



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, May 4, 2023

Virtual meeting as allowed by Ch. 2 of the Acts of 2023 extending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20 until March 31, 2025.

I. Call to Order & Open Meeting Law Statement

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm.

Chair John Duval called the meeting to order as a virtual meeting as allowed by Ch. 2 of the Acts of 2023 extending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20 until March 31, 2025.

II. Roll Call:

Read by Office Administrator Kate Hill Tapia:

John Duval, Chair, Adams Alternate

Malcolm Fick, Vice Chair, Gt Barrington Alternate

Sheila Irvin, Clerk, Pittsfield Delegate

Buck Donovan, Treasurer, Lee Delegate

Rene Wood, Commission Development Committee Chair, Sheffield Alternate

Roger Bolton, Environmental Review Committee Chair, Williamstown Alternate

Kyle Hanlon, At-large, North Adams Delegate

Sam Haupt, At-large, Peru Delegate - Absent

Others Present: Peter Traub, Cheshire Delegate; Christine Rasmussen, Stockbridge Alternate; Dan Shearer

Staff Present: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director; Marianne Sniezek, Office Manager; Kate Hill Tapia, Office Administrator

Tom explained that Finance Committee Zoom meeting was "bombed," thus the switch to a webinar format with Attendees needing to raise their hand and or be invited as Panelists in order to speak.

III. Approval of April 20, 2023 Minutes

Rene Wood moved to approve the April 20, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Sheila Irvin and approved by a roll call vote from John Duval, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Buck Donovan, Rene Wood, Roger Bolton, and Kyle Hanlon.

IV. Financial Reports

A. March 31 to April 27, 2023 Expenditures Report

Kyle Hanlon moved to accept the report as presented, and Rene Wood seconded the motion. There were no questions. A roll vote approved it from

John Duval, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Buck Donovan, Rene Wood, Roger Bolton, and Kyle Hanlon.

B. Accounts Receivable Report/Assessments March and April 2023

The March document was missing from the last month's packet, so it was in this month's packet.

C. Line of Credit Report

There has been no need to draw on the line of credit.

D. Line of Credit Increase

TD Bank approved the line of credit increase; implementation is in process.

V. Comments from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates and Alternates – none.

VI. Items Requiring Action

A. Approval to Submit a Grant Application to the Community One Stop for Growth Program related to Emergency Services

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit a grant application for \$100,000 and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements to the Community One Stop for Growth program for Emergency Services. This project would assess rural and small-town fire departments and EMS services and make recommendations for personnel, equipment, and training. It would begin in FY24. There is no match required. Public Health Planner [Jaymie Zapata](#), x40, is the BRPC contact.

Rene Wood motioned to approve submitting a grant application and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements to the Community One Stop for Growth program related to assessing Emergency Services; Sheila Irvin seconded it. A roll call vote approved it from John Duval, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Buck Donovan, Rene Wood, Roger Bolton, and Kyle Hanlon.

B. Approval to Submit of a Grant Application to the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center's (MassCEC) Equity Workforce Planning and Capacity Building Grant Program

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) Equity Workforce Planning and Capacity Building Grant Program and to sign resulting contracts and agreements. Working with a diverse group of partners, the BRPC Environmental and Energy Program and Economic Development Program seeks to apply for \$50,000 to develop an Equitable Workforce Development Plan. The grant would fund the development of analysis and capacity plans of the Green Energy and Technology sector workforce needs, including developing a pipeline to meet those needs while providing opportunities to underrepresented populations and Berkshire County residents. There is no BRPC match requirement. Staff contact is [Sherdyl Fernandez-Aubert](#), Environmental and Energy Planner.

Rene Wood motioned to approve submitting a grant application to the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) Equity Workforce Planning and Capacity Building Grant Program and to sign resulting contracts and agreements; Malcolm Fick seconded it. A roll call vote approved it from John Duval, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Buck Donovan, Rene Wood, Roger Bolton, and Kyle Hanlon.

C. Approval to Submit a Grant Application to the Community One Stop Urban Agenda Program

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development Urban Agenda program for \$100,000 and sign any resulting contracts and agreements. There is no match required. Staff lead is [Laura Brennan](#), Economic Development Program Manager, x14.

Rene Wood motioned to approve submitting a grant application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development Urban Agenda program and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements; Sheila Irvin seconded it. A roll call vote approved it from John Duval, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Buck Donovan, Rene Wood, Roger Bolton, and Kyle Hanlon.

D. Approval to Submit Grant Application to the Center for Disease Control Overdose Data to Action: Limiting Overdose through Collaborative Actions in Localities (OD2A Local) Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Site-based Program

It was decided not to apply for this grant because it is targeted for larger urban populations.

Rene Wood motioned to table this item; Sheila Irvin seconded it. A roll call vote approved it from John Duval, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Buck Donovan, Rene Wood, Roger Bolton, and Kyle Hanlon.

