



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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MINUTES OF THE Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Tuesday, August 27, 2024

Meeting Held Via Zoom Video Communications

Meeting Materials: <https://berkshireplanning.org/event/berkshire-mpo-meeting-3/>

MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

Stephen Woelfel	MassDOT (Representing Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt)
Francisca Heming	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Gulliver)
Malcolm Fick	BRPC
Sarah Vallieres	BRTA
John Boyle	North Central Subregion Delegate
Gordon Bailey	Southeast Subregion Delegate
Dottie Bonbrake	Southwest Subregion Delegate

Others Present:

Clete Kus	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Nick Russo	BRPC
Ryan Griffis	BRPC
Chris Klem	MassDOT
Mark Moore	MassDOT
Peter Frieri	MassDOT

I. Call to Order – Introductions

Mr. Woelfel called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Meeting attendees introduced themselves via a roll call conducted by Mr. Kus.

II. Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 23, 2024

ACTION: Mr. Bailey introduced a motion, seconded by Ms. Vallieres, to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2024 MPO meeting.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Woelfel:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick	Abstain
Ms. Vallieres	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Abstain
Mr. Bailey	Yea
Ms. Bonbrake	Abstain

IV. Approval of an amendment (5th amendment) to the 2024-2028 TIP for changes to the Highway section to address the cost

increases to Pittsfield East Street project (604003) identified below and authorize the Chairman to sign the certification documents on behalf of the MPO members.

Ms. Koirala provided details on the fifth amendment for highway and transit which was introduced at the previous MPO meeting and approved for a 21-day comment period. The project cost of the reconstruction of East Street (Route 9) in Pittsfield has increased by \$2,799,466 which was added to the FY25 TIP. No public comments were received, and Ms. Koirala invited Mr. Klem to provide any additional information.

Mr. Klem noted that the among of the cost increase did not warrant an additional adjustment to the amendment, however, as of that morning, the project cost had again increased from \$13.2M to \$14.1M. Any additional costs can be addressed in FY25 once the development TIP becomes active. Mr. Frieri explained the additional costs increased was the result of design submittal developing from 100% to final design. Five major items of the bid had increased in costs, which increased the estimate.

Mr. Bailey asked which five items had increased in cost estimates, which Mr. Moore responded were the result of increased industry costs of earth excavation, reinforced concrete excavation, gravel burrow, disposal of hazardous materials and soil, and pavement items ranging from 8-9%.

Mr. Woelfel requested a motion to approve the amendment, with changes to the amount to reflect the updated value.

ACTION: Mr. Fick introduced a motion, seconded by Ms. Vallieres, to approve the amendment (5th amendment) to the 2024-2028 TIP for changes to the Highway section to address the cost increases to Pittsfield East Street project (604003) identified below and authorize the Chairman to sign the certification documents on behalf of the MPO members.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Woelfel:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick	Yea
Ms. Vallieres	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Abstain
Mr. Bailey	Yea
Ms. Bonbrake	Yea

V. Update on Safe Streets and Roads for All safety action plan

Mr. Russo provided a high-level overview of the Safe Streets for All program for all members. Mr. Russo presented the locations in Berkshire County identified as top injury locations and the reasoning for their ranking. Mr. Russo then moved onto an overview of the BRPC program website, and the high-injury network dashboard designed as part of this process.

Mr. Bailey asked what defined a “vulnerable road user” – which Mr. Russo explained this essentially means any person in the right-of-way not using an automobile. Ms. Vallieres asked whether there would be a website associated with the SS4A program, which Mr. Russo confirmed there would be. Mr. Klem commended efforts to include the mapping tool for users to include sites they personally know to be dangerous.

VI. Status reports from Member Agencies

Mr. Frieri provided an update on District 1 improvements currently scheduled. The bridge replacement projects for Alford and Cheshire have been advertised and notices to proceed were issued in January and May respectively. The previously discussed reconstruction of East Street (Route 9) in Pittsfield is expected to be advertised in the coming weeks. The bridge replacement in New Marlborough received a final design submittal in June and is currently undergoing environmental permitting.

Ms. Vallieres noted that the BRTA has recently received their final hybrid-electric bus and are currently undergoing the process to make them road-worthy.

Mr. Kus reiterated that caucuses are being held to fill remaining MPO delegate positions, and that the final draft document for the Northern Tier Rail Study has been released and is available during its 60-day public comment period. Comments are due by October 12th.

VII. Other Business

There was no other business.

VIII. Next Meeting date – September 24, 2024

The next MPO meeting is scheduled to be held on September 24th, 2024.

ACTION: Mr. Bailey motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Boyle. Mr. Woelfel adjourned the meeting at 4:34 p.m.

Documents and Exhibits Used:

- [Agenda](#)
- [BMPO July 23 Meeting Minutes DRAFT](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2024-2028 Highway TIP 5th Amendment](#)
- [MassDOT District 1 TIP Projects Update](#)