



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

MALCOLM FICK, Chair
BUCK DONOVAN, Vice-Chair
SHEILA IRVIN, Clerk
THOMAS MATUSZKO,
Executive Director

MEETING NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
on Thursday, November 20, 2025 at **7:00 p.m.**

This will be 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

The Meeting can be accessed at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3926128831?omn=88636813528>

Meeting ID: 392 612 8831

The Meeting Notice, Agenda, and meeting materials are on BRPC's website:

www.berkshireplanning.org.

Click the calendar of events, then the meeting name, and follow the link to materials.

Agenda

(All times approximate)

I. Opening

(7:00-7:05)

- a) *Call to Order and Open Meeting Law Statement*
- b) *Roll Call of Commission Members Attending the Meeting*
- c) *Vote to Approve Minutes of the September 18, 2025 Full Commission Meeting*

II. Comments from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates and Alternates

(7:05-7:10)

BRPC Delegates & Alternates may offer comments on any item not on the agenda. Discussion or action will be referred to a future meeting and not discussed at this meeting.

III. Comments from the Public

(7:10-7:15)

Members of the public may offer comments regarding topics on the agenda or other matters they wish to bring to the Commission's attention. Comments are to be directed to the Commission. Commenters must state their names and the city or town they are from. Any discussion or action will be referred to a future meeting and not discussed at this meeting.

IV. Presentation & Discussion of Executive Committee Actions

(7:15-7:20)

Executive Committee actions taken on the Commission's behalf during the October 2, 2025, and November 6, 2025, meetings are presented for information and discussion.

V. Vote to Elect Sam Haupt as BRPC Treasurer for FY 2026

(7:20-7:25)

John Duval, the then Alternate Delegate from Adams who was elected in July 2025 as BRPC Treasurer for FY 26, has resigned. A new Treasurer needs to be elected. The BRPC Commission Development Committee has recommended Sam Haupt as Treasurer.

VI. Vote to Approve Mary McGurn as an At-Large Member of the Executive Committee as Appointed by the Commission Chair

(7:25-7:30)

The BRPC Bylaws require the Commission to approve the Chair's appointment of at-large members of the BRPC Executive Committee. The Commission Chair has appointed Mary McGurn, the Delegate from Egremont, to replace Sam Haupt for the remainder of FY 26.

VII. Vote to Allow Non-Commission Members to Make up a Majority of the Membership of the BRPC Environmental Review Committee, BRPC Regional Issues Committee, Berkshire Brownfields Committee, and Berkshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee (7:30–7:40)

The BRPC Bylaws allow the Commission to exempt the requirement that standing and special committees of the Commission do not allow Non-Commission members to make up a majority of the membership of a committee. Greater participation by Non-Commission members would enhance the activities of these committees.

VIII. Vote to Establish the Special BRPC Executive Director Search Committee, whose Duties shall be to Establish and Conduct the Initial Hiring Process, make Recommendations to the Executive Committee and Commission about Candidates for Interviews, and make a Recommendation to the Executive Committee and the Commission on the Hiring of a New BRPC Executive Director and whose members shall be Buck Donovan, the Committee Chair,(subject to approval by the Commission), Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Kyle Hanlon, John Duval, Laura Kittross, and Marybeth Mitts (7:40-7:50)

In preparation for the current Executive Director's upcoming retirement in March 2026, the Commission needs to establish a process to select a replacement. The Executive Committee recommended a process that includes conducting the search in-house with a 7-member search committee. The BRPC bylaws require the members and duties of newly created committees be clearly defined and recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which such a committee is authorized.

IX. Vote to Approve Buck Donovan as Chair of the BRPC Executive Director Search Committee as Appointed by the Commission Chair (7:50-7:55)

The BRPC Bylaws require the Commission to approve the appointment of Committee Chairs. The Commission Chair has appointed Buck Donovan as Chair of the BRPC Executive Director Search Committee.

X. Presentation and Discussion about the BRPC Energy and Environmental Program (7:55-8:05)

BRPC Energy and Environmental Program Manager Melissa Provencher will provide a brief overview of the work of the BRPC Energy and Environmental Planning Program

XI. Open Discussion by Commission Members about Current Items of Interest in their City or Town (8:05 – 8:25)

Delegates and Alternates are encouraged to discuss key items of interest in their City or Town, such as town meeting updates, development proposals, changes in municipal leadership, proposed development projects, etc.

XII. Report and Discussion of the Executive Director's Report (8:25 – 8:30)

XIII. Adjournment (8:30)

Other interested citizens and officials are invited to attend.

All times listed are estimates of when specific agenda items may be discussed.

