianne Sniezek – Office Manager
Clete Kus – Transportation Program Manager
Anuja Koirala – Principal Transportation Planner
Mark Maloy – GIS, Data & IT Program Manager
Kate Hill Tapia – Office Administrator

Others Present:

Susan Strate - UMass Donahue Institute
Brittany Polito - iBerkshire
Pittsfield Community Television
Amy Cooper
Josh Vallieres
413-743-3496

C. Approval of Minutes of March 18, 2021 Meeting

Roger Bolton moved to approve the draft minutes of the March 18, 2021 meeting; Buck Donovan seconded the motion. There were no comments or discussion. The Minutes were approved with a roll call vote and five abstentions.

Yes:

Peter Traub - Cheshire Delegate
Malcolm Fick - Great Barrington Alternate
Buck Donovan - Lee Delegate
Pam Kueber - Lenox Delegate
Kyle Hanlon - North Adams Delegate
Sheila Irvin - Pittsfield Delegate
Fred Schubert - Richmond Alternate
Rene Wood - Sheffield Alternate
Nancy Socha - Stockbridge Alternate
Roger Bolton - Williamstown Alternate
David Zink - Windsor Delegate

Abstained:

Pedro Pachano - Great Barrington Delegate
James Sullivan - Hinsdale Delegate
Gwen Miller - Lanesborough Alternate
Ken Smith - Sheffield Delegate
Amanda Hamilton - Tyringham Delegate

II. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

III. Delegate & Alternate Issues

There were no Delegate or Alternate

IV. Executive Committee Actions

There were no questions or comments on the actions taken by the Executive Committee at the April 1 and May 6 meetings.

V. Juneteenth Holiday

Juneteenth (June 19th) was adopted by the state legislature as a state holiday in 2020. At its May 6, 2021 meeting, the Executive Committee voted to recommend that the Full Commission vote to add Juneteenth/June 19 as an additional BRPC floating holiday in recognition of this date as the end to slavery. Tom confirmed that this does not require a bylaw change.

Pam Kueber made a motion for BRPC to add Juneteenth/June 19 as an additional BRPC floating holiday in accordance with Massachusetts Law and Governor Baker's proclamation "setting apart the nineteenth of June as Juneteenth Independence Day, to be observed on June 19th of each year, in recognition of June 19, 1865 when Union General Gordon Granger announced freedom for all slaves in the Southwestern United States and in recognition of the end of slavery in the United States as well as the significant contributions, individuals of African descent have made to the commonwealth and to the United States and recommending that said day be observed in an appropriate manner by the people."

Amanda Hamilton seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by a roll vote.

Yes:

Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate
James Sullivan – Hinsdale Delegate
Gwen Miller – Lanesborough Alternate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Pam Kueber – Lenox Delegate
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Nancy Socha – Stockbridge Alternate
Amanda Hamilton – Tyringham Delegate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Ken Smith – Sheffield Delegate
David Zink – Windsor Delegate

VI. U.S. Census Differential Privacy Policy

Susan Strate, the Senior Program Manager of the Population Estimates Program with the UMass Donahue Institute gave a PowerPoint presentation on the U.S. Census's Differential Privacy Policy. With the differential privacy policy, except for at the state level, the Census Bureau intentionally distorts actual counts of some population groups at congressional district, township and census blocks levels to protect the privacy of small number population groups. This is commonly referred to as an injection of "noise" into the count.

Concerns were expressed about the impact of applying the differential privacy technique and whether census data will continue to be what people need. Susan confirmed that the numbers will not be the same as the census count due the injected "noise" and among other things, may impact population projections.

Susan does not see the application of this technique as political but rather an attempt to apply best statistical theory to protect privacy. The census does re-survey to retest areas to ensure accuracy. Changes are still happening as it is still in draft form. The first version showed a greater impact on rural communities vs. the recent version.

BRPC is considering submitting comments by May 28. Susan will get Tom the email address.

VII. Transportation Improvement Program for FFY 2022-2026

The Berkshires' Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the next five fiscal years (2022-2026) was presented by BRPC Principal Planner Anuja Koirala. The plan establishes which projects receive limited federal transportation funds. The process started in January 2021 by asking towns for priority projects. The 140 page document was released for review and comment in April.

The plan will be reviewed and confirmed at next week's Transportation Advisory Committee meeting. Anuja shared a map detailing proposed projects by community and year. Projects include:

- Bridges: rebuilding and maintenance
- Highway: resurfacing & construction
- Intersection improvements: signals, safety, roundabouts
- Bike/Trail: continuation of VT to CT multi-use trail
- Transit: preventive maintenance and new vehicles

Jim Sullivan made a motion to instruct the BRPC Chair to endorse staff recommendations on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FFY 2022-2026 at the next Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Tuesday, May 25, 2021. Fred Schubert seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by a roll vote.

