



FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES September 21, 2023

This was 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.

I. Opening

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

Chair Malcolm Fick stated that per the open meeting law, BRPC was recording this meeting. Others may record the meeting after informing the meeting Chair. Documents presented must be provided to the Chair at the meeting.

B. Roll Call

The following Commission members were present:

John Duval – Adams Alternate
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Caleb Darcy – Dalton Delegate
Mary McGurn – Egremont Delegate
Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate
Malcolm Fick – Great Barrington Alternate
Leanne Yinger – Lanesborough Delegate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Laura Mensi – Monterey Delegate
Keith Torrico – Mount Washington Delegate
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Mark Anthony – Otis Delegate
Sari Hoy – Sheffield Delegate
Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Christine Rasmussen – Stockbridge Alternate
Amanda Hamiton – Tyringham
Cory Campbell – Williamstown Delegate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate
Chris Cozzaglio – Windsor Alternate

Towns with no Delegate or Alternate present:

Alford, Becket, Clarksburg, Florida, Hancock, Hinsdale, Lenox, New Ashford, Otis, Peru, Pittsfield, Richmond, Sandisfield, Savoy, Washington, West Stockbridge

Staff Present:

Thomas Matuszko, Marianne Sniezek, Kate Hill Tapia, Laura

Brennan, Mark Maloy, Sandra Martin, Dan Hassett

Others Present:

Scott Koczela, Katharine Dagle, PCTV, Erica Holman

C. Approval of Minutes of July 20, 2023, Meeting

Buck Donovan moved to approve the July 20, 2023, draft meeting minutes, and Pedro Pachano seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The minutes were approved with a roll call vote with Peter Traub, Mary McGurn, Leanne Yinger, Buck Donovan, Rene Wood, Christine Rasmussen, Amanda Hamilton, Doug McNally voting to approve.

Abstained: John Duval, Pedro Pachano, Keith Torrico, Mark Anthony, Cory Campbell

II. Comments from and Discussion with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates and Alternates Issues

Doug McNally recommends reviewing [MMA's recent webinar](#) on changes to cannabis regulations. Most municipalities' bylaws are non-compliant, and penalties can be up to \$50,000.

III. Comments from the Public

None

IV. Presentation of Executive Committee Actions

No questions.

V. Amendments to Housing Regulations

BRPC Senior Public Health Planner Sandra Martin, Senior Housing Specialist Trainer Katherine Dagle, and Scott Koczela, CSP Environmental Analyst with the Department of Public Health, presented on amendments to the State Sanitary Code related to housing and the key role local Boards of Health have in providing safe housing. [See BRPC's website for the PowerPoint presentation.](#) Dan Hassett, the Public Health Program's new Housing Specialist was introduced. He is being trained to be a housing inspector.

Housing Code Changes enacted May 2023:

1. Temporary Housing up to 90 days (cannot legally rent substandard housing)
2. Alternative Housing – variances required (owner occupied only) Still must meet:
 - Zoning Code (location and use)– Zoning Officer
 - Building Code (safety) – Building Inspector
 - Septic Title 5 if no sewer connection - BOH
 - Potable water may be an issue if a public water supply is unavailable – BOH.
3. Heating Season can be changed by Board of Health if needed
4. Homeless Shelters - New Exemptions in Churches

5. Excessive Moisture instead of "chronic dampness"
6. Pests: Landlords must do pre-rental pest inspections (insects and wildlife.)
7. Kitchens must have refrigerator/freezer unless lease says tenant supplies.
8. Deep closets need lighting.

VI. Vote to Endorse Committee Chairs for FY 2024

The BRPC bylaws require the Commission to approve the Committee Chairs and At-Large Executive Committee members as recommended by the BRPC Chair.

- Commission Development Committee Chair – Doug McNally, Windsor
- Berkshire Brownfields Committee Chair – Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield

Rene Wood moved to endorse the Committee Chairs for FY 2024 per the recommendations of the Chair; Kyle Hanlon seconded the motion. A roll call vote authorized the endorsement.

