



**DRAFT Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Executive Director Search Minutes
Wednesday, January 14, 2026**

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 Buck Donovan called the meeting to order at 4:03pm. 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:

Buck Donovan, Search Chair, Lee Delegate
Malcolm Fick, BRPC Chair, Great Barrington Alternate
Sheila Irvin, Berkshire Brownfields Committee Chair, Pittsfield Delegate
Kyle Hanlon, At-Large, North Adams Delegate
John Duval, Former Adams Alternate
Laura Kittross, BRPC Staff
Marybeth Mitts, Select Board Chair- Joined meeting at 4:32pm

Others Present:

Mark Smith, Environmental Review Chair, Lenox Delegate

Staff Present:

Tom Matuszko, Executive Director
Marianne Snizek, Office Manager
Caitlin Davis, Office Administrator

III. Vote to Approve the Minutes of the BRPC Executive Director Search Committee Meeting of December 22, 2025*

Sheila Irvin motioned to approve the Minutes from the 12.22.25 Search Committee minutes. Kyle Hanlon seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion.

The motion passed with affirmative votes from: Buck Donovan, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Kyle Hanlon, John Duval, and Laura Kittross. Marybeth Mitts did not vote.

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

No comments.

V. Update on the Conflict of Interest Requirements

This item was about a situation if a potential internal applicant applied and if a member of the search committee knew that person through BRPC would it be a conflict. Tom reported that our attorney did not think it was a problem. It is possible to have a professional relationship with the person if that is the only way a member knows the person.

In terms of Laura Kittross being a co-worker and being on the search committee as the staff representative, our attorney also did not think this was a conflict. Laura has filed a disclosure with the Commission as a precaution. The search committee agreed they did not see knowing an internal candidate as a conflict.

VI. Update on the Hiring Process

Tom shared the process document with the search committee. He stated he did not prepare the first round interview questions in time to submit to the Delegates and Alternates or staff; hence they were not submitted. Laura stated she did not think the first round questions were submitted in 2018 for other review. The Committee agreed it was not necessary to send first round interview questions to Delegates and Alternates. There was discussion about whether the interviews would be virtual or in person, how long they would be, and the schedule of interviews with breaks in between depending on the number of candidates. It was agreed the first round of interviews would be virtual and held to be no more than one hour. If interviews were going to be scheduled back-to-back there would be a 15-minute break in between. Members of the search committee would rotate asking a question. The Search Committee member would ask the same question of each candidate. There was discussion on whether the candidates would receive the questions beforehand. In the interest of fairness all the same questions would be presented to candidates beforehand. Follow-up questions would be allowed by Search Committee members immediately after the candidate's answer to the question. In the interest of saving time, Search Committee members would not be individually introduced but identified in the material being sent to the candidate.

John Duval asked if one 'wildcard' question could be saved to see how the candidates think on their feet. This led to a discussion of second round interviews. There would be a different format and questions for the second-

round interviews. Search Committee members would send questions to Tom who would compile them. The second round interviews would be in open session, hybrid, with Delegates and Alternate invited to participate. There was a question about if second round interview questions needed to be identical for each candidate. Tom responded he thought the interview needed to start off with the same questions, but additional ones could be added.

VII. Discussion about Questions to be Used in Initial and Final Interviews with candidates for the BRPC Executive Director Position

The search committee reviewed the first round interview questions and evaluative criteria. Tom would revise based on feedback from the committee. The committee's suggestions were:

1. Add phrasing about if this is a logical progression to their career or career advancement. How does this fit with career goals?
2. No further suggestions.
3. Marybeth made a comment about including Covid in the question-Should this be its own question; what if the candidate had already been working remotely or currently is? Is it too granular to have candidates address these challenges?
Sheila asked if it could be added to the question or be asked in the second round. It was agreed the post-COVID question would be specifically asked in the second round.
Malcolm also commented that there was no mention of interactions as an executive and being an executive decision maker. This should be added as an evaluative criterion.
4. Municipalities should be added.
5. Tom stated the importance of working with certain entities, such as Berkshire, state agencies, etc. that the Executive Director would work with to form partnerships. Marybeth and Laura suggested phrasing the question as 'Give a specific example to illustrate, or describe a specific experience; what were the challenges or the outcomes.'
6. Marybeth suggested an instance where you had to interpret either a state or federal law.
Malcolm asked if this question would elicit the response we want from the candidates. Could the question be rephrased as 'Given your knowledge of the work of BRPC and what they do, what strengths do you bring?' This could show their knowledge of BRPC and how much research they did beforehand.
7. No further suggestions.
8. No further suggestions.
9. Remove this question.
10. No further suggestions.

Laura commented that there was nothing Berkshire County specific in the questions. Would this be for the second round? The committee agreed it should be between questions 3 and 4 on this list. The suggestion for the question and evaluation would be:

What role should BPRC play to seize Berkshire County's major opportunities and address major challenges?

