



**APPROVED Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Executive Committee Minutes
Thursday, December 4, 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. Call to Order & Open Meeting Law Statement

Chair Malcolm Fick called the meeting to order at 4:02pm. He stated that BRPC was recording the meeting and said that if anyone else wanted to record it, they needed to inform him.

II. Roll Call: Caitlin Davis, Office Administrator, read the roll call:

Members Present:

Malcolm Fick, Chair, Great Barrington Alternate
Buck Donovan, Vice Chair, Lee Delegate
Sheila Irvin, Clerk, Berkshire Brownfields Committee Chair, Pittsfield Delegate
Mark Smith, Environmental Review Committee Chair, Lenox Delegate
Kyle Hanlon, At-Large, North Adams Delegate
Christine Rasmussen, Regional Issues Committee Chair, Stockbridge Alternate
Douglas McNally, Commission Development Chair, Windsor Delegate
Mary McGurn, At-Large, Egremont Delegate

Members Absent:

Sam Haupt, Treasurer, Peru Delegate

Staff Present:

Tom Matuszko, Executive Director
Marianne Sniezek, Office Manager
Caitlin Davis, Office Administrator
Karen Pelto, Grant Specialist, Berkshire Funding Focus

III. Vote to Approve the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of November 6, 2025, Minutes

Doug McNally motioned to approve the November 6, 2025. Sheila Irvin seconded the motion.

Tom mentioned the formatting of the minutes would slightly change.
Regarding voting, the format would have the motion to approve, a second, any

discussion on the motion and the voting. The executive committee was fine with these changes.

The motion passed with affirmative votes from: Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Mark Smith, Kyle Hanlon, Christine Rasmussen, and Doug McNally.

Buck Donovan abstained. Mary McGurn did not vote as she was not a committee member at the time of the previous meeting.

IV. Financial Reports and Discussion

A. Vote to Approve the October 29, 2025 – November 24, 2025, Expenditures Report

Doug McNally motioned to approve the October 29, 2025 – November 24, 2025, expenditures report. Buck Donovan seconded the motion.

Buck Donovan asked for clarification on the state retirement board if it was the employee or employer's share. Tom confirmed it was the employee's share in the report.

The motion passed with affirmative votes from: Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Sheila Irvin, Mark Smith, Kyle Hanlon, Christine Rasmussen, Mary McGurn, and Doug McNally.

B. Report on the Accounts Receivable November 2025

Malcolm Fick commented on the Baystate Medical payment that is past 90 days. They are in the middle of their audit and are only just looking at the data. It was a fiduciary for the digital equity work BRPC did and they had received a large grant from MBI for several western MA services. There was also discussion about the Group Purchasing invoice to Sunoco.

C. Report on the Line of Credit – November 2025

The credit line has not been used.

D. Report on Federally Funded Contracts

No comments.

V. Open Comments from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates and Alternate Delegates not to be further discussed at this meeting by the Executive Committee.

Doug McNally recently met with BCC President Ellen Kennedy, and she is very happy over her recent Kusik award from BRPC.

VI. Items Requiring Action

A. Vote to Submit a Grant Application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Technology Services and Security – Office of Municipal & School Technology Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Program *

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Technology Services and Security – Office of Municipal & School Technology Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Program and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements. This grant would enable BRPC to train its employees on enhancing cybersecurity. There is no funding associated with this grant, as the grant provides access to the KnowBe4 software. Staff lead on this project is GIS, Data & IT Manager Mark Maloy, mmaloy@berkshireplanning.org, x29.

Doug McNally moved to approve the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Technology Services and Security – Office of Municipal & School Technology Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Program and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements. Buck Donovan seconded the motion.

There is no money for this, just access to tools. Doug McNally mentioned Windsor is also using this and that the other municipalities should start doing the same.

The motion passed with affirmative votes from: Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Sheila Irvin, Mark Smith, Kyle Hanlon, Christine Rasmussen, Mary McGurn, and Doug McNally.