City and Town Clerks: Please post this notice
BRPC has adopted the BRPC website www.berkshireplanning.org
as its official posting method as allowed by
940 CMR29.00 section 29.03 (3) (b) since November 2010.



DRAFT FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES **September 18, 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 7:01 pm.

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, if the method of recording does not interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Others recording the meeting were an AI notetaker and PCTV.

B. The following Commission members were present:

Christian Rowe - Adams Delegate
Al Blake - Becket Delegate
Diana Mott - Becket Alternate
Mary McGurn - Egremont Delegate
Malcolm Fick - Great Barrington Alternate
Keith Harrison - Hinsdale Delegate
Buck Donovan - Lee Delegate
Laura Mensi - Monterey Delegate
John Flecher - Otis Delegate
Sheila Irvin - Pittsfield Delegate
Cassandra Williams - Savoy Delegate
Sari Hoy - Sheffield Delegate
Christine Rasmussen - Stockbridge Alternate
Erik Reardon - Williamstown Delegate
Sarah Gardner - Williamstown Alternate
Douglas McNally - Windsor Delegate

Towns with no Delegate or Alternate present:

Alford, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Dalton, Florida, Hancock, Lanesborough, Lenox, Mount Washington, New Ashford, New Marlborough, North Adams, Peru, Richmond, Sandisfield, Tyringham, Washington, West Stockbridge

Staff Present:

Laura Brennan, Marianne Snizek, and Brett Roberts

Others Present:

Claire Morehouse, Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)
ADU Coordinator
Filipe Zamborlini, Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)
Manager, Community Assistance Unit
Leanne Yinger, Lanesborough

C. Vote to Approve Minutes of the July 17, 2025 Commission Meeting

Doug McNally motioned to approve the May 15, 2025, draft meeting minutes. Christine Rasmussen seconded the motion. A roll call vote approved it: Mary McGurn, Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Laura Mensi, Sheila Irvin, Sari Hoy, Christine Rasmussen, Sarah Gardner, and Doug McNally.

Abstained: Christian Rowe, Al Blake, Diana Mott, Keith Harrison, John Fletcher, Cassandra Williams

II. Welcome to Newly Appointed Alternate or Alternate Delegates

Malcolm welcomed new Commission members and encouraged all to attend the Commission meetings. Malcolm also suggested that people look through the list of committees and see if something interests them and consider serving on one.

Adams	Christian Rowe	Delegate
Becket	Al Blake	Delegate
Hinsdale	Keith Harrison	Delegate
Savoy	Cassandra Williams	Delegate

Laura Brennan reported the Commissioner handbook had been emailed to Alternates and Delegates. BRPC is happy to provide an orientation.

III. Comments from Delegates and Alternate Delegates

Douglas McNally informed everyone that the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) Director is retiring in March. The BRTA board has extended an offer to a candidate for the role.

Al Blake commented on the following items:

- Siting Reform – It has been announced where the hearings will be, and none of them are in the Berkshires. I would like to see if BRPC can assist with a hearing held in Berkshire County.
Malcolm indicated that the Commission sent many letters and comments on the siting reform.
- Seasonal Communities Designation – Becket tried to vote on it at their last town meeting, but it got tabled because no one could understand it. Al asked if BRPC could assist the communities.

IV. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

V. Presentation on and Discussion about the new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Law and Regulations

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) ADU Coordinator Claire Morehouse discussed resources and technical assistance material, highlighted key FAQs and best practices, highlighted current and upcoming EOHLC ADU-related initiatives, and engaged in a question-and-answer session.

Claire covered some key highlights of the ADU law and regulations. She highlighted some resources that can hopefully help planners' day-to-day work and current efforts, and shared new initiatives, best practices, and over 30 frequently asked questions and their answers. There are webinars, recordings, and slides on the ADU law and regulations, ADU model zoning, MAPC, and MHP shared information about the ADU Model, and how cities and towns can use this tool. The Office of the Attorney General of Massachusetts Municipal Law (MLU) decision Look up tool is an important tool.

Current efforts:

- Supporting cities and towns in amending or adopting ADU zoning
- Bylaw review of bylaws & decisions published
- Outreach and Education

ADU Initiatives:

- Design – goal to spread awareness and lower costs
- CIP Funding - \$5 million announced to support pre-development and development costs
- Data Collection – over 500 ADUs have been approved as of 6/30/2025

Questions and Comments from the Commission:

Al Blake: Becket has chosen to put the option for a second ADU and asked if there are any sample bylaws on that, and your opinion?

Response: The model zoning shows how to handle the second ADU. The second ADU, as is written in the statute, must be obtained by special permit. It was suggested that Becket contact the Attorney General's office, Municipal Law Unit, for more information.

