



APPROVED Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Executive Committee Minutes
Thursday, June 4, 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 Malcolm Fick called the meeting to order at 4pm. 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-joined at 4:03pm
Sheila Irvin, Berkshire Brownfields Committee Chair, Pittsfield Delegate
Mark Smith, Environmental Review Committee Chair, Lenox Delegate
Christine Rasmussen, Regional Issues Committee Chair, Stockbridge Alternate
Kyle Hanlon, At-Large, North Adams Delegate
Sam Haupt, Treasurer, Peru Delegate-left at 4:20pm
Mary McGurn, At-Large, Egremont Delegate

Not Present:

Doug McNally, Commission Development Chair, Windsor Delegate

Others Present:

Allen Moody

Staff Present:

Laura Brennan, Executive Director
Marianne Snizek, Office Manager
Caitlin Davis, Office Administrator

III. Vote to Approve the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of May 7, 2026 Minutes

Mary McGurn motioned to approve the May 7, 2026 meeting minutes. Sheila Irvin seconded the motion.

Christine Rasmussen asked what the relationship between MILUS and the Rural Policy Commission and how they integrated. This question was saved for discussion later in the meeting on these topics.

The motion passed with affirmative votes from: Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Mark Smith, Christine Rasmussen, Sam Haupt, and Mary McGurn. Kyle Hanlon abstained. Buck Donovan joined the meeting later and did not vote.

IV. Financial Reports and Discussion

a. Vote to Approve the April 29, 2026 – May 28, 2026, Expenditures Report

Mark Smith motioned to approve the **April 29, 2026 – May 28, 2026**, expenditures report. Kyle Hanlon 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, Christine Rasmussen, Sam Haupt, Kyle Hanlon, and Mary McGurn.

b. Report on the Accounts Receivable May 2026

A few of the over 90-day invoices were closed out, including for the town of Adams for \$22k. With one of the oldest invoices, Baystate, we took a different approach and contacted a different staff person whom BRPC had been in contact with previously. There were also a few projects that wouldn't be paid until after their completion at the end of June.

c. Report on the Line of Credit – May 2026

The line of credit was still at zero.

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

Mary McGurn announced that Egremont and the Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire broke ground on two duplexes that would combine homeownership and rental. Modular units were expected in August and the project completion in October.

Malcolm Fick asked if buyers were lined up. The CDC would be involved with that, so Mary did not have an answer, but they were looking at qualified applicants.

Sam Haupt also shared that he was a member of the Governor's Commission on PILOT for state owned land. There will be a report that will be issued within a year. Public listening sessions would take place in July. There was a kickoff meeting on May 20th and the next meeting would be June 16th. Sam will provide more information at the next meeting.

VI. Items Requiring Action

a. Vote to ratify renewal of Leases for Suite 201 and Suite 202 at 1 Fenn St., Pittsfield

After undertaking an RFI process, including site visits at several office space locations in downtown Pittsfield, and comparing square footage pricing and corresponding office space configuration and amenities, BRPC's executive director and staff determined that it was advisable to indicate to our current landlord our intention to renew our current lease for an additional five years.

Mary McGurn motioned to ratify the renewal of Leases for Suite 201 and Suite 202 at 1 Fenn St., Pittsfield. Christine Rasmussen 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, Christine Rasmussen, Kyle Hanlon, Sam Haupt and Mary McGurn.

b. Vote to Ratify the Submission of an application to the Federal Highway Administration's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program

The Executive Committee was requested to ratify the submission of a \$548,560 request to the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Supplemental Planning and Demonstration project to improve pedestrian safety at five midblock crossing locations across Berkshire County that have elevated crash risk. Demonstration activities will install temporary, MUTCD compliant treatments such as high visibility crosswalks, refuge enhancements, signage, and traffic calming to improve driver yielding and pedestrian visibility. An accompanying education and outreach campaign will explain why locations were selected, how the treatments work, and how they improve safety. Before and after evaluation will inform permanent upgrades and future countywide implementation. The communities impacted by this potential award are: Adams, Great Barrington, North Adams, Pittsfield, and Stockbridge. Match in the amount of \$137,140 has been requested from the Massachusetts FFIO. Staff lead on this project will be Nicholas Russo, nrusso@berkshireplanning.org.

