



APPROVED FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES May 15, 2025

This was a virtual meeting as allowed by An Act Relative to Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted during the State of Emergency extending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A sec.20 until June 30, 2027

I. Opening

A. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chair Malcolm Fick stated that in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law:

Meetings of the BRPC Commission Committee are recorded. Others may record meetings after informing the Chair that they wish to do so, as long as the method of recording does not interfere with the conduct of the meeting.

Anyone recording the meeting or using an artificial intelligence generated transcription of the meeting is reminded that the approved minutes of the meeting is the official record of the meeting.

If anyone is planning on presenting any materials at this meeting, copies must be left with the Chair to be part of the record of the meeting. Copies may be provided in any form, with electronic versions always being helpful to easily retain the required records.

Robert Ronzio, Becket Delegate, also recorded the meeting.

B. The following Commission members were present:

John Duval – Adams Alternate
Robert Ronzio, Becket Delegate
Mary McGurn – Egremont Delegate
Malcolm Fick – Great Barrington Alternate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Mark Smith – Lenox Delegate
Laura Mensi – Monterey Delegate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
Christine Rasmussen – Stockbridge Alternate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Douglas McNally – Windsor Delegate

Towns with no Delegate or Alternate present:

Alford, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Dalton, Florida, Hancock, Hinsdale, Lanesborough, Mount Washington, New Ashford, New Marlborough, North Adams, Otis, Peru, Richmond, Sandisfield, Savoy, Sheffield,

Tyringham, Washington, West Stockbridge

Staff Present:

Thomas Matuszko, Laura Brennan, Marianne Sniezek, Clete Kus, and Anuja Koirala

Others Present:

Pittsfield Community Television

C. Vote to Approve Minutes of the March 20, 2025 Commission Meeting

Douglas McNally motioned to approve the March 20, 2025, draft meeting minutes. Sheila Irvin seconded the motion. A roll call vote approved it: John Duval, Mary McGurn, Malcolm Fick, Mark Smith, Laura Mensi, Sheila Irvin, Christine Rasmussen, Roger Bolton, and Doug McNally.

Abstained: Buck Donovan

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

Malcolm reported that Roger will not be seeking reappointment to the Commission for FY2026. All thanked Roger Bolton for his 25 years of service to BRPC. Roger has served on the Executive, Environmental Review, and CEDs committees.

Mary McGurn thanked Mark Maloy on behalf of the Egremont Planning Board. His excellent work in helping the Planning Board with a build-out map was beneficial to the town in their second phase of zoning revisions.

III. Comments from the Public

There were no comments.

IV. Presentation of Executive Committee Actions

Executive Committee actions taken at the April 3 and May 1, 2025, meetings were in the meeting materials packet. There were no comments.

V. Vote to Authorize the BRPC Chair to Vote to Approve the FFY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting

The updated FFY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program for the Berkshires establishes the projects that will receive the limited federal transportation funds in the region. The Commission's review of the draft TIP document and associated vote guides the Chair on how to vote at the MPO meeting. The full TIP document is posted on BRPC's website, <https://berkshireplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/DRAFT-Berkshire-MPO-FFY-2026-2030-TIP-Document-1.pdf>

Anuja Koirala presented the important projects for the 5 years with an estimated cost of \$356,517,214.00.

Doug McNally moved to Authorize the BRPC Chair to Vote to Approve the FFY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting

Buck Donovan seconded the motion. A roll call vote approved it: John Duval, Mary McGurn, Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Mark Smith, Laura Mensi, Sheila Irvin, Christine Rasmussen, Roger Bolton, and Doug McNally.

VI. Vote to Authorize the BRPC Chair to Vote to Approve the October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting

The Unified Planning Work Program for FFY 2026 establishes the transportation planning work BRPC staff will be involved in for the coming year. Discussion and input will instruct the BRPC Chair how to vote at the upcoming MPO meeting.

Clete Kus presented the four major activity areas and the twenty-two tasks for the federal fiscal year. The Budget for personnel and direct expenses total \$894,607.

Sheila Irvin to Authorize the BRPC Chair to Vote to Approve the October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting. Laura Mensi seconded the motion. A roll call vote approved it: John Duval, Mary McGurn, Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Mark Smith, Laura Mensi, Sheila Irvin, Christine Rasmussen, Roger Bolton, and Doug McNally.

