

**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 29, 2010**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Call to Order

V. Koivumaki called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1.2. Roll Call

1.3. Recognition of Guests

PRESENT (COMMITTEE ACTED ON BEHALF OF COMMISSION)

J. Meehan (M), Athol; Paula Caron (M), Fitchburg; Robert Grubb (A), Gardner; V. Koivumaki (M), Lancaster; V. Andreliunas (M), Royalston; J. White (M) Winchendon.

ABSENT

M. Whitney (A), Ashburnham; B. Whitney (M), Ashburnham; W. Stacy (A), Ashby; J. Gibbons, (M), Ayer; P. Lowitt (N/V), Devens; A. Gross (M), Gardner; D. Manugian, (M) Groton; A. Eliot (A), Groton; K. McGuire Minar (M), Harvard; L. Wallace (A), Harvard; L. Brisbois (M), Hubbardston; P. Hale (A), Hubbardston; E. Christoph (A), Lancaster; J. Raymond (A), Leominster; E. Anderson (A), Petersham; J. Hardie (A), Royalston; C. Colburn (M); Shirley; J. Lynch, (A) Shirley; C. Hajdu (M), Sterling; P. McCloy (A), Townsend; P. Haley (M), Templeton; N. Thalheimer (M), Townsend; A. Sears (M), Westminster; J. Kreidler (A), Winchendon

STAFF

Glenn Eaton, Eric Smith, Nancy Belliveau, Jason Stanton, Linda Parmenter, George Kahale, John Hume, Jason Stanton, Brad Harris

GUESTS

Mark Goldstein, MRPC Legal Counsel; Bruce Eason, Squannacook River Rail Trail

2. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 25, 2010 MEETING MINUTES

R. Grubb moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the May 25, 2010 minutes as printed. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

R. Grubb indicated that the Nominating Committee presented the following Slate of Officers at the May 25, 2010 Meeting: Chairman – Victor Koivumaki; Vice Chairman – Paula Caron; Treasurer – James Meehan; Assistant Treasurer – Robert Grubb; Secretary – John White; At Large Committee Members – Vyto Andreliunas and Tom Bodkin.

R. Grubb moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission elect the following officers to serve on the MRPC for FY2010 – 2011:

Chairman – Victor Koivumaki;
Vice Chairman – Paula Caron;
Treasurer – James Meehan;
Assistant Treasurer – Robert Grubb

Secretary – John White;
At Large Committee Members – Vyto Andreliunas and Tom Bodkin.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

4.1. Cash Situation

4.2. Approval of the Warrant

J. Meehan read the June 29, 2010 cash schedule. Balance after last warrant \$61,947.61; Total Receipts this month \$209,224.82; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$271,172.43; Less: amount of this warrant \$125,912.22; balance after this warrant \$145,260.21.

J. White moved to accept the June 29, 2010 cash schedule as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

5. STATUS REPORTS

5.1. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

5.1.1 Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (Submitted February 12, 2010)

Spoke with our program representative at DHCD. He stated the staff has completed their review of the applications and the process has now moved up to the higher level at DHCD for their approval. He also said he thought the announcements would be the first week of July timeframe.

5.1.2 Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (Due December 2010)

MRPC continues working on the next grant applications. Staff attended several meetings with the towns that are submitting this year. A Public Forum was held in Hubbardston in June, the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was published and four proposals were received for the engineering at the Lunenburg Council on Aging (COA) center, windshield surveys are in the process of being completed in Westminster and Lunenburg, and letters have been sent to those addresses with pre-applications and brochures.

This year's applications are due in December of 2010. Possible grant applications are as follows:

1. Lunenburg – COA Parking lot, COA Outreach worker, housing rehab
2. Westminster and Hubbardston - senior center design and housing rehab
3. Lancaster - ADA issues and housing rehab

5.1.3 Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (October 09)

REPORT for FY 2009

Ashby/Hubbardston Joint Housing Rehabilitation Grant:

Ashby: first five (5) housing rehab and two (2) septic cases are underway:
3 housing rehab units completed
1 housing rehab unit under construction
1 housing rehab unit in inspection stage
2 septic cases in design stage

Hubbardston: first five (5) housing rehab and two (2) septic cases are underway:
3 housing rehab units substantially completed
1 housing rehab unit under construction
1 housing rehab unit in bidding stage
2 septic cases in design stage

Once we have final project costs on a few more cases, we will add another housing rehab project to each town.