- Can name specific challenges and opportunities
- Urban v. rural areas
- Demographic challenges
- Knowledge of political landscape

There was discussion about scheduling. Tom offered to arrange a schedule.

VIII. Vote to Enter into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(8) to Consider Potential Candidates for the BRPC Executive Director Position because Considering Potential Candidates in Open Meeting will have a Detrimental Effect Obtaining Qualified Candidates and Adjourn the Meeting at the End of the Executive Session and not Return to Open Session after the Executive Session is Completed

Sheila Irvin motioned to enter into executive session to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(8) to Consider Potential Candidates for the BRPC Executive Director Position because Considering Potential Candidates in Open Meeting will have a Detrimental Effect Obtaining Qualified Candidates and Adjourn the Meeting at the End of the Executive Session and not Return to Open Session after the Executive Session is Completed.

Malcolm Fick seconded the motion. There was no further discussion on the motion.

The motion was approved by roll call vote with affirmative votes from: Buck Donovan, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Kyle Hanlon, John Duval, Laura Kittross and Marybeth Mitts.

The meeting entered into Executive Session.



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Director Search Committee Members
FROM: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director
DATE: January 22, 2026
SUBJ: January 23, 2026, Executive Director Search Committee Meeting

This memorandum contains an explanation about some of the items listed in the Meeting Notice and Agenda.

V. Update on the Hiring Process

Thank you for your quick turnaround evaluating this most recent set of applications. I provided those applications to you because they seemed qualified and the Committee did not provide guidance as to how to handle new applications. Given the candidate pool we now have, I suggest we do not evaluate additional applications, should we get them, unless the ones we are currently evaluating do not pan out.

VI. Discussion about Questions to be Used in Initial Interviews with Candidates for the BRPC Executive Director Position

Included in the meeting material are revised draft questions to be used for the initial interviews and evaluation criteria based on discussion at the previous meeting.

VII. Executive Session

The Chair should read to following to request a motion, which needs a roll call vote:

I will accept a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. chapter 30A, section 21(a)(18) to consider potential candidates for the BRPC Executive Director position, because considering potential candidates in open meeting will have a detrimental effect obtaining qualified candidates and return to open session at the end of the Executive Session.

VIII. Discussion of the Schedule for Initial Interviews

Any discussion of scheduling interviews is supposed to occur in open session.



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BRPC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

First Round Interview Questions

Interviews to be held virtually on xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

The initial round of questions is purposely designed to be broad, to allow the candidate to be the lead speaker within the conversation. If the discussion does not yield enough information on key topics that are of interest to the Search Committee, or if greater detail is needed on key topics, then follow up questions will be asked.

- 1. Please tell us about your professional self and your career. How does this position fit within your overall career goals and professional advancement?**
- 2. Please tell us what attracted you to apply for this position.**
- 3. Considering the requirements of the Executive Director Position Description, tell us how your experience, professional skills and leadership qualities would make you an excellent candidate for the position.**
- 4. What role should BRPC play in the near future to seize Berkshire County's major opportunities and address major challenges?**
- 5. What do you think a Regional Planning Agency should be and how should it prioritize efforts given limited resources?**
- 6. Describe specific experiences you have had working with diverse private, non-profit, and public stakeholders within a region and in developing collaborations.**
- 7. Given your knowledge of the work of BRPC, what strengths do you bring to the position?**
- 8. Are there any requirements as you understand the Position where you feel you are not as strong as you'd like to be or do not meet the requirements? If yes, what are they and what is your plan to address them?**
- 9. What else would you like us to know about you relative to this Position?**
- 10. Do you have any questions for us?**
- 11. Interview Wrap up**
 - Thank the candidate
 - Let the candidate know what will happen next and how they will be notified.
 - Inform the candidate that it is the Search Committee's intent to forward favorable candidates into a second round of interviews with the Full Commission.
 - Inform the candidate that state law requires finalist interviews to be conducted as open public meetings and the material they submitted to be made public.
 - Inform the candidate that if they are selected for the next round, they will be

asked to provide 3 references, who will be called.