Mary McGurn: Egremont adopted an ADU bylaw in 2019. It was updated on February 4, 2025, along with several other major changes to their zoning. Egremont had two strikeouts on their ADU bylaw: a ban on ADUs, which already had more than two dwellings, and a limitation of how many units can be rented. The AG struck both out. The town will have a special town meeting to rectify the strikeouts.

Laura Mensi, from Monterey, asked if the town could sublet ADU units. Is it just for workhouse housing, or is it for any other kind of housing?

Response: The law left it up to localities whether they wanted to regulate short-term rentals with ADUs. The law prohibits the use and occupancy restrictions. The short-term rental law, Chapter 64G, regulates short-term rentals. The law does not address subletting.

Can someone rent the protected-use ADU to anyone? Yes
Can the property owner live in the main home and rent the ADU? Yes.
Can the property owner live in the ADU and rent the principal dwelling? Yes.
Can the property owner not live on the property and have both units rented?
Yes
Can the property owner have a family member live in the ADU? Yes.

Claire Morehouse, Accessory Dwelling Unit Coordinator
Claire.Morehouse@mass.gov

Filipe Zamborlini, Manager, Community Assistance Unit
Filipe.Zamborlini@mass.gov

The Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) presentation can be found on BRPC's website under additional meeting materials:
<https://berkshireplanning.org/about/agendas-and-minutes/>. For more information: www.mass.gov/adu

VI. Presentation of Executive Committee Actions

Executive Committee actions taken at the August 7 and September 4, 2025 meetings were in the meeting packet. Malcolm explained that the Executive Committee meets monthly. The Commission can ask questions or comment on the Executive Committee's Actions. There were no questions or comments.

VII. Presentation of the Home Modification Loan Program

The Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP) provides no-interest loans to modify or adapt the homes of older adults and individuals with disabilities residing Massachusetts. BRPC administers that program in Berkshire County for the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC). Principal Planner Brett Roberts described the program.

HMLP is available to all 32 towns and cities to income-eligible residents. It is a 50-year loan program that's funded through the state, which provides up to \$50,000 for home modification for things like bathroom and kitchen modifications, ramps, stair lifts, platform lifts, sensory or therapy spaces in a home, hardwire alarm systems, fences, and accessory dwelling units. The program will help pay to construct an accessory dwelling unit and allow someone to live on the property and help care for the homeowner as they age, whether a home healthcare worker or a family member.

Brett explained that the income restrictions are based on household size. For a household of one, that household would have to make more than \$231,600 to be ineligible. Assets are checked, but that doesn't include any pension, Roths,

or retirement funds. The primary home is not included in the calculation. The applicant must own the home, but landlords can apply on behalf of their tenants for the program.

Other information:

- Massachusetts Historical Commission - Any exterior-type work must be reviewed and could be a barrier.
- Wells and Septic systems are not allowed under the program.

The Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP) flyer can be found on BRPC's website under additional meeting materials:

<https://berkshireplanning.org/about/agendas-and-minutes/>

VIII. Open Discussion by Commission Members about Current Items of Interest in their City or Town

Delegates and Alternates were encouraged to discuss key items of interest in their city or Town, such as town meeting updates, development proposals, changes in municipal leadership, proposed development projects, etc.

Mary McGurn: Egremont will have an October 28 Special Town Meeting, which will include a zoning warrant article, but that's preliminary to the December 9th Special Town Meeting. Mary discussed a serious housing problem, and Egremont's zoning does not address it. She mentioned Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and the excellent housing production plan they produced for the town's Municipal Housing Trust. The town put together a fairly aggressive number of bylaws, including inclusionary affordability and several different housing types, including Cottage Cluster and mixed-use development. A tax incentive program should be implemented to encourage people to rent year-round instead of short-term rentals because they can get a certain percentage off their property taxes. The town also recently adopted a CPA at 3%.

Sari Hoy asked Mary to share Egremont's bylaws.

Al Blake from Becket asked if Egremont addressed tiny homes in their bylaws. Response: Yes, that is one of the affordable-by-design housing types that's allowed in the zoning for Cottage Cluster.

Doug McNally suggested working with the Commission to request a grant to help design models that allow growth in small rural communities that do not have sewer or water—a cluster with a single septic system that serves multiple residents.

Laura Mensi: Monterey only has one parcel of land that might be able to be used for housing. Other than that, it's all farmland.

Mary reported that Mark Maloy at BRPC had produced a build-out map for Egremont. The map gave the town an idea of the land that is not conserved or restricted that could be used for housing.