B. Vote to Ratify the Submission of a Grant Application to the MOSAIC RIZE Municipal Matching Grant Program

The Executive Committee was requested to ratify the submission of a grant application to the MOSAIC RIZE Municipal Matching Grant Program and authorize the Executive Director to sign any resulting contracts and agreements. This grant would enhance youth-led substance use prevention and mental health promotion in collaboration with the City of Pittsfield. This one-year grant allows for funding of up to \$40,000. The City of Pittsfield has committed up to \$20,000 in opioid abatement funds to meet the required municipal match. The proposed initiative builds on the SPARK (Supporting Positive Actions for Resilience & Knowledge) Coalition's work, including two Youth Advisory Boards (YABs) at Pittsfield and Taconic High Schools. Expected partners (not directly funded by this grant) include the City of Pittsfield, Berkshire AHEC, Solasta Strategies and Kate Hocker Design. There would not be subcontractors/subrecipients. BRPC contact is Andy Ottoson, aottoson@berkshireplanning.org and Noé González Ortiz, NGonzalezOrtiz@berkshireplanning.org.

Mark Smith moved to ratify the submission of a grant application to the MOSIAC RIZE Municipal Matching Grant Program and authorize the Executive

Director to sign and resulting contracts and agreements. Buck Donovan seconded the motion.

Tom clarified that this is a continuation of BRPC's work with Pittsfield. Pittsfield provided the match on behalf of SPARK.

The motion passed with affirmative votes from: Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Sheila Irvin, Mark Smith, Kyle Hanlon, Christine Rasmussen, Mary McGurn, and Doug McNally.

C. Vote to Approve BRPC's Proposed Revision to the Disposal of Surplus Equipment Policy*

The Executive Committee was requested to approve BRPC's Proposed revisions to the Disposal of Surplus Equipment Policy adopted in 2009. The change in our current policy is to comply with M.G.L. Chapter 30B, §15. The meeting material contains our current policy and the proposed policy.

Doug McNally moved to approve the proposed revision to the disposal of surplus equipment policy. Mary McGurn seconded the motion.

Marianne mentioned the changes were to make BRPC is compliant with the law as the previous policy was from 2009. Adelson had approved the change.

The motion passed with affirmative votes from: Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Sheila Irvin, Mark Smith, Kyle Hanlon, Christine Rasmussen, Mary McGurn, and Doug McNally.

D. Vote to Approve BRPC's Proposed Whistleblower Policy*

The Executive Committee was requested to approve BRPC's Proposed Whistleblower policy. One of the revisions to 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Guidance, effective as of October 1, 2024, is that federal grant award recipients and subrecipients must now inform employees in writing of whistleblower rights and protections (§ 200.217). A Whistleblower Policy, complete with employee and subrecipient notices, has been prepared for review pursuant to this requirement that also reflects Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 149, Section 185 requirements.

Doug McNally moved to approve BRPC's Proposed Whistleblower policy. Mark Smith seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion.

The motion passed with affirmative votes from: Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Sheila Irvin, Mark Smith, Kyle Hanlon, Christine Rasmussen, Mary McGurn, and Doug McNally.

E. Vote to Conditionally Approve Berkshire Regional Planning

Commission's Fiscal Year 27 Assessment Subject to Ratification at the Next Commission Meeting. Options Include No Increase from FY26, a 1% Increase from FY26 or a 2.5% Increase from FY26.

The Executive Committee was requested to conditionally approve BRPC's fiscal year 27 assessment. The Regional Planning Law requires the municipal assessments for the upcoming fiscal year be approved no later than February prior to the beginning of the next fiscal year. The Commission typically votes to approve the Assessment at the January meeting. Many municipalities have told us their budget planning begins as early as November / December prior to the upcoming fiscal year. Conditional approval in December would allow us to provide an initial conditional invoice to the municipalities early in their budget planning cycle. The BRPC Finance Committee met on Monday December 1, 2025, and recommended to the Executive Committee and Commission a 2.5% increase from FY 26. Any action by the Executive Committee needs to be ratified by the Commission at its next meeting.

Doug McNally moved to approve BRPC's Commission Fiscal Year 27 Assessment to increase by 2.5% over FY26 as recommended by the Finance Committee. Mary McGurn seconded the motion.

Mark Smith asked for a brief overview of this policy. Tom explained this is a per capita tax billed to Berkshire County residents. This goes into BRPC's discretionary fund. This is 1.6% of BRPC's budget that is used for various training and educational purposes.