VII. Vote to Submit the 2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Performance Report

The 2025 CEDS Performance Report, due by June 30, 2025, is required to be submitted annually to the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Laura Brennen presented the essential highlights of the CEDS Performance Report. Laura explained that the report is a five-year guiding document.

Roger Bolton moved to approve submitting the 2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Performance Report and allowing staff to make any minor final edits before submitting it in June. Mark Smith seconded the motion. A roll call vote approved it: John Duval, Mary McGurn, Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Mark Smith, Laura Mensi, Sheila Irvin, Christine Rasmussen, Roger Bolton, and Doug McNally.

VIII. Vote to Adopt the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission FY 2026 Budget

In accordance with the BRPC bylaws, BRPC must adopt an annual budget for the coming fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2024. The Finance Committee recommended the version contained in the meeting material.

Malcolm reported that the finance committee recommended the conservative budget, and the Executive Committee also reviewed the FY2026 Budget. Buck thank Marianne and the admin staff for the wonderful work. Tom pointed out the increase in expenses related to the transition of IT functions from the network to the cloud.

Doug McNally to Adopt the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission FY 2026 Budget. John Duval seconded the motion. A roll call vote approved it: John Duval, Mary McGurn, Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Mark Smith, Laura Mensi, Sheila Irvin, Christine Rasmussen, Roger Bolton, and Doug McNally.

IX. Authorization for Executive Committee to Act on Behalf of the Commission

BRPC Bylaws require Commission members to vote annually reconfirming the Executive Committee's authorization to act in the name of and on behalf of the Commission.

Malcolm stated that the Executive Committee meets monthly to review and approve actions. Approval is needed before the July Executive Committee meeting.

Tom explained the three ways to authorize the Executive Committee to act on behalf of the Commission: Email, Survey Monkey poll, or return the paper form included in the meeting materials. It isn't easy to receive 22 votes from the 32 municipalities. The Alternate Delegate can vote if the community does not have a Delegate (the Planning Board votes to send a representative as the Delegate, which should be done annually). A Delegate who wants to remain should get BRPC a record that they will remain the Delegate. Alternates must be appointed annually by the chief elected official, the Board of Selectmen, the Town Manager, or the Mayor. In the future, we need to review the bylaws to change the requirement to a simple majority.

X. Report and Discussion of the Executive Director's Report

The 5th Thursday event was discussed, and all were encouraged to attend and share with their communities to sign up.

Malcolm asked all to give any updated information related to town meetings.

Malcolm reported the closing of the Simons Rock of approximately 275 acres of residential zoned land. The town of Great Barrington passed a campus overlay district, which allows most of the existing buildings to be used by right and expands other uses with a special permit.

Mark Smith reported what happened at Lenox's town meeting. Food Establishment bylaw related to food trucks was adopted. They tried to get three other bylaws to the annual meeting without success. They were institutional uses, fence bylaws, and signage bylaws. An ADU rewrite was passed in December to allow duplexes.

Mary McGurn reported that Egremont had a public hearing on a citizen petition, all related to ADU regulations. One was voted down, and the other two, the petitioner decided, would amend both. The good news is that the CPA, with a 3% surtax passed.

Doug McNally reported that a new ADU had passed in Windsor.

Buck Donovan reported that Lee has restricted that if you have an ADU, you are not allowed to have a Short-term Rental (STR) on either property, your primary or your ADU. The town has a new software program to track Short-term Rentals.

Christine reported that Stockbridge looked very close to granting a permit or redevelopment of the Desisto property. The town received a Citizen Petition that someone wanted to take the conservation easement off his forest open land, and a \$600,000 developer is willing to pay. The town has the issue of deciding to pay the \$600,000 out of free cash.

XI. Adjournment

Mark Smith made a motion to adjourn. Doug McNally seconded the motion. A roll call approved the motion: John Duval, Mary McGurn, Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Mark Smith, Laura Mensi, Sheila Irvin, Christine Rasmussen, Roger Bolton, and Doug McNally.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Documents and Exhibits Used:

BMPO FFY 2026-2030 TIP
FFY26 UPWP
2025 Annual CEDS Performance Report Berkshire County
FY2026 Finance Budget Memo
EC Authorization Delegate Vote memo
Additional Meeting Material – CEDS Presentation