Laura Brennan reported that BRPC applied for the grant for BRPC to do a build-out analysis for all Berkshire County communities.

Al Blake: I think one of the things that could housing is that Becket has a lot of land that is not owned by the town but could use CPC money to acquire land.

Farmers, he stated, have a lot of land, but they don't use it all and might be amenable if the town offered to buy 5 or 10 acres to be used for housing.

IX. Executive Director's Report

A. BRPC Delegates and Alternate Delegates

The BRPC Policy body is made up of two representatives from each of the 32 municipalities in Berkshire County, the Delegate or Alternate Delegate (also called Alternate for short).

- Delegate: One municipal representative to BRPC, the Delegate, is from the Planning Board in a town or the Community Development Board in a city. This member is voted on by the Planning or Community Development Board.
- Alternate Delegate (Alternate): The other municipal representative to BRPC, the Alternate Delegate, is appointed by either the Select Board, Town Manager, or Mayor. This is an annual appointment. The only requirement for this position is that the Alternate Delegate be a resident of the municipality they represent.

If a city or town Planning or Community Development Board has not voted for a Delegate, a request was made to do so as soon as possible. A fillable PDF form was included in the meeting material. For Select Board, Town Manager, or Mayor who have not appointed an Alternate Delegate, a request was made to do so as soon as possible.

B. BRPC Committee Membership

Much of the policy work of BRPC is done by various committees. Included in the meeting material was a list of Committee members. A request was made to consider joining one. BRPC staff are glad to speak with members about the work of any of these Committees.

C. Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) Western MA Conference

CPTC is coming to Western MA for an in-person conference on Saturday, October 4. Planning Board, Zoning Board, citizen or professional planner, were encouraged to attend the conference which will be held at Greenfield Community College in Greenfield, MA. This year, there will be four sessions in the morning (choice of one topic per timeslot), plus a continental breakfast will be available. Read more and register on the CPTC website:

<https://masscptc.org/index.php/training/western-conference/>

D. MARPA/DLS Annual Conference

A request was made to join the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) and the Division of Local Services (DLS) at the 2025 MARPA and DLS Conference. The conference will be held on Tuesday, October 7 at the Hogan Campus Center of College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. Doors will open at 8:30 am, and the conference will begin at 9 am. Registration and additional information are available at: <https://www.mapc.org/event/2025-marpa-and-dls-conference/>

E. BRPC Annual Meeting – October 16 at Proprietor's Lodge in Pittsfield

The Annual Meeting will be held from 5 to 7 pm on October 16 at Proprietor's Lodge, 22 Waubeek Rd., Pittsfield. The event will begin with networking, a cash bar, and hearty appetizers, followed by guest speakers and presentation of the 2025 Kusik Awards. Honorees include: Ellen Kennedy, BCC; Rene Wood, Town of Sheffield; Meg Bandarra, Unpaved Trails for All; one additional honoree TBD.

[Tickets are \\$35 and are available for purchase on Eventbrite.com.](#)

Invoicing for tickets needs to be done through Laura Brennan at lbrennan@berkshireplanning.org prior to October 8.

Laura reported that October is National Community Planning Month and highlighted that the four very impactful women from around the region will be presented the Kusik award. Malcolm reinforced that all of you should go back and talk to your boards and committees about attending the annual meeting. It's always a good time, with good speakers and a chance to interact with others throughout the county.

F. Berkshire County Municipal Officials Networking

The Berkshire Municipal Managers Association, Berkshire Selectmen's Association, and BRPC continue to collaborate on quarterly networking events for elected and appointed officials. The next networking event will occur on Thursday, October 30, at the Greylock Glen Outdoor Center from 5 to 7 pm. Our special guest will be Inspector General Jeffery Shapiro. Please register in advance on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/berkshire-county-municipal-officials-networking-tickets-1497313257259?aff=oddtcreator>

G. Seasonal Communities Regulations

The Seasonal Communities Advisory Council met on September 11 to receive a Draft Regulation Update from EOHLC. The presentation included an overview of key definitions, including for an "Attainable Housing Unit," and the potential conditions related to designation, including Acceptance & Denial, possible revocation of Seasonal Communities status, and proposed zoning requirements or waivers thereof. The meeting also discussed Year-Round Housing and Employment-Specific (essential public employee preference) or Vocation-Specific (artist) Housing and explored some possible uses of the \$2M included in Governor Healey's CIP for Seasonal Communities. Draft regulations will be made available for public comment for one month, as the next step. Presentation slides were included.

Please note: The presentation slides offer a plain language overview of the current status of draft regulations. The summaries provided are not complete restatements of current draft regulations, and adjustments may be made before draft regulations are made available for public comment.