The motion was approved with affirmative votes from: Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Sheila Irvin, Mark Smith, Kyle Hanlon, Christine Rasmussen, Mary McGurn, and Doug McNally.

VII. Committee Updates, Reports and Discussion

A. Commission Development Committee

The Commission Development Committee met on November 12, 2025. The main topics were to make a recommendation about a nomination for the vacant Treasurer position and a potential 5th Thursday event on January 29, 2026.

Doug McNally mentioned that the Treasurer replacement would be voted on at the November Commission meeting and the January fifth Thursday meeting, would not be held in January due to the potential for inclement weather.

B. Environmental Review Committee

The Environmental Review Committee meets as needed and did not need to meet in November 2025. BRPC did receive a Single Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) on dredging Harnett Pond in New Marlborough. Tom reported we are determining if we will send comments, but since we decided not to

submit comments on the ENF, we most likely will not submit comments on the SEIR.

C. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met on December 1, 2025. The main agenda item was to discuss and recommend to the Full Commission the FY2027 Assessments.

D. Regional Issues Committee

The Regional Issues Committee did not meet in November 2025. Chrstine Rasmussen highlighted a few items of the December legislative report. A main ballot question Christine mentioned was the vote on reinstating rent control statewide and how housing advocates are on side and real estate developers are on the other side. The housing vote does not seem to apply to rural communities. Another highlight from the report was the energy bill that would grant Massachusetts immunity should the state miss its target for reduction in carbon emissions. The state goals would halve the greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, compared to levels in the 1990s.

E. Berkshire Brownfield Committee

The Berkshire Brownfield Committee meets as needed did not meet in November 2025. Tom reported the EPA Brownfield program will have a new application round in January 2026.

F. Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPO)

The MPO met on November 25, 2025. The main agenda items were consideration of various administrative adjustments to the FFY 2026-2030 TIP, consideration of an amendment to the FFY 2026-2030 TIP, a presentation from the BRTA about the Link 413 regional bus service which connects with transit services to and from the Berkshire with those in the Connecticut River Valley, a reminder that the FFY 2027-2030 TIP process will begin in January, and an update on the Complete Streets Program and activities.

G. Comprehensive Economic Development (CEDS) Committee

The CEDS Committee meets quarterly and did not meet in November 2025. The next meeting is scheduled for January.

H. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

The Transportation Advisory Committee meets as needed, primarily to advise the TIP development process and did not meet in November 2025 as the next TIP process has not started yet.

VIII. Executive Director's Report and Discussion

A. Report on New Contracts/Agreements

New Grants and Contracts received/initiated from 10/29/25 – 11/25/25

- Housatonic Valley Association – Berkshire Clean Cold Connected Partnership – \$100,655.18
- Barr Foundation – Regional Climate Resilience Initiative – \$300,000

- ArtWeek Berkshires 2026:
 - Great Barrington Cultural District – \$4,000
 - Pittsfield’s Upstreet Cultural District – \$4,000
 - Williamstown Chamber of Commerce Cultural District – \$4,000
- Digital Equity Implementation:
 - Great Barrington – \$13,580

Grants and Contracts not received.

- Massachusetts Environmental Trust (MET) Grant for Educational and Conservation Activities Focused on Improving Aquatic Habitats - Hoosic Watershed \$50,000
- Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) Empower Implementation (CFP) - \$150,000
- TD Charitable Foundation’s Regional Grant program to further BRPC’s work in digital equity - \$25,000
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - Community Change Grant – \$19,837,942
- Alzheimer’s Association - Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map Strategists Program - \$50,000

B. Berkshires Tomorrow Inc. (BTI) Update

The BTI Board approved the following:

- Grant Application submissions to support the Berkshire Funding Focus initiative from:
 - Greylock Federal Credit - \$5,000
 - Berkshire Bank Foundation - \$5,000
 - Mountain One - \$2,500
 - Lee Bank Foundation - \$2,500
 - Mill Town Foundation - \$10,000
 - Adams Community Bank - \$2,500

BRPC contact is Laura Brennan, lbrennan@berkshireplanning.org

C. Staff Updates

- Joined:
 - AmeriCorps Lead for America fellow – Jimmy Hall
- Open Positions:
 - Public Health Trainer

D. Seasonal Communities Advisory Council Update

The Seasonal Communities Advisory Council met on Wednesday November 19, 2025. Key items that were discussed included the naming of an additional 10 South County towns to be eligible to be designated a Seasonal Community and the announcement of a grant program for those communities that have accepted the designation. A copy of the presentation used in the meeting was included in the meeting material. Final regulations for Seasonal Communities are targeted to be released by the end of the year.

