



**APPROVED 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 Sniezek, 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 1Berkshire, 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 BPRC 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 BPRC 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.