X. Adjournment

Doug McNally made a motion to adjourn. Sheila Irvin seconded the motion. A roll call approved the motion: Christian Rowe, Al Blake, Mary McGurn, Malcolm Fick, Keith Harrison, Buck Donovan, Laura Mensi, Sheila Irvin, John Fletcher, Cassandra Williams, Sari Hoy, Christine Rasmussen, Erik Reardon,

and Doug McNally. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Documents and Exhibits Used:

- *2025.07.17 Full Commission Minutes Draft*
- *Executive Committee Action Memo August and September 2025*
- *2025.09.11 Assistant Director Memo*
- *Comment letter on EPA's Endangerment Finding*
- *Comment letter on Social Consumption Draft Regulations*
- *Seasonal Communities Advisory Council Presentation*
- *FY26 Delegate Certification Form*
- *FY26 Alternate Delegate Appointment Form*
- *BRPC Committee Membership*
- *Additional Meeting Material – Presentation of the new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Law and Regulations, Home Modification Loan Program flyer*



MEMORANDUM

TO: Delegates and Alternates, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
FROM: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director
DATE: November 13, 2025
SUBJ: Executive Committee Actions taken at October 2, 2025 and November 6, 2025 Meetings

Per the BRPC bylaws, actions taken by the Executive Committee on the Commission's behalf are reported and presented for discussion at the next Commission meeting. The Executive Committee took the following actions at the October 2, 2025, and November 6, 2025 Executive Committee meetings:

Executive Committee Actions on October 2, 2025

Approved the minutes of September 4, 2025 BRPC Executive Committee meeting.

Approved the August 27, 2025 – September 18, 2025 Expenditures Report.

Approved the Submission of a Grant Application to the Williamstown Community Chest for a Fund for Williamstown Grant*

The Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director to submit a grant application to Williamstown Community Chest for the Fund for Williamstown grant and sign any resulting contracts and agreements. The \$2,500 grant would provide funding for an innovative 6-week fall prevention program in which a trained MMA instructor would teach older adults (55+) at The Williamstown Council on Aging to fall safely through exposure to mixed martial arts (MMA) techniques that are often taught in "hard" martial arts classes like jujitsu and judo.

Approved the Submission of a Grant Application to the MOSAIC RIZE Municipal Matching Grant Program*

The Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the MOSAIC RIZE Municipal Matching Grant Program and sign any resulting contracts and agreements. This up to \$30,000 grant would allow for work to abate the impact of opioids in North Berkshire County.

Approved the Executive Director's FY 25 Performance Review and FY 26 Salary Adjustment*

The Executive Committee approved the Executive Director's FY 25 Performance Review at an "exceptional" level, and a FY 26 3% salary increase retroactive to July 1, 2025. BRPC's Bylaws require "On an annual basis, the Executive Director shall prepare a review of his/her accomplishments for the preceding year and goals for the upcoming years as part of his/her performance evaluation by the Executive Committee." BRPC salaries are based on performance reviews.

Executive Committee Actions on November 6, 2025

Approved the minutes of the October 2, 2025 BRPC Executive Committee meeting.

Approved the September 19, 2025 – October 28, 2025 Expenditures Report.

Ratified the Submission of a Grant Application to the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) FY25 Community and Schools Youth Drug Prevention Program

The Executive Committee ratified the submission of a grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) FY25 Community and Schools Youth Drug Prevention Program and authorize the Executive Director to sign any resulting contracts and agreements. This three-year grant opportunity offers up to \$750,000 to support school-based youth substance use prevention in coordination with law enforcement and community coalitions by expanding the SPARK (Supporting Positive Actions for Resilience & Knowledge) Coalition's presence in Pittsfield Public Schools and Central Berkshire Regional School District.

Ratified the Submission of a Grant Application to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection MS4 Municipal Assistance Grant Program

The Executive Committee ratified the submission of a grant application to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection MS4 Municipal Assistance Grant Program and authorized the Executive Director to sign any resulting contracts and agreements. This \$63,225 grant would provide off-the-shelf readily implementable BMP designs, as well as the background information to siting and amendments, to Massachusetts MS4 operators so that they can more easily integrate structural BMPs into ongoing capital improvements and other publicly funded projects.

Authorized the Submission of a Grant Application to the Massachusetts Office of Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention (OBHPP) Grant for Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention under the Tier A funding category*

The Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Massachusetts Office of Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention (OBHPP) Grant for Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention under the Tier A funding category and sign any resulting contracts and agreements. The \$212,500 amount in the initial grant period will implement a Community EMS program focusing on preventive outreach services to reduce loneliness and alcohol use while promoting physical wellbeing among older adults (65+) in Berkshire County.