Financial Literacy Training and Counseling Sessions: The first financial training and budgeting sessions were held by Montachusett Opportunity Council (MOC) in April. Reverse Mortgage sessions were held in Ashby in May.

REPORT for FY 2007:

Lancaster Regional Housing Rehabilitation Program (LLTA): The final disbursement, which is for the audit costs, will be paid by the end of June. Close out of this grant program will then be initiated with DHCD.

5.1.4 Other Projects

5.1.4.1 Ashby DEP Funds for Septic Replacement Projects

Staff created the discharge paperwork for one of the betterments and the loan documents to replace the betterment.

5.1.4.2 Post Purchase Counseling:

Nothing new to report this month.

5.1.4.3 Housing Preservation Grant:

Nothing new to report this month.

5.2 COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

5.2.1 Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA), Section 302 Capacity Building Grant

MRPC submitted its EDA Capacity Building grant proposal during the last week of May.

A 319 Non-Point Source Pollution Grant was prepared and submitted to the state's Department of Environmental Protection. The grant application includes a request for funding for free educational low impact development (LID) workshops throughout the Montachusett Region's municipalities that are in the Millers River Watershed. For communities within the Millers River Watershed free technical assistance to develop Low Impact Development Bylaws will be available if the grant is funded. Grant awards are expected to be made sometime in early fall.

A Brownfield Area Planning Grant Application was prepared by MRPC staff and submitted to the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The area that is targeted is located within the South West Downtown area of the Town of Athol. If funded, this planning project will develop an area-wide plan for the brownfields-impacted area, which will inform the assessment and cleanup of the brownfields site(s), and identify next steps and resources needed for plan implementation. EPA anticipates making grant announcements sometime this summer.

J. Hume reported that MRPC staff is working to prepare a grant application to be submitted to EDA for an energy plan for the Montachusett Region. The scope of work, while not finalized, could include a Renewable Energy Regional Inventory Energy Model Forecasting with the assistance of Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) students with WPI faculty oversight, Design and Construction of Energy Educational Exhibits and Community Workshops.

J. White moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission will authorize up to \$5,000 in cash to match a \$70,000 Economic Development Administration Grant Application for a Regional Energy Plan. This would enable MRPC to perform the following Tasks:

Task 1. Montachusett Energy Advisory Committee Meetings: This committee will meet quarterly or as needed to provide oversight and policy guidance to the MRPC staff during its implementation of this grant program.

Task 2. Renewable Energy Regional Inventory. An inventory of existing and proposed renewable energy development throughout the Montachusett Region will be conducted.

Task 3. Energy Model Forecasting: MRPC will provide an evaluation of trends and projection of future energy demands for the area encompassed by the 22 communities of the Montachusett Region. MRPC has been in contact with Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) to provide student in-kind services.

Task 4. Design and Construction of Energy Educational Exhibits. Utilizing information collected in Task 2 and Task 3, educational exhibits will be constructed.

Task 5. Prepare and Conduct a Minimum of Six Community Workshops.

Task 6. Prepare Final Report.

Task 7. Wrap-Up Event.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

5.2.2 Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA), Ice Storm Grant

MRPC's consultant (CEG) continues its work to assess the capacity, structural deficiencies, and inadequacies of the electrical grid system throughout the region. CEG will present a draft of its findings at the next Montachusett Energy Advisory Committee meeting scheduled on June 25 at 12:30 pm here at MRPC offices.

A survey was forwarded to regional assets (hospitals, supermarkets, gas stations, etc) concerning their emergency backup power systems. More than 100 surveys were completed and returned. Surveys are now being analyzed.

MRPC held a workshop where Paul Wolff, Director of Sustainability and Energy Management at Mount Wachusett Community College provided an overview of renewable energy sources at MWCC. John Merlino, CEO of Sirius Integrator, Inc. (a firm located in Devens) was the featured speaker – he talked about fuel cells or "Fuel Cells – Reliable Power When You Need It". The workshop was held on Friday, June 11 at the Mount Wachusett Community College Gardner Campus.

