



Approved Executive Committee Minutes Thursday, August 1, 2024

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

Chair Malcolm Fick called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. 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. He stated that BRPC was not recording the meeting, and anyone else who wanted to record it needed to inform him.

II. Roll Call:

Office Administrator Kate Hill Tapia read the roll call:

Malcolm Fick, Chair, Great Barrington Alternate

John Duval, Vice Chair, Adams Alternate

Buck Donovan, Treasurer, Lee Delegate

Sheila Irvin, Clerk, Pittsfield Delegate (not present)

Douglas McNally, Commission Development Committee, Chair, Windsor Delegate

Roger Bolton, Environmental Review Committee Chair, Williamstown Alternate

Christine Rasmussen, Regional Issues Committee Chair, Stockbridge Alternate

Kyle Hanlon, At-Large, North Adams Delegate (not present)

Sam Haupt, At-Large, Peru Delegate

Staff Present: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director; Marianne Sniezek, Office Manager; Laura Brennan, Assistant Director and Economic Development Program Manager; Kate Hill Tapia, Office Administrator

III. Vote to Approve the July 2, 2024 Minutes

Doug McNally moved to approve the July 2, 2024, meeting minutes. Roger Bolton seconded the motion. It was approved by a roll call vote from Malcolm Fick, John Duval, Buck Donovan, Doug McNally, Roger Bolton, Christine Rasmussen, and Sam Haupt.

IV. Financial Reports

A. Vote to Approve the June 28 – July 25, 2024, Expenditures Report

Roger Bolton moved to approve the June 28 – July 25, 2024 Expenditures Report. Doug McNally seconded the motion. The \$49,000 Outdoor Center refers to payment for a climate change exhibit at Greylock Glen. The report was approved by a roll call vote from Malcolm Fick, John Duval, Buck Donovan, Doug McNally, Roger Bolton, Christine Rasmussen, and Sam Haupt.

B. Report on the Accounts Receivable/ Assessments – July 2024

There were no questions.

C. Report on the Line of Credit

There has been no need to use the line of credit.

V. Comments from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates and Alternate Delegates

None

VI. Items Requiring Action

A. Vote to Authorize the Executive Director to Enter into Intergovernmental Agreements and Contracts with Municipalities

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to enter into intergovernmental agreements and contracts with municipalities in FY 25.

Sam Haupt moved to authorize the Executive Director to enter into intergovernmental agreements and contracts with municipalities in FY 25. Doug McNally seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote: Malcolm Fick, John Duval, Buck Donovan, Doug McNally, Roger Bolton, Christine Rasmussen, and Sam Haupt.

B. Vote to Approve the Submission of a Grant Application to the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association Wellness Program.

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) Wellness Grant "A Great Place to Work" program and approve any resulting contracts and agreements. BRPC is seeking the full \$5,000 allotment. A portion (approximately 14%) of the funds will be used to purchase a Soda Stream system and flavor enhancers, branded tumblers for onsite staff, an air purifier for each suite, and a privacy screen for the massage chair. The remaining funds will be used to continue providing healthy snacks for the office. The staff lead on this application is Marianne Sniezek, msniezek@berkshireplanning.org, 413-442-1521x13.

Doug McNally moved to authorize the Executive Director to submit a grant application for \$5000 to MIIA's Wellness Program for wellness items for BRPC staff. Roger Bolton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote: Malcolm Fick, John Duval, Buck Donovan, Doug McNally, Roger Bolton, Christine Rasmussen, and Sam Haupt.

C. Vote to Approve Changes to the BRPC Personnel Pay Plan to Remove an Offsite Senior Planner Position and Add 3 Offsite Positions: a Public Health Subject Matter Expert, Public Health Community Coordinator, and Group Purchasing Coordinator.

The Executive Committee was requested to approve changes to the BRPC personnel pay plan to remove an offsite Senior Planner position and add three offsite positions: Public Health Subject Matter Expert, Public Health Community Coordinator, and Group Purchasing Coordinator.

These changes bring job titles in line with job responsibilities. The Public Health Subject Matter Expert and Group Purchasing Coordinators are reclassifying current employees' positions. The Public Health Community Coordinator position would be a new position, but it needs to be established along with a Position Description to obtain funding for it.

Roger Bolton moved to approve changes to the BRPC personnel pay plan to remove an offsite Senior Planner position and add three offsite positions: Public Health Subject Matter Expert, Public Health Community Coordinator, and Group Purchasing Coordinator. Buck Donovan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote: Malcolm Fick, John Duval, Buck Donovan, Doug McNally, Roger Bolton, Christine Rasmussen, and Sam Haupt.

VII. Committee Report and Discussion

A. Commission Development Committee

The Commission Development Committee's July 2, 2024, meeting was postponed until September 12 due to a lack of a quorum. It will be at 5:30 p.m. following the Executive Committee meeting.

B. Berkshire Brownfields Committee

The Brownfields Committee met on July 8, 2024. Several sites previously approved for assessment were approved for additional assessments: Hide Hill/Former Tannery Dump, North Adams, Carpenter's Variety, Great Barrington, Rising Pond Parcel, Great Barrington, JB Paper Factory, Pittsfield, 370 Wahconah (former Bel Air Mill), Pittsfield, 100 Woodlawn, Pittsfield, Tyler Street, Pittsfield (3 parcels), Stetson Cleaners, Pittsfield, Windsor Mill, North Adams, Niagara Mill, Lenox. One site, Heritage State Park, North Adams, was discussed and approved for an environmental site assessment. Draft minutes have not yet been prepared.

C. Metropolitan Planning Organization

The MPO met on July 23, 2024. Amendments for highway and transit changes were approved to the 2024 – 2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). An amendment to the 2024 – 2028 TIP related to the increase in costs for the Pittsfield East Street project was authorized for public comment. Draft unapproved minutes were in the meeting materials.