Authorized the Submission of a Grant Application to the Massachusetts Office of Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention (OBHPP) Grant for Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention under the Tier B funding category

The Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Massachusetts Office of Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention (OBHPP) Grant for Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention under the Tier B funding category and sign any resulting contracts and agreements. The

\$354,167 amount in the initial grant period will expand SPARK's youth mental health promotion and substance misuse prevention efforts in Pittsfield. Key components include teen-led vaping and Positive Childhood Experiences (PCE) education for 4th and 5th graders, expansion of the "Cheer Without the Cheers" campaign to reduce adult alcohol consumption, and new efforts to further reduce adolescent alcohol and cannabis use.

Approved BRPC's Updated Continuation of Medical Benefits After Retirement Policy*

The Executive Committee approved BRPC's updated Continuation of Medical Benefits After Retirement policy. The changes from the current Continuation of Medical Benefits After Retirement Policy specify eligibility for retirement as being consistent with the Massachusetts State Employee Retirement System (MSERS), clarify pre-retirement plan benefit requirements, clarify language around a surrounding spouse, specify retirees must enter into the MSERS immediately after separation from employment with BRPC, and require prompt retiree share payments. There was no change to the major substantive issue of the contribution rate.

Approved the Description of Responsibilities of the Executive Director to be Used in the Executive Director Search Process

The Executive Committee approved the description of responsibilities of the Executive Director to be used in the Executive Director Search Process. The approved version is similar to the version that was approved by the Executive Committee five-year review as required in the BRPC Bylaws.

Recommended an Executive Director Hiring Process to the Commission at the November 20, 2025, Commission Meeting

The Executive Committee approved a recommendation for the Executive Director Hiring Process to the Commission at the November 20, 2025, Commission Meeting.

BRPC Executive Director Search Process (as recommended by the BRPC Executive Committee)

The BRPC Executive Committee recommends the Commission use the following process outline, based on the 2017 – 2018 hiring process to hire the next BRPC Executive Director. Once the BRPC Executive Director Search Committee is formed, the final process will be determined by the Search Committee.

Activity	Responsible Party	Schedule	Notes
Establish the BRPC Executive Director Search Committee (Search Committee)	Commission	November 20, 2025	The search process will be done in-house. The BRPC Bylaws (Bylaws) require the Commission to establish Standing Committee
Appoint the Search Committee Chair	Commission Chair (Chair)	Prior to November 20, 2025	The Bylaws state the Chair appoints committee chairs
Appoint the Search Committee members	Chair, with input from Search Committee Chair	Prior to November 20, 2025	The Bylaws state the Chair appoints committee members with consultation of the Committee Chair. The members should primarily be current or former Delegates or Alternates with familiarity of the workings of BRPC. The Search Committee should be composed of 5-7 members. The Search Committee must contain less than a quorum of the parent body (less than 5, current Executive Committee members, less than 8 Commission members)
Approve the Chair's appointment of the Search Committee Chair and members	Commission	November 20, 2025	The Bylaws require the Commission to approve the Chairs appointments of committee Chairs and members
Approve advertising material Approve advertising locations	Search Committee w/ BRPC staff support	SC meeting #1 (virtual) – week of Dec 1??	Virtual open public meeting. 2017 – 2018 hiring process advertised in 15 local, state, NE region, and national locations. It is recommended these sites be used again with several more added.
Advertise position Collect applications	BRPC Staff	Immediately after SC mtg #1 until new Executive Director is hired.	Advertisement to state that application reviews begin January 9, 2026 and will continue until position is filled. Applicant material initially kept confidential
Approve pre-screening eligibility criteria Approve initial draft of 1 st round interview questions	Search Committee w/BRPC staff support	SC mtg #2 (virtual)– week of Dec.15??	Virtual open public meeting
Pre-screen applicants for eligibility as they are received	BRPC Staff	Immediately after SC mtg #2 to January 9, 2026	Search Committee to decide where there are questions related to eligibility
Circulate 1 st round interview draft questions to Delegates, Alternates and BRPC staff for comment	BRPC Staff	Immediately after SC #2 to December 31 st	
Approve 1 st round interview questions	Search Committee w/BRPC staff support	SC mtg #3 (virtual) – week of Jan 5 th ??	Virtual open public meeting