5.2.3 Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Montachusett Region Brownfields Reuse Initiative (MRBRI)2009 Grant Award:

A MRBRI meeting will be held on June 29 at 1pm at MRPC offices. There will be a review of the Grant Budget for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (all funds have been expended) and a brief review of all projects completed under this program. There will also be discussion of MRPC's next brownfield site assessment grant proposal anticipated to be due sometime this fall.

5.2.4 District Local Technical Assistance Program

5.2.4.1 Reviews and Awards for Services: District Local Technical Assistance

V. Koivumaki read the following resolution.

The MRPC's Executive Director respectfully reports that, in June 2010, ten communities submitted eleven proposals for use of District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) resources to provide a variety of services.

Comprehensive Planning staff will be primarily responsible for the delivery of MRPC's DLTA services. The eleven proposals and related communities are as follows:

1. Gardner, Westminster, and Winchendon: Route 140 (North) Corridor Study.
2. Royalston: Fixed Wireless Broadband Facility Bylaw.
3. Templeton: Airport Overlay District Bylaw.
4. Ashburnham: Re-write of Open Space Residential Development Bylaw.
5. Ashburnham: Development of Cultural Plan
6. Ashburnham: Review and revise Development Rate Limitation Bylaw.
7. Westminster: Update Circulation Element of the Master Plan.
8. Athol: Propose Potential Uses for a Town-Owned Property (210 Canal Street)
9. Westminster: Update Open Space Element of the Master Plan.
10. Westminster: Update Land Use Chapter of the Master Plan.
11. Lunenburg, Fitchburg, Leominster: Applied for \$65,000 in DLTA funding to hire a surveyor to locate existing field structures for the North Street/Summer Street Transportation project.

B. Eason asked what the total amount of the requests was.

J. Hume replied approximately \$75,000.

R. Grubb moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) recommends that #1 through #8 of the above-named proposals and project requests for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) be awarded for a cumulative amount of \$75,000.

Currently, the amount of technical assistance requested exceeds funding under the DLTA Program and MRPC would like to provide assistance to as many communities as possible.

- Proposals #9 and #10 will not be awarded. Westminster has a current open space plan and the town just recently completed a land use related study last winter. However, Westminster will still significantly benefit from the DLTA program with four DLTA projects underway including a windmill bylaw, chapter 43D Guidebook, Route 140 Corridor Study, and an update of the Circulation Element of the Master Plan (see Proposal #7 which was the community's top priority and is recommended to be awarded).
- Proposal #11 will not be awarded. It is a request for \$65,000 in cash to hire a surveyor. The state's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) was contacted concerning the eligibility of this project. DHCD indicated that this project does not seem to fit within the framework of the DLTA program - DHCD referred MRPC to Chapter 29 Section XXX, which states that communities can request assistance within Regional Planning Expertise and surveying is not considered or listed as a regional planning expertise (see handout of the statute). MRPC shall communicate with Lunenburg to see if MRPC can in any way provide some kind of technical assistance with the project.

Those requests awarded (#1 through #8) are subject to the conditions listed below.

1. The services to be delivered to the communities will be completed commencing no earlier than a fully executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the subject (lead) community and the MRPC.
2. Services will be delivered to the subject community(ies) during the implementation of the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program year (2010).

3. The award of services from the MRPC is subject to the:
 - a. Funding available to the MRPC during the program year (2010);
 - b. Successful negotiation of a detailed scope of services, schedule for the completion of the tasks identified in the scope of services, and budget utilizing DLTA and other funds, if available and eligible for the aforementioned project;
 - c. Execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MRPC and the community(ies); and,
 - d. The MRPC's receipt of a letter from the Chief Elected Official (CEO) of all of the affected communities indicating agreement to this proposal and willingness to participate in this analysis. (Communities may agree to participate in this analysis after the full execution of the MOU between the subject (lead) community and the MRPC but must agree to participate in order to receive the results of the report.)
4. Where and when possible the MRPC will deliver the tasks related to "analysis, preparation and presentation ... report(s) ..." as indicated above. The MRPC and the community requesting services will "outsource" consulting services only when absolutely deemed to be necessary by both the lead community and the MRPC.
5. This is an award of services from the MRPC to the applicable community(ies). This is not a cash award.
6. Proposals will be forwarded to the state's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to verify proposal eligibility. If DHCD determines that the project is ineligible, the award of services will be null and void.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Town of Ashby

Village Center Sewer District Feasibility Study: MRPC is conducting a village center sewer feasibility study for the Town of Ashby to determine various options for sewer treatment and wastewater disposal and their related costs.