Yes:

Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate
James Sullivan – Hinsdale Delegate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Pam Kueber – Lenox Delegate
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Nancy Socha – Stockbridge Alternate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Ken Smith – Sheffield Delegate
Amanda Hamilton – Tyringham Delegate

Abstained:
David Zink – Windsor Delegate

VIII. Transportation Unified Planning Work Program for FFY 2022

Clete Kus, Transportation Program Manager, reviewed the proposed Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for FFY 2022, which establishes the transportation planning work BRPC staff will be involved in for the coming year. Focus Areas are:

Public Participation

- VPI – Virtual Public Involvement best practices
- Remote meeting participation
- Public Participation Plan Update

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- Increase outreach to communities
- Assistance to increase TIP projects

Bike & Pedestrian Planning

- Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan
- Hodges Cross Road to Downtown N Adams scoping study
- Study to evaluate countywide Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board
- Adventure Trail (from Spruces to MassMOCA)
- Bennington trolley line trail

Regional Data & Analysis

- Update demographic databases-2020 Census

Pavement Management

- Statewide standardized PMS ratings/system

Special Studies

- EV Infrastructure Strategic Plan Implementation
- Micro mobility implementation plan – bike share feasibility study funded for Pittsfield but regional interest and focus
- Housatonic Rail Line Intra County service feasibility study (train vs. buses)

Climate Change

- Coordination of efforts: Transportation Climate Initiatives-P and Green Communities

Expansion of Transit

- Transportation Management Association (TMA) Implementation

Rail Initiatives

- Participation in Northern Tier Study (Rt. 2 / Pan Am line)
- Berkshire Flyer Pilot Service Implementation
- East/West Rail Implementation

Jim Sullivan made a motion to authorize the BRPC Chair to vote in the affirmative on the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) following staffs' recommendations for FFY 2022 at the MPO meeting June 22, 2021. Pedro Pachano seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

Yes:

Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate
James Sullivan – Hinsdale Delegate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
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Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
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X. Adoption of the BRPC FY 2022 Budget

Malcom Fick, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported that both the Finance and Executive Committees recommend approving the proposed FY 2022 budget. Income actuals are higher than last year and the overhead rate remains the same. Tom pointed out that the only unknown is the cost of the office lease.

Pedro Pachano motioned to approve the draft FY 2022 Budget.

Jim Sullivan seconded the motions which was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

Yes:

Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
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Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
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Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
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Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Ken Smith – Sheffield Delegate
Amanda Hamilton – Tyringham Delegate
David Zink – Windsor Delegate

XI. Nominating Committee Report – Officers for FY 2022

Rene Wood, Chair of the Nominating Subcommittee of the Commission Development Committee, presented a slate of BRPC officers, all of whom have agreed to serve, for FY 2022. Voting will be at the first BRPC Full

Commission meeting after July 1st. Nominations will also be taken from the floor.

Chair, John Duval
Vice Chair, Malcom Fick
Clerk, Sheila Irvin
Treasurer, Buck Donovan

XII. Roundtable Discussion – Trials, Tribulations and Successes of Zoning Amendments at Town Meetings

Delegates and Alternates were asked to share their experiences getting zoning amendments passed at town meetings.

Ken Smith from Sheffield reported two minor changes to their Table of Use changes easily passed at their May meeting.

XIII. Executive Director’s Report

A. Office Update

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BRPC Office is still closed to the public. Due to recent announcements by the Governor, we will re-open June 15 under the recently revised telework policy. The lease for our current office space expires on November 30, 2021. We have gone out to bid for space according to the Mass Procurement Law. Bids are due June 1st. Unless there is new legislation, meetings will return to in-person.

B. District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Funding

FY 22 funding for the DLTA program is currently in the legislative process. Similar to previous years, it was included in the House budget, but not included in the Senate Ways and Means budget. Tom reported that we are working with our RPA colleagues to have it funded again this year but may request Commission members’ assistance to remind Senator Hinds how important DLTA funding is and has been. He has been asked to co-sign.

C. Greylock Glen

Tom congratulated the Town of Adams for securing funding to build the Outdoor Recreation Center at Greylock Glen. The Outdoor center is the central component of a larger project to spur natural resource based economic development in the town. This has been a long standing, sometime controversial, effort to transform the base of Mount Greylock. Special congratulations to Donna Cesan, whose persistence was a major driver to making this happen.

D. 2021 MassDOT Transportation Innovation Conference-Virtual

Details were shared for the annual MassDOT Transportation Innovation Conference 5/25/2021 7:00 AM - 5/27/2021 1:30 PM. It provides a forum for innovative transportation systems, management ideas, and initiatives.

The conference is arranged by topics:

- Practices in Municipal and Regional Transportation
- Mobility, Accessibility, and Transportation Equity
- Techniques in Design, Materials, and Construction
- Promoting a Culture of Safe Transportation
- Shaping the Transportation Landscape for a Post Covid world

Register at <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/umtc/default.asp>

E. Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2030

At the March Commission meeting, there was much discussion about the proposed Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2030. A copy of the final comment letter that was submitted was distributed. Also attached was a response email from Secretary Theoharides.

F. Other

Fred Schubert reported on Richmond's positive vote for \$7 million for a new Town Hall / Community Center / Library. A similar effort failed several years ago. This effort was restarted in 2017. His only concern is whether the project will have to be scaled back due to increases in construction costs. It is possible to ask Town Meeting for supplemental funds and private donations are helping.

XIV. Adjournment

Jim Sullivan made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Pedro Pachano. Unanimously approved. Adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Materials distributed or presented during this meeting:

Meeting Agenda

Draft Meeting Minutes March 18, 2021

Executive Committee Actions Memo for April and May 2021

Executive Director's Report

Differential Privacy for Census Data and PowerPoint presentation

2021 Holiday Schedule Draft with Juneteenth

Berkshire MPO FFY 2022-2026 Draft TIP and /map

2022cUPWP Highlights and Budget

BRPC Agency FY22 Budget Memo

FY22 Agency Budget Recommended Revenue

FY22 Agency Budget Recommended Expenses

CECP Comment Letter Approved 2021.03.18

e-2030 CECP finalization 05.13.21