Activity	Responsible Party	Schedule	Notes
Approve applicant evaluation and ranking criteria			
Provide eligible applicants' material to Search Committee members	BRPC Staff	Jan 9 th	Applicant material to remain confidential by Search Committee members
Evaluate and rank eligible applicants	Every Individual Search Committee member	Jan 9 th through Jan 19 th	Applicant material to remain confidential by Search Committee members
Compile Search Committee member evaluations and rankings into master composite ranking	BRPC Staff	Jan 19 th through Jan 23 rd	
Approve initial draft of 2 nd round interview questions Determine which candidates will be given 1 st round interviews	Search Committee w/BRPC staff support	SC mtg #4 (preferable in-person, virtual possible) – week of Jan 26 th	2 nd round interview questions discussion must be done in open public meeting Deciding which candidates to invite to 1 st round interviews is done in Executive Session
Circulate 2 nd round interview draft questions to Delegates, Alternates and BRPC staff for comment Arrange 1 st round interviews	BRPC Staff	Immediately after SC #4 to February 6 th	
Conduct 1 st round interviews	Search Committee w/BRPC staff support	Jan 26 th – February 6 th (in-person or virtual) (interviews may be done in one long meeting or spread out over several meetings)	1 st round interviews to be conducted in Executive Session. Depending on the number of 1 st round interview candidates and their locations, 1 st round interviews may be done in-person (preferable) or virtual. All candidates to be interviewed the same way.
Approve 2 nd round interview questions Determine which candidates, at least 2 but preferably 3, will be offered 2 nd round interview	Search Committee w/BRPC staff support	SC mtg # 5 (preferable in-person, virtual possible) – week of Feb 9 th	2 nd round interview questions approved in open public meeting Candidates selected for final interview to be done in Executive Session
Arrange final in-person interviews for at least 2 candidates	BRPC Staff	Immediately after SC #5	
Conduct in-person final interviews for at least 2 candidates	Search Committee w/BRPC staff support	SC mtg #6, in-person between Feb 16 th – Feb 27 th	Open public meeting. Delegates and Alternates encouraged to attend
Vote to approve the next BRPC Executive Director Vote to establish committee to set new ED salary, terms	Commission	March 19, 2026	Open public meeting. Delegates and Alternates encouraged to attend

Role of the Search Committee

The role of the BRPC Executive Director Search Committee is to establish and conduct the initial hiring process, make recommendations to the Commission about candidates for interviews, and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee and the Commission on the hiring of a new BRPC Executive Director.

The General Process

The Search Committee will provide oversight about the content and location of advertising material. BRPC staff will place the advertisements and collect the responses. The Search Committee will prepare initial pre-screening criteria. Once the position is advertised and responses received, BRPC will conduct an initial pre-screening of applicants only to determine eligibility with the Search Committee to decide if there are questions on eligibility. Search Committee prepares evaluation and ranking criteria. Applicant material for all eligible applicants will be forwarded to Search Committee members who will conduct an initial evaluation and ranking of applicants. A certain number of highly qualified applicants will be invited for initial interviews with the Search Committee in Executive Session. A smaller subset of those applicants will be provided with the opportunity for second interviews in public session. The Search Committee must recommend at least two, preferably three candidates to the Commission for a vote by the Commission.

The Specific Activities include but are not limited to:

• Approve the advertising material	• Approve the advertising locations
• Approve initial screening criteria	• Approve eligibility where initial screening is inconclusive
• Approve evaluation and ranking criteria	• Evaluate and rank eligible candidates
• Prepare initial interview questions (Delegate, Alternate, staff input)	• Conduct initial interviews
• Prepare 2 nd round questions (Delegate, Alternate, staff input)	• Conduct second interviews (in-person)
• Recommend at least two candidates (preferably 3) to the Commission for approval	

Time Commitment

The 2017-2018 hiring process required nine meetings of the Search Committee, approximately every two – three weeks from October – March. The 2017-2018 meetings were held in person. Interviews should be conducted in person. The use of material from the 2017 – 2018 process may shorten the time commitment, but a significant time commitment will still be required. The preferred schedule is to have a vote on the next BRPC Executive Director by the Commission at their regularly scheduled March 19, 2026 meeting. For fair consideration of all the candidates, Search Committee members should be prepared to attend all meetings.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates & Alternates
FROM: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director
DATE: November 14, 2025
SUBJ: November 20, 2025 Commission Meeting

A. BRPC Committee Membership

Much of the policy work of BRPC is done by various committees. Attached is a list of Committee members. Please consider joining one. We are more than glad to speak with you about the work of any of these Committees if you are interested.