VII. Committee Reports and Discussion

A. Transportation Advisory Committee

The TAC met on April 18, 2023. The final draft of the 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) was approved and recommended to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Updates were shared regarding the pavement state of repair and recommended projects for inclusion in the 2024 RTP. Draft meeting minutes were in the packet.

B. Commission Development Committee

The Commission Development Committee met on April 18, 2023, to establish a nominating committee to recommend a slate of officers for FY24. Draft minutes were in the packet.

C. Nominating Subcommittee

The committee met on April 18 and confirmed a proposed slate of officers to be presented at the May 18 Commission meeting. Officers will be elected at the first meeting after July 1, 2023 in the new fiscal year. Draft minutes were in the packet.

D. Metropolitan Planning Organization

The MPO met on April 25, 2023. 2023-2027 TIP amendments were approved, as was the release of the Highway and Transit TIP document for the 21-day public comment period. There was also an update on the development of the Regional Transportation Plan. Draft minutes were in the packet.

E. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met on April 27, 2023, reviewed the FY2024 Budget, and approved it for recommendation to the full Commission on May 18, 2023. Other topics were shown in the draft minutes in the meeting packet.

VIII. Executive Director's Report

A. Report on New Contracts/Agreements

New Grants and Contracts received/initiated from 3/31 to 4/27/2023.

- Williamstown – Open Space and Recreation Plan - \$5,000
- Northampton Health Department - Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Site-Based Program - \$10,000
- Berkshire Public Health Alliance – Inspection Services FY24:
 - Becket - \$31,186
 - Egremont - \$11,730
 - Middlefield - \$5,200
 - Washington - \$4,500
 - Windsor - \$9,030
- Berkshire Public Health Alliance – Public Health Nursing Services FY24:
 - Adams - \$4,367
 - Becket - \$3,858.75
 - Clarksburg - \$3,070.46
 - Hinsdale - \$3,141.60
 - Washington - \$2,310
 - West Stockbridge - \$3,000
 - Williamstown - \$6,846.90

Grants and Contracts not received.

BRPC is not aware of any grants and contracts not received.

B. Berkshires Tomorrow Inc. (BTI)

There has been no recent activity.

C. Staff Update

Open Positions:

- Community Planning
- Transportation Planning

- Public Health Housing Inspector Specialist

D. Rural Policy Advisory Commission (RPAC) Update

The Commission met on April 14, 2023. Secretary Yvonne Hao and Undersecretary Ashley Stolba from the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development provided an update about the newly created Director of Rural Affairs position, a realignment of the secretariat, and efforts to create a new economic plan required when a Governor is elected.

E. Passenger Rail

- West-East Rail - The Special Commission to address West-East Passenger Rail will hold two hearings on May 16; 10 am Worcester and 2 pm in Natick. The report on governance is due June 30.
- Berkshire Flyer - The working group continues coordinating and implementing advertising efforts and securing rental cars at the BRTA Intermodal Center. Service starts Memorial Day weekend.
- Northern Tier Passenger Rail – No additional activity has occurred since the January 11, 2023 meeting.

VIII. Old Business

A. No Old Business to Discuss

IX. New Business

A. Discuss Topics for May Commission Meeting

Potential items required or previously mentioned:

- Adoption of the FY 2024 budget
- Report of the Nominating Committee
- Authorize the Chair to vote on the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)
- FY 2024 Meeting Schedule
- Meet with Governor Healey's Western Mass Director if available; if not:
 - Possible "primer" on digital equity planning
 - Cyber security
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There was discussion about a Public Comment period. John, the Chair, will allow for it and limit topics and length based on number of potential commentators.

The July Executive Director and Commission meetings might be combined on Thursday, July 13. The Metropolitan Planning Organization needs authorization to vote on the Regional Transportation Plan 2024 by July 25. If there is a Director of Rural Affairs, they might be a guest.

X. Adjournment

Kyle Hanlon motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:48 pm, seconded by Roger Bolton, and unanimously approved by a roll call vote:

John Duval, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Buck Donovan, Roger Bolton, and Kyle Hanlon.

Attachments:

- Unapproved Minutes of April 20, 2023, BRPC Executive Committee Meeting
- March 31 to April 27, 2023 Expenditures Report
- Accounts Receivable Reports – March and April 2023
- April Line of Credit Report
- Transportation Advisory Committee Draft Minutes April 18, 2023
- Commission Development Committee Draft Minutes April 18, 2023
- Nominating Subcommittee Draft Minutes April 18, 2023
- Metropolitan Planning Organization Draft Minutes April 25, 2023
- Finance Committee Draft Minutes April 27, 2023
- Finance Committee Memorandum
- Project FY 24 Budget – Revenue and Expenses
- Executive Director's Memorandum
- EOHEP Press Release 4.20.23
- Western Massachusetts Passenger Rail Commission Public Hearing Notice – Worcester
- Western Massachusetts Passenger Rail Commission Public Hearing Notice – Natick
- MassDOT Press Release 4.10.23
- March Technical Assistance Memo