A contract between MRPC and the Town of Ashby has been signed by the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen on May 26, 2010

A kick-off meeting was held on June 15, 2010 at Ashby Town Hall. MRPC staff, members from the Ashby planning board, board of health and the general public were in attendance at the public meeting. The feasibility project goals and scope of services were discussed.

It was determined that technical assistance from an engineer would be needed to supplement the feasibility study. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) has been written and was sent out to various engineering firms on June 18, 2010. The responses to the RFQ are due on July 2, 2010. From these responses, a qualified engineer will be chosen to work with MRPC to complete the study.

Town of Shirley

Development Plan: Planning assistance to help the Town of Shirley work in collaboration with MassDevelopment and Devens to complete the first steps of a development plan for the Shirley Village Growth District I. Since the May 19th kick-off meeting MRPC staff has been at work on the Information Collection phase of this project. Staff paid a visit to MassDevelopment on May 25th to obtain various Devens-related planning documents.

Chapter 43D Expedited Permitting: MRPC is providing assistance to the Town to establish a streamlined permitting process as part of a Chapter 43D program. An Informational Meeting was held in Shirley on June 16 where MRPC staff presented on the basics of Chapter 43D, participated in discussion, and answered questions that the town had concerning the program.

Economic Development Portion of Master Plan: MRPC is assisting in developing the Economic Development section of Shirley's Master Plan. MRPC Staff have been busy on the inventory and data collection phase of this project over the past month. Staff anticipates meeting with the Town's Economic Development Committee over the next month as this project enters the analysis phase.

Town of Westminster

Chapter 43D Expedited Permitting: The Town is requesting assistance to establish a streamlined permitting process as part of a Chapter 43D program within the town. A meeting is in the process of being scheduled sometime in early July to review draft materials concerning potential permitting procedures available to the community.

Wind Energy Conversion System Bylaw: Westminster's request entails the development of a wind energy system (WECS) bylaw. On May 24, 2010 MRPC staff attended a Public Forum for input on the development of Wind Energy Conversion System Bylaw that was hosted by the Westminster Planning Board. About 20 residents and Town officials were attendance. Consensus emerged that residents wanted the Town to permit Small Wind Energy Systems without too much governmental interference or hurdles for residents to overcome. MRPC Staff followed this Public Forum with a meeting of Town officials on June 9th, to review a first draft working outline of a Wind Energy Conversion Systems Bylaw, focusing on the Small Wind Energy Systems. MRPC staff has provided the Town with a host of example Bylaws and a report comparing how a number of communities permit Wind Energy Conversion Systems.

5.3 GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

5.3.1 Rt 140 Task Force Mapping

Mapping continues to be completed regarding the Rt 140 Task Force. Staff will be performing travel time analysis along Rt 140 between Sterling and Westminster, using the GPS unit and TravTime 2.0 software. Testing for the TravTime data collection and processing has begun. This project is expected to be ongoing throughout the next several months.

5.3.2 Traffic Count Mapping

All data and maps for the Traffic Count Mapping project have been completed up to the year 2009. This information will be placed on the MRPC website in the next couple of weeks for viewing and downloading.