Laura Brennan mentioned that this tied closely to the Vision Zero initiative of the BRPC Transportation team, and is and supportive of identified priorities.

Kyle Hanlon motioned to ratify submission of an application to the Federal Highway Administration's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program. Sheila Irvin seconded the motion.

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

VII. Committee Updates, Reports and Discussion

a. Commission Development Committee

The Commission Development Committee meets as needed and did not meet in May 2026.

b. Environmental Review Committee

The Environmental Review Committee meets as needed and did not need to meet in May 2026.

Mark Smith commented that there was an ENF that came through for a dam repair in Washington that supplies water to Pittsfield. MEPA was still reviewing it, and the comment period was extended.

c. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee meets as needed and did not meet in May 2026.

d. Regional Issues Committee

The Regional Issues Committee did not meet in May. Staff anticipate a meeting in June and in the meantime have encouraged members to participate in public engagement sessions related to the revised Rural Policy Plan. More information, including background material and registration links, is available at:

<https://frcog.org/2026-ma-rural-policy-plan-feedback-sessions/>

Christine Rasmussen gave an update on the legislative report she provided in the meeting packet. She thanked Laura for formatting her report. The state budget was entering step 5, Conference Committee, with 3 House reps and 3 Senate Reps to make final recommendations. There is a \$50 million difference to work out. Malcolm Fick mentioned that one thing from the report that stuck out was the ADU loan program and how hard some towns in Berkshire County have with getting those started, from a financial perspective.

e. Berkshire Brownfield Committee

The Berkshire Brownfield Committee meet as needed and did not meet in May 2026.

f. Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPO)

The MPO typically meets virtually on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 4:00 pm. The MPO met on May 26th. Draft minutes are included in the meeting packet.

g. Comprehensive Economic Development (CEDS) Committee

The CEDS Committee typically meets four times per year and met on May 6, 2026 to endorse the 2026 Performance Progress Report for submission to the US Economic Development Administration after approval by the Commission. Laura mentioned that the CEDS Committee would be developing the next 5-year CEDS in 2027 and that it was a great time to join the CEDS committee.

h. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

The Transportation Advisory Committee meets as needed primarily to advise on the TIP development process. The TAC met on May 19th. Draft minutes are included in the meeting packet.

VIII. Executive Director's Report and Discussion

a. Report on New Contracts/Agreements

New Grants and Contracts received/initiated from 4/29/26 – 5/28/26

- Becket & Washington - Digital Equity Implementation – Additional \$985
- Sandisfield - Open Space & Recreation Plan - \$30,000
- Berkshire Community College - Hoarding Talk - \$3,000
- Northern Middlesex Council of Governments - Massachusetts Integrated Land Use Strategy - \$19,045.58

- Becket – Grant Writing - \$3,500
- Peru – Zoning - \$4,500
- Berkshire Public Health Alliance - Regional Public Health Inspection Program:
 - Clarksburg - \$9,500
 - Egremont - \$20,000
 - New Ashford - \$5,000
 - Richmond - \$27,000
 - Savoy - \$8,500
 - Washington - \$6,000
- Berkshire Public Health Alliance - Regional Public Health Nursing Program:
 - Dalton - \$6,470.30
 - Florida - \$2,402.40
 - Hinsdale - \$3,267.26
 - Savoy - \$2,402.40
 - Washington - \$2,402.40

Grants and Contracts not received

We are not aware of not receiving any grants or contracts.

Laura commented that a lot of these were renewals of existing relationships that we have and tried to keep up year after year. In some cases, we were growing the number of subscribers into some inspection programs and things along those lines.