VIII. Executive Director's Report

A. Report on New Contracts / Agreements

New Grants and Contracts received/initiated from 06/27/2024 to 07/25/2024.

- Lanesborough – Economic Development Planning - \$11,000

- Franklin Regional Council of Governments– Emergency Preparedness Planning - \$169,656
- Environmental Protection Agency - Revolving Loan Fund 2022 – Additional \$2,350,000
- Massachusetts Technology Collaborative - Municipal Digital Equity Planning Services – Monterey - \$32,621.41
- Southern Berkshire Regional Emergency Planning Committee - After Action Report - \$4,212.50

Grants and Contracts not received:

There is no immediate impact on the Public Health Program's budget.

- HRIA (MCHAAF) Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)
- HRIA (MCHAAF) Healthy Aging (Senior. Exercise Parks)
- HRIA (MCHAAF) PSE Grant (Gray to Green expansion/continuation)

B. Berkshires Tomorrow Inc. (BTI) Update

- The B.T.I. Board of Directors authorized the President to sign an agreement between Berkshires Tomorrow and BRPC's Software Lease for 67 Subscriptions for Microsoft Office 365 and Microsoft Defender for FY2025. Tom Matuszko will sign for BRPC. Total \$17,160.00.
- The B.T.I. Board of Directors authorized the President to sign an agreement between BPRC and Berkshires Tomorrow for Consulting Services to set up the Federal Fund Accountability and Transparency Act Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) and sub-award grant compliance. This agreement will be up to \$10,000. Tom Matuszko will sign for BRPC.

C. Staff Updates

Open Positions:

- Public Health Community Social Worker
- Public Health Trainer
- Public Health Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) Assistant Coordinator

Reclassifications:

- Pat Mullins – PT Project Specialist
- Nancy Slattery – PT Public Health Nurse

D. Rural Policy Advisory Commission (RPAC) Update

The Rural Policy Advisory Commission did not meet in July 2024.

E. Passenger Rail

- West-East Rail – No known activity over the past month.
- Berkshire Flyer – Ridership of the Berkshire Flyer has been slightly lower but generally similar to last year. It appears that on-time performance has improved. Last mile transportation has been sparingly used.
- Northern Tier Passenger Rail – No known activity over the past month.

F. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Success Story – Berkshire Innovation Center (BIC)

EDA promoted the BIC’s EDA award of \$900,000 as a success story on the main EDA website, highlighting the Berkshire Innovation Center Manufacturing Academy. BIC established the Berkshire Innovation Center Manufacturing Academy, to help foster growth in the advanced manufacturing sector. Assistant Director Laura Brennan was instrumental in obtaining this award. For more information, see <https://www.eda.gov/impact/success-stories/workforce-development/eda-funded-manufacturing-revival-underway-new-england>

G. Conference Committee FY 2025 State Budget

On July 18, the FY25 Budget Conference Committee released its budget for the Governor's approval. The Governor had until 7/29/24 to review the budget. The Legislature had until 7/31/24 to override any vetoes. A summary prepared by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council was attached. Some key items for BRPC:

- The DLTA program was level-funded at \$3 million
- The Grant Assistance Program (GAP) was level-funded at \$2 million
- The Efficiency & Regionalization Program was level funded at \$600,000
- The SAPHE (State Action for Public Health Excellence) was funded as \$10.1 million
- A technical fix was made to the GAP program to allow RPAs to use FY24 GAP for both state and federal grants instead of just federal

Specific to BRPC:

- \$75,000 was obtained to support the work of Berkshire Funding Focus
- \$200,00 for the Berkshire County Opioid Education and Awareness Task Force

Tom thanked Berkshire County legislators for supporting the larger statewide budget items, especially Senator Mark's strong support for the Berkshire Funding Focus and Opioid Education and Awareness Task Force.

IX. Old Business

A. Discussion and Vote to Select the Kusik Award Winner for 2024

One nomination was received for the Kusik Award winner: Representative Smitty Pignatelli for his service to the communities in southern Berkshire County.

Doug McNally moved to award Representative Smitty Pignatelli the 2024 Kusik Award. Roger Bolton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote: Malcolm Fick, John Duval, Buck Donovan, Doug McNally, Roger Bolton, Christine Rasmussen, and Sam Haupt.

B. Discussion about the Annual Meeting

Balderdash Cellars' barn has been reserved for Wednesday, September 25. Potential speakers include Congressman Neal and Mass Energy &

Environmental Affairs Secretary Tepper.

C. Update of the Proposed National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC)

BRPC is unaware of any action by the U.S. Department of Energy's proposed New York – New England NIETC designation. It isn't clear when a decision will be made. Eversource has said the current right-of-way is sufficient and they would not use eminent domain power. New substations will need land and there is agreement that capacity improvements are needed. Federal subsidies would help, and consumers might see reduced rates.

Tom is communicating with relevant municipal officials. It was suggested that an Eversource presentation to that group might be useful.

X. New Business

No new business.

XI. Adjournment

Doug McNally made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:38 p.m., seconded by Sam Haupt, and unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Malcolm Fick, John Duval, Buck Donovan, Doug McNally, Roger Bolton, Christine Rasmussen, and Sam Haupt.

Additional Meeting Material:

- 2024.07.02 Unapproved Executive Committee Meeting Minutes - DRAFT
- June 28 - July 25, 2024 Expenditures Report
- July 2024 Aged Receivables Report
- 2024.07.24 Line of Report
- 2024.07.25 Executive Director Memorandum
- FY25 Personnel Pay Plan Ranges
- 2024.07.23 Unapproved Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
- FY25 Conference Committee Budget Summary