5.3.3 MRPC Favorable Wind Energy Areas Analysis

Analysis is being performed to determine areas in the region most suitable for potential wind energy sites. The MRPC will be utilizing the guidelines established by MassGIS while determining potential sites in the Cape Cod region. This analysis will involve mapping areas of exclusions, where physical or regulatory limitations completely prohibit wind development, as well as constraints, where factors may affect the likelihood of development but do not explicitly prohibit wind development. Areas of exclusion include, but are not limited to, insufficient wind speeds, wetlands, DEP Zone I buffers and non-road impervious surfaces. Areas of constraints include, but are not limited to, wildlife habitats, airfield proximity and Article 97 lands. At the conclusion of the analysis favorable wind energy areas will be mapped and information will be sent to appropriate community personnel upon completion. In addition, all maps and data will be uploaded to the MRPC website for viewing.

5.3.4 Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Mapping

SRTS mapping has begun and includes the Harvard Elementary School and the South Street Elementary and Memorial Middle Schools in Fitchburg. A series of maps have been, and will be completed, as part of this project. Some of the final maps will include Major Routes/Most Traveled Roadways, Dangerous Areas, Crash locations, Traffic Volumes and Sidewalk Locations. Work on this project will be ongoing in the next several months.

5.3.5 Ice Storm Grant Mapping

Forty-plus data sets have been identified for this project. Data collection relative to Regional Assets has been completed in draft format. Further data collection tasks will need to be completed. This data will need to be verified for spatial and attribute accuracy by local officials, owners and managers of regional assets as well as site visits. Back-up Power Sources surveys have been mailed to all current Regional Assets to determine the availability and usefulness of emergency back-up power sources. All survey results have been entered. A series of maps will be created, and relevant data analysis will be performed as deemed necessary by the Energy Advisory Committee. Work on this project will be ongoing in the next several months.

5.3.6 Townsend Open Space & Trail Mapping

A series of maps is being completed for the town relative to its' Open Space and Trail Networks. The MRPC is currently waiting on updated GPS trail data from the town to complete the project. These maps are intended to be placed on the town's website for citizens to view and print. The MRPC is currently waiting for additional GPS trail data from the town in order to complete the mapping. This project is expected to be completed in the next couple of weeks.

5.3.7 Ayer Street Map

Two large format versions of Ayer's Streets have been created for the Fire, Public Works and Economic Development Departments. The maps are in the final stages of review by the town and should be completed by the end of the month.

5.3.8 Trail Inventory

The MRPC is currently working on trail mapping for the communities of Gardner, Phillipston & Westminster. Several miles of trail data has been GPS'd, with only a few segments remaining to be collected. Upon completion of data collection follow-up meetings will be held to collect and process attribute data regarding the trails. Maps will then be created and sent to the communities' for their review. Work on the trail inventory will be ongoing in the next couple of months.

5.4 TRANSIT

5.4.1 Wachusett Commuter Rail Station and Layover Facility

MART has submitted the Environmental Assessment report to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for their review. MRPC staff is working on Request for Proposals (RFP) for land surveys and properties' appraisals for the Wachusett Station and the layover facility project. The proposed project of the Wachusett Station and the layover facility involves construction of a new passenger station and parking facility.

5.4.2 Expansion of MART Storage Facility

MRPC staff continues to work with the contractor Vanguard Construction to resolve construction issues. Removal of the contaminated soil and roof installation at the existing building have been completed. The erection of steel for the new building has begun. MART anticipates a completion of the construction of the expansion of the Vehicle Storage and Bus Wash Facility by December 2010.

5.4.3 Parking Expansion at North Leominster Station

MRPC staff continues to work with FTA on the Categorical Exclusions study to purchase an abutting property for the expansion of North Leominster Parking Garage Facility for the four-hundred (400) plus parking spaces to be constructed at North Leominster Train Station.

5.4.4 Fitchburg Commuter Rail Improvement

The consultant HNTB Architecture & Engineering of Burlington continues to work on the engineering design of the Fitchburg Line Improvement projects. Preliminary design should be completed by June 2010. They intend to start construction soon and phase the project so work can begin in sections along the line. A Stimulus Federal Fund of approximately \$ 40,000,000 has been approved to construct the double tracks of about 10 miles between Ayer and South Acton, and new accessible Commuter Rail Station at Littleton.

5.4.5 Ayer Parking Facility

MRPC Staff continue to assist MART and the Town of Ayer to move forward the construction of the Ayer Commuter Rail parking facility at the Rail Trail parking lot location at Park Street. A meeting with Town Officials was held to discuss the federal funding and the scope of services for Architecture & Engineering consultant to work on the Ayer Commuter Rail parking facility.