Laura also mentioned one award that was not included on the list, which was for digital equity. 150-200 computers were to be distributed to local nonprofits, as well as providing technical assistance.

b. Berkshires Tomorrow Inc. (BTI) Update

The BTI Board approved the following:

- There was no new activity in May for BTI.

Grants and Contracts not received

- We are not aware of not receiving any grants or contracts.

c. Staff Updates

- Open Positions:
 - Inspector
 - Associate Planner (with grant funds by the Barr Foundation to hire a RAY fellow)

d. Seasonal Communities Advisory Council Update

The Seasonal Communities Advisory Council did not meet in May 2026. BRPC's CJ Hoss has been approved by the Commission as the representative to the Council. In the upcoming summer meeting, he will act as Tom Matuszko's designee and will be formally appointed later in the calendar year. More information is at [Seasonal Communities | Mass.gov](#).

e. Rural Policy Advisory Commission

The Rural Policy Advisory Commission met on May 12th. There are plans in place

for outreach related to the next version of the Rural Policy Plan. Laura Brennan has been approved by the Commission to replace Tom Matuszko on the Commission, and a request has been submitted to the state.

f. Massachusetts Integrated Land Use Strategy (MILUS)

BRPC staff members continue to participate in working groups related to the Massachusetts Integrated Land Use Strategy, including Economic, Energy, and Conservation. More recently, Mark Maloy has provided information related to the mapping components of MILUS. The public outreach process portion of the MILUS initiative will begin in earnest in late summer, and the final deadlines extended to December 31, 2026.

Christine Rasmussen's earlier question regarding the relationship between Rural Policy Advisory Commission and MILUS was discussed. While there was no official relationship between the two, the RPAC advises on behalf of rural communities regarding pertinent legislation. MILUS is an ongoing statewide initiative, housed under the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. There is crossover in conversations happening in public sessions with MILUS and rollout of the draft 2026 Rural Policy Plan.

Christine Rasmussen commented that the working groups were a good opportunity for Berkshire County to be heard and open comments were encouraged. More attendance from Berkshire County would be helpful, as there are not many sessions left. Mary McGurn also commented that the moderators did a great job in a session she attended, but found it discouraging that there was very little Berkshire County attendance.

g. Passenger Rail

- West-East Rail – Laura was not aware of any updates this month.
- Berkshire Flyer -As reported at the last full Commission meeting, Mass DOT has released final details for the 2026 season. A few highlights:
 - The Friday train will arrive at 3PM. This should give travelers time to reach destinations and enjoy Friday evening in the Berkshires.
 - A full round trip from Pittsfield to New York has been added. Travelers can depart Pittsfield at 3:15PM on Friday and arrive in NYC at 7:46PM. A return on Sunday departs at 11:06 AM from New York.
 - The service will run from June 12th to September 13th.
- Northern Tier Passenger Rail – The economic benefits study continues, with the most recent meeting having been on Friday, May 29th.

More information on these items can be found at [Compass Rail | Mass.gov](#).

h. Technical Assistance Report

There was no technical assistance report for April.

IX. Old Business and Discussion

No old business was discussed.

X. New Business and Discussion

a. Discussion about Topics for the July 16, 2026 Commission Meeting

Anticipated topics for the July 2026 Commission Meeting include:

- Election of Officers
- Approval of At Large Members of Executive Committee
- Approval of Chairs-BRPC Standing and Special Committees
- Overview of the FY27 Commissioners' Handbook
- Discussion of Items of Interest
- Report and Discussion- Executive Director's Memo

Malcolm Fick asked what the Commissioner's handbook was and Laura explained it had been rolled out again in FY26 after several years of not being distributed, and is now in PDF form for accessibility. While it is mainly for new delegates and alternates, it contains useful information for all Commission members.

Christine Rasmussen asked if the July Commission meeting was a good time to invite Senator Paul Mark, and Laura agreed she would extend an invitation.

XI. Adjournment

Kyle Hanlon made a motion to adjourn. Christine Rasmussen seconded the motion.

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:50pm.