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First Round Interview Questions

Interviews to be held virtually on **xxxxxxxxxxxxxx**

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1. Please tell us about your professional self and your career. How does this position fit within your overall career goals and professional advancement?
2. Please tell us what attracted you to apply for this position.
3. Considering the requirements of the Executive Director Position Description, tell us how your experience, professional skills and leadership qualities would make you an excellent candidate for the position.
4. What role should BRPC play in the near future to seize Berkshire County's major opportunities and address major challenges?
- 4-5. What do you think a Regional Planning Agency should be and how should it prioritize efforts given limited resources?
- 5-6. Describe specific ~~What~~ experiences ~~you~~ have ~~you~~ had ~~in~~ working with diverse private, non-profit, and public stakeholders within a region and in developing collaborations.
- 6-7. Given your knowledge of the work of BRPC, what strengths do you bring to the position? ~~For the Executive Director's position, which requirements do you feel favor your strengths?~~
- 7-8. Are there any requirements as you understand the Position where you feel you are not as strong as you'd like to be or do not meet the requirements? If yes, what are they and what is your plan to address them?
- ~~8. What else would you like us to know about you relative to this Position?~~
- ~~9. Based on what you've heard in this interview, are there any other questions search committee members wish to ask?~~
10. Do you have any questions for us?
11. Interview Wrap up
 - Thank the candidate
 - Let the candidate know what will happen next and how they will be notified.
 - Inform the candidate that it is the Search Committee's intent to forward favorable candidates into a second round of interviews with the Full Commission.
 - Inform the candidate that state law requires finalist interviews to be

conducted as open public meetings and the material they submitted to be made public.

- Inform the candidate that if they are selected for the next round, they will be asked to provide 3 references, who will be called.

Candidate identification _____

Reviewer name: _____

Evaluators Response

Strong Response	Moderate Response	Weak Response	Not responsive	Notes
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Questions in Bold. Response topics of interest for evaluation (BLUE)

1. Please tell us about your professional self and your career. How does this position fit within your overall career goals and professional advancement? (overall response)					
How did the candidate explain their interest in the public v. private sector as career choice					
Other aspects of response _____					
2. Please tell us what attracted you to apply for this position (overall response)					
How did the candidate explain wanting to work for a regional agency?					
How did the candidate explain planning as a career choice?					
How did the candidate explain wanting to work in the northeast?					
How did the candidate explain wanting to work in the Berkshires					
Other aspects of response _____					
3. Considering the requirements of the Executive Director Position Description, tell us how your experience, professional skills and leadership qualities would make you an excellent candidate for the position. (overall response)					
How did the candidate describe their efforts to lead an organization?					
How did the candidate describe being an executive leader (board leader, decision-maker)					
How did the candidate describe their leadership style & how they would apply it to the position					
How did the candidate describe the importance of diversity & its importance to this position?					
How did the candidate describe the importance of staff retention & development?					
How did the candidate address work post-Covid & agency cohesiveness with Teleworking					
Other aspects of response _____					
4. What role should BRPC play in the near future to seize Berkshire County's major opportunities and address major challenges? (overall response)					
How well did the candidate identify specific challenges and opportunities					
How did the candidate recognize differences between urban and rural issues					
How did the candidate address demographic issues					
How did the candidate address political issues					
5. What do you think a Regional Planning Agency should be and how should it prioritize efforts given limited resources. (overall response)					
How did the candidate describe a RPA's focus strictly on planning?					
How did the candidate describe working with and providing services to municipalities.					
How did the candidate describe a RPA's role in implementation?					
How did the candidate describe a RPA's role in providing services?					
How did the candidate describe their approach to prioritization given limited resources?					
Other aspects of response _____					

Questions in Bold. Response topics of interest for evaluation (BLUE)

<u>Evaluators Response</u>				
Strong Response	Moderate Response	Weak Response	Not responsive	Notes

6. Describe specific experiences you have had working with diverse private, non-profit, and public stakeholders within a region and in developing collaborations? (overall response)					
How did the candidate describe different approaches to working with different types of entities?					
How did the candidate describe successful collaborations					
Other aspects of response_____					
6. Given your knowledge of the work of BRPC, what strengths do you bring to the position? (overall response)					
How did the candidate describe their knowledge of state and federal employment laws					
How did the candidate describe their personnel management experience					
How did the candidate describe their knowledge of & familiarity w/ State & Federal laws related to:					
planning					
transportation					
housing					
community development					
energy					
environmental					
public health					
economic development					
procurement					
ADA					
How did the candidate describe their experience grant writing and management					
How did the candidate describe budgetary experience					
Other aspects of response_____					
7. Are there any requirements as you understand the Position where you feel you are not as strong as you'd like to be or do not meet the requirements? If yes, what are they and what is your plan to address them? (overall response)					
Other aspects of response_____					
8. What else would you like us to know about you relative to this Position?					
Other aspects of response_____					
9. Do you have any questions for us?					
Other aspects of response_____					

10. Interview Wrap up

Thank the candidate and let the candidate know what will happen next and how they will be notified.

Inform the candidate that it is the Search Committee's intent to forward favorable candidates into a second round of interviews with the Full Commission.

Inform the candidate that state law requires finalist interviews to be conducted as open public meetings and the material they submitted to be made public.

Inform the candidate that if they are selected for the next round, they will be asked to provide 3 references, who will be called.

YES	NO

Evaluator's recommendation - Invite the Candidate for a second interview