John Duval, Peter Traub, Mary McGurn, Leanne Yinger, Buck Donovan, Rene Wood, Christine Rasmussen, Amanda Hamilton, Chris Cozzaglio

Abstained: Pedro Pachano, Keith Torrico, Mark Anthony, Cory Campbell

VII. Vote to Ratify Appointment of Representative to Related Groups Not Under the Jurisdiction of the Commission

The BRPC bylaws require the Commission to ratify the appointment to related groups not under the jurisdiction of the Commission made by the Executive Committee.

- Westfield River Wild and Scenic Advisory Committee –
Doug McNally, Windsor

Kyle Hanlon moved to ratify Doug McNally's appointment as the Westfield River Wild and Scenic Advisory Committee representative. Amanda Hamilton seconded the motion. A roll call vote authorized the appointment.

John Duval, Caleb Dary, Mary McGurn, Pedro Pachano, Leanne Yinger, Buck Donovan, Laura Mensi, Keith Toricco, Kyle Hanlon, Mark Anthony, Sari Hoy, Christine Rasmussen, Amanda Hamilton, Chris Cozzaglio

Abstained: Cory Campbell

VIII. Vote to Appoint Representative to Related Groups Not Under the Jurisdiction of the Commission

The BRPC bylaws require the Commission to appoint representatives to related groups not under the jurisdiction of the Commission.

- Woodlands Partnership of Northwest Massachusetts-
Christopher Cozzaglio, Windsor

Pedro Pachano moved to approve the appointment of Christopher Cozzaglio to the Woodlands Partnership of Northwest Massachusetts. Buck Donovan

seconded the motion. A roll call vote authorized the appointment.

John Duval, Peter Traub, Caleb Dary, Mary McGurn, Pedro Pachano, Leanne Yinger, Buck Donovan, Laura Mensi, Keith Toricco, Kyle Hanlon, Mark Anthony, Sari Hoy, Christine Rasmussen, Amanda Hamilton

Abstained: Cory Campbell, Chris Cozzaglio

IX. Presentation of 2020 Census Results

BRPC GIS, Data and IT Manager Mark Maloy briefly overviewed the 2020 decennial census results. The document is on the BRPC website under this [meeting's materials](#) and at <https://berkshirebenchmarks.org>.

As one member said, there were no surprises. The population in 2020 was 129,026, down from 131,219, a loss of 2,193 people or 1.7%. The county has continued to get more diverse. In 2020, 19,763 people, or 15.3% of the population, were classified as Black Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). Up from 12,293, or 9.4% of the population in 2010.

X. Review of BRPC Website (www.Berkshireplanning.org)

Assistant Director Laura Brennan reviewed the BRPC website to introduce new members and give a refresher for longer-time Commissioners. Meeting notices and material, information about projects and initiatives, and other resource materials were reviewed.

XI. Executive Director's Report

A. 2023 Statewide Municipal Partnerships Conference

The 2023 Statewide Municipal Partnerships Conference for municipal officials and staff, co-hosted by the Massachusetts Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) and Division of Local Services, will be held at the College of the Holy Cross on Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2023. Lt. Governor Driscoll and a panel of Cabinet members will start the morning, followed by breakout sessions on:

- Climate Resiliency and Climate Action Plans
- Building Livable Communities
- Post-Pandemic Public Health
- Rural Empowerment
- Federal Funding Opportunities

Register at [2023 MARPA / DLS Conference \(constantcontact.com\)](https://constantcontact.com)

B. Housing Bond Bill Priorities

The Healey Administration will soon be releasing a Housing Bond Bill. The Rural Policy Advisory Commission's priorities for items included in the bill are in this meeting's materials packet.

C. Municipal Modernization Bill

A new bill will likely be introduced to remove inefficiencies, as was done

about five years ago. Send Tom ideas for changes to remove unnecessary barriers, such as easier procurement methods, the impact of prevailing wage requirements for small towns, and anything annoying for our municipalities. tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org

XII. Adjournment

Kyle Hanlon motioned to adjourn, seconded by Pedro Pachano, and approved by roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

John Duval, Peter Traub, Caleb Dary, Mary McGurn, Pedro Pachano, Leanne Yinger, Buck Donovan, Laura Mensi, Keith Toricco, Kyle Hanlon, Mark Anthony, Sari Hoy, Christine Rasmussen, Amanda Hamilton, Cory Campbell, Doug McNally