5.5 TRANSPORTATION

5.5.1 Montachusett FFY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development

The MJTC reviewed a prioritized listing of TIP eligible projects as part of the development of recommended options for further review by the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The MPO is scheduled to meet on Wednesday July 7th at 1:00 PM at MRPC Offices to recommend for release for a 30 day public review and comment period, a draft FFY 2011-2014 TIP. The draft TIP was developed based upon Federal Aid target figures for our region. The targets for each federal fiscal year are as follows:

		FFY 2011	FFY 2012	FFY 2013	FFY 2014
Target Figures	HSIP	\$445,955	\$445,955	\$445,955	\$445,955
	CMAQ	\$557,444	\$0	\$891,911	\$891,911
	STP	\$5,213,327	\$5,302,797	\$4,620,596	\$4,620,596
	Total	\$6,216,726	\$5,748,752	\$5,958,462	\$5,958,462
Target Figures Adjusted for Year Of Expenditure (YOE) Dollars	HSIP	-	\$445,955	\$445,955	\$445,955
	CMAQ	-	\$0	\$891,911	\$891,911
	STP	-	\$5,072,847	\$4,134,386	\$3,876,599
	Total	-	\$5,518,802	\$5,472,252	\$5,214,465

The second set of figures labeled “Target Figures Adjusted for Year of Expenditure (YOE) Dollars” is the original target figures in the upper box reduced by 4% per year in order to reflect the impacts on inflation on project costs.

A copy of recommend project listings is available for review. It is anticipated that the 30 day comment period will begin shortly after the July MPO meeting.

5.5.2 Route 140 Safety Improvement Task Force

A meeting of the MRPC Route 140 Safety Improvement Task Force Study was held on May 27, 2010 in the town of Westminster. MRPC staff continued to review the status to date of the study including recent analyses of alternative improvements. Follow up individual meetings with the towns of Sterling and Westminster Task Force members have been scheduled to discuss and prioritize alternatives and improvements within each community. An additional public presentation for the communities as a whole is planned for late July to early August.

5.5.3 Montachusett Regional Transportation Plan

The 2011 Montachusett Regional Transportation Plan Update will be discussed at a series of workshops throughout the development process. The first two workshops are scheduled for:

7:00 PM - June 30, 2010, Gardner City Hall, 95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, MA
6:00 PM - July 14, 2010, Leominster City Hall, 25 West Street, Leominster, MA

At these workshops, a brief overview of the Regional Transportation Plan will be provided and then we will solicit input for goals and visions for the future in transportation in the Montachusett Region. Main topics to be discussed include infrastructure, transit, and alternate modes of transportation. The current 2007 RTP is available on our website on the Downloads page at www.mrpc.org.

5.5.4 October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2011 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

A draft of the October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is under development and will be released for a 30 day public review and comment period after review by the Montachusett MPO. The UPWP for the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a financial programming tool developed annually as part of the federally certified transportation planning process. This document contains task descriptions of the transportation planning program of the MPO, with associated budget information and funding sources for the 2010-2011 program year. The purpose of the UPWP is to ensure a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3C) transportation planning process in the Leominster-Fitchburg Urbanized Area and the Montachusett Region. In addition, this document provides for the coordination of planning efforts between communities in the Montachusett Region. The upcoming program will be budgeted at \$563,751 in transportation "PL" funds.

6. COMMITTEE

6.1. Recommendation for Approval of FY2011 Budget

The following handouts were presented by the Executive Director

- A detailed report and brief slide show prepared by the Executive Director concerning projected revenues and expenses for MRPC in FY11.
- Optional budgets reflecting both cost of living/performance salary increases and no cost of living/performance salary increases.
- A report and draft resolution that would require Commission action should the Planning Commission choose to reduce Personal Leave Time from five (5) days (37.5 hours) per employee per fiscal year to three (3) days (22.5 hours) per employee per fiscal year for all eligible employees in FY11.