B. Grid Modernization Advisory Council

The [Grid Modernization Advisory Council \(GMAC\)](#) is hosting its second in-person event in 2025, "*The Future Grid from a Municipal Lens & New Customer Connections Workshop*" to convene municipal stakeholders and community leaders who are interested in or taking steps to decarbonize and electrify their city or town. Attendees will hear from a panel of speakers from the GMAC and electric distribution companies (EDCs) to learn about the actions Massachusetts is taking to modernize and proactively plan our electric grid, including the [Electric-Sector Modernization Plans ESMPs](#). Western Massachusetts municipal leaders will share their successes and challenges with navigating electrification. Attendees will engage in facilitated breakout discussions to explore opportunities and challenges of updating our electric grid and identify priority topics for the GMAC's future work. Additionally, attendees have the option to learn more about distribution system infrastructure through a "virtual" tour of an electric substation.

Municipal and community stakeholders are invited to stay for an afternoon "*New Customer Connections Workshop*" led by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) to discuss the new customer connection process, electrification barriers, customer knowledge gaps, and potential solutions.

Information on the new customer connections initiative is at the [Improving Interconnection to the Electric Grid webpage](#).

The event will be held at UMass Amherst, Campus Center Marriott Center, 1 Campus Center Way, Amherst, MA 01003 on Friday, December 12, 2025. The GMAC event is from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. The EEA Workshop is from 2:30 – 4:00 PM. Registration is required at [Registration required](#)

C. District Local Technical Assistance

With funding support from the Massachusetts Legislature, once again BRPC can offer technical assistance to municipalities on a wide range of topics. Solicitations for assistance will be going out soon to municipalities where municipal leaders can specify the type of assistance they would like from BRPC staff, with work to be started early in calendar year and hopefully mostly wrapped up by next December. Contact Community Planning and Development Program Manager CJ Hoss, choss@berkshireplanning.org for more information.

D. Seasonal Communities Advisory Council Meeting

The next meeting of the Seasonal Communities Advisory Council will be Wednesday November 19, 2025 at 9:30 AM. This will be virtual only. The meeting notice, agenda, and meeting information can be obtained at [Seasonal Communities | Mass.gov](#)



BRPC

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Committee Descriptions

An integral feature of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission is the work done by the standing committees of the Commission. BRPC currently has the following committees, comprised of delegates, alternates, and members from outside BRPC.

Standing Committees

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is responsible for oversight of the business affairs and formulates general programs for the Commission in accordance with specific needs, plans, and goals of the Commission. It reports its actions at the next Commission meeting. The Executive Committee has the following powers: disbursement of Commission funds based upon a warrant approved by the Executive Committee; borrowing funds in anticipation of revenue; authorizing signatory authority on checks; hearing and resolving personnel grievances; establishing personnel policies; authorizing applications for federal, state and local aid; seeking contributions; entering into contracts; approving comments on proposals of a regional or inter-community nature; approving submittal of comments for projects undergoing state or federal agency review; establishing policy for responding to requests for planning related technical assistance; authorizing planning services; and approving submittal of comments on legislation or regulations which affect the region or member municipalities.

Environmental Review Committee

The Environmental Review Committee reviews projects requiring state or federal environmental permits. It may also review requests for funding assistance from state or federal agencies and local land use actions for potential regional impacts and compliance with adopted regional plans. The committee advises the Commission or the Executive Committee regarding its recommendations and requested conditions before a given project or action is approved or denied by state, federal, or local authorities.

Commission Development Committee

The Commission Development Committee considers Commission education, membership, structure, and process, including periodic evaluations of the performance of the Commission. Periodically, the Committee also reviews the Commission's bylaws to determine whether amendments are needed to enhance the operations of the Commission. A nominating subcommittee of this committee recommends a slate of officer candidates to the Commission for the next fiscal year.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee oversees the Commission's financial operations and reviews the annual audit. It recommends the per capita assessments of the member cities and towns for the next fiscal year to the Commission for approval no later than February. It also recommends a full budget for the next fiscal year for Commission action before the beginning of the next fiscal year.

Regional Issues Committee

The Regional Issues Committee provides recommendations to the Commission identifying regional issues facing Berkshire County, provides recommendations on proposed state or federal legislation or regulations, makes recommendations to the Commission concerning requests from municipalities for policy or guidance on regional issues, and studies regional issues and policies.

Special Committees

The **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee** oversees the planning process for ongoing regional economic development efforts focused on identifying regional economic goals and priorities, identifying strategies for and facilitating implementation, and measuring regional progress. The result of this ongoing planning process is the development of a 5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region and accompanying annual progress reports, which are sent to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to maintain the region's eligibility for EDA investments.

The **Berkshire Brownfields Program Committee** oversees site assessments, reuse and cleanup planning, a revolving loan fund for cleanups, and site-specific cleanup projects. It also assists with community outreach. This program is funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and allows Berkshire County to reclaim land that may be contaminated and underutilized.