Mary reported on proposed zoning amendments that might enable Egremont to comply with requirements to become a Seasonal Community.

E. Passenger Rail

- West-East Rail – No new update.
- Berkshire Flyer – No new update.
- Northern Tier Passenger Rail – The Franklin Regional Council of Governments, with funding from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and in partnership with BRPC and the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, received two bids for a consultant to conduct an economic impact study of the proposed Northern Tier Passenger Rail Service. The bids are under review.

More information on these items can be found at [Compass Rail | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/compass-rail)

F. Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) Fall/Winter Workshops

The full-slate CPTC training sessions is now available for registration. Registration is at Webinar Series – CPTC.

G. Draft Clean Energy Model Bylaws

In response to DOER's request for welcomes written comments on its Draft Model Bylaws for Solar Photovoltaic Systems and BESS BRPC submitted comments which were included in the meeting material.

H. Waiver of Notice Request – Proposed Agricultural Preservation Restriction New Marlborough

Following the lead of the New Marlborough Select Board Tom reported he approved a request to reduce the 120-day notice period to 60 days for a proposed Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) on the 244.9-acre Edward B. Goodnow Revocable Trust property along Keyes Hill Road in New Marlborough.

I. Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Regulations Comments

BRPC's Energy and Environmental Program Manager, Melissa Provencher assisted with the development of comments on proposed amendments to the MEPA regulations that we submitted by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies. A copy of those comments was included in the meeting material

J. Massachusetts Integrated Land Use Strategy (MILUS)

The Commonwealth, through the leadership of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) is conducting a planning process to integrate the various state plans into something more coordinated and comprehensive. EOEEA has reached out to regional planning agencies to request our participation on the various working groups related to this effort and assist with outreach in Berkshire County.

IX. Old Business**A. Update and Discussion about the Executive Director Search Process**

The BRPC Executive Director Search Committee had its first meeting Tuesday, December 2, 2025.

The executive director's posting has gone up on the BRPC website as of December 5th.

B. Update and Discussion about the BRPC Treasurer Position

Sam Haupt has been elected as Treasurer to fill the term of John Duval, who is no longer on the Commission.

X. New Business

A. Discussion about Topics for the January 15 Commission Meeting

Potential topics for January 2026, Commission Meeting include:

- Vote to approve the FY 27 assessment
- Presentation on MILUS
- Presentation on the Sites Strategy and Build-Out projects
- Roundtable Discussion of Municipal Items
- Overview of the BRPC Public Health Program Areas

Tom asked the committee for feedback on the recent presentation done by Melissa Provencher about the environmental program. Committee members agree that they found these types of presentations useful and valuable.

Tom also noted that with Laura Kittross's upcoming retirement, Public Health will be split into two parts: Services and Planning. This change will take effect on January 1, 2026.

B. Next Executive Commission Meeting Date

As a reminder, due to the New Year's holiday, the next BRPC Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2026.

XI. Adjournment

Doug McNally made a motion to adjourn. Kyle Hanlon seconded the motion. The motion passed without discussion with affirmative votes from: Malcolm Fick, Buck Donovan, Sheila Irvin, Mark Smith, Kyle Hanlon, Christine Rasmussen, Mary McGurn, and Doug McNally.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57pm.

Additional Meeting Material:

- 2025.11.06 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – Unapproved DRAFT
- 2025.10.29 – 2025.11.24 Expenditures Report
- 2025.11 Accounts Receivable Report
- 2025.11 Line of Credit Report
- 2025.11.29 Executive Director Memorandum
- Disposal of Surplus Equipment Policy - proposed
- Whistleblower Policy – proposed
- FY 27 Assessment Options
- 2025.11.19 Seasonal Communities Advisory Council meeting presentation
- BRPC Comments on Model Bylaws
- Comment letter on Proposed MEPA Regulation Amendments
- October 2025 – Technical Assistance Memorandum