V. Koivumaki indicated that the Committee met earlier regarding the above. It is important to note that the Commission and the Executive Director recognize the contributions that the staff makes. There were two budgets proposed. One budget had no salary increase and the other had a step increase representing 3 ½%. It was the consensus of the Executive Committee that they do want to reward the staff, but in these particular fiscal times, where all towns are laying off people or not

giving any step increases as well as the uncertainty of the MRPC budget at this time, we are recommending that staff receive half a step increase (1.75%) each. As the year progresses, this will give us a larger cushion than in the project budget with the full 3 ½% increase. The Committee also discussed the possibility of readdressing the salary issue and increasing the amount to the full step sometime in the fiscal year depending upon funding.

V. Koivumaki stated that another recommendation of the Executive Director was to reduce Personal Leave from five days to three. The Executive Committee has decided to leave the present policy in place.

V. Koivumaki indicated that Executive Committee discussed the retainer fee for MRPC's Legal Counsel, Mark Goldstein. It was the recommendation of the Committee that his fee be increased

N. Belliveau asked what would the MRPC vote to adopt as they do not have a budget to adopt that depicts the half step increase.

G. Eaton replied the MRPC would adopt the FY11 budget with an step increase at 1.75% not at 3.5%.

N. Belliveau indicated she would email the changed budget to the Committee.

J. Meehan moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the increase in the monthly retainer fee for Attorney Mark Goldstein from \$750.00 per month to \$800.00 per month effective July 1, 2010. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

J. Meehan moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the draft budget for FY11 with a 1.75% (half-step) salary increase for all staff effective July 1, 2010. As the year progresses salaries may be revisited for the possibility of future increases subject to funding. However, if increases are granted they will not be retroactive. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

R. Grubb moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the FY2010 adjusted budget as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

6.2. Computer Purchase Program

G. Eaton presented the Computer Purchase Program Policy as a handout. He indicated that at the April meeting the Commission reviewed the policy and made some revisions. Attorney Goldstein also made some revisions. G. Eaton explained the revisions. All comments have been incorporated into the policy.

P. Caron suggested revisiting the policy in a year to look at the time it takes to administer this program.

J. Meehan moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the Computer Purchase Program Policy and revisit the policy within one year. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

6.3. Strategic Planning

V. Koivumaki indicated that we need to focus on strategic planning. Staff developed a history of the MRPC to depict what the MRPC has accomplished. We need to discuss what we want to accomplish in the future. Regionalization is a way to save money for the public we serve. The Executive Director has provided a starter document for the MRPC and for MEC regarding strategic planning.

G. Eaton that he will schedule a separate Executive Committee Meeting in August to discuss strategic planning. He will schedule it around August 15th so that we can bring the information to the Commission at its August meeting. He indicated that he will email Committee members with possible dates for a meeting.

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

G. Eaton stated that yesterday he emailed the Committee regarding a resolution forming an ad hoc committee that will work with the Executive Director for one year for the purpose of identifying, pursuing and implementing regionalization of municipal services by the MRPC or other entities as deemed appropriate by MRPC or its communities. We would like to have a committee represented by Town Managers, DPW Directors, CEOs and the like to provide direction and input to the MRPC as how best to implement services. He indicated he would like to correspond with all 22 communities request that local officials be appointed to the Committee. The names will be brought to the July MRPC meeting for appointment.

J. White moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission authorize the Director to form an ad hoc Regionalization Committee and send a letter to the 22 MRPC communities requesting local officials be appointed to MRPC's Regionalization Committee. Members who are appointed will be approved at the July MRPC meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

J. Meehan stated that two waste management companies have signed letters with landowners in Athol, Orbit Energy and Enviro Park. Enviro Park will make a presentation to Mass Office of Business Development tomorrow. They are a waste-to-energy company. Enviro Park needs 15 acres. In a year they have to have a guarantee of 295,000 tons. This company does not release anything into the atmosphere. The trash is burned at 1000 degrees Fahrenheit. The trash creates an ash of 10% and the rest is collected as gas or steam and its generated and produces electricity. There are 22 landfills in MA and 17 are closing in two years. Everyone will need to find a place for trash soon. What they would like is that if Athol fills up the business park to sell both electricity and steam to the other facilities within the park.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.