

**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)**  
**MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2016**  
**7:00 PM**

**1. OPEN MEETING AND INTRODUCTIONS**

J. Telepciak called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All present introduced themselves. Meeting attendance can be found on the last page of this document.

**2. APPROVAL OF APRIL 26, MAY 31 and JUNE 16, 2016 MRPC MEETING MINUTES**

A motion was made to approve the minutes of April 26, May 31 and June 16, 2016. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously with abstentions from G. Corbosiero, N. Piazza, A. Pease and D. Prokowieiw.

**3. TREASURER'S REPORT**

**3.1 Approval of Cash Schedules**

**3.2 Bank Forms**

Addressed at 9:02 PM after all other business had been completed.

**4. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

**4.1 Temporary Employees**

G. Eaton indicated that according to MRPC's Personnel Regulations - Employees (whether Permanent part-time or Temporary part-time) who work over an average of 18.75 per week receive pro-rated leave benefits such as vacation, holiday, sick and personal.

Currently, MRPC has five temporary employees who are working an average of 25 hours per week ranging from three to six months. Based on MRPC's current policy, MRPC's financial liability to provide leave benefits to the five temporary employees totals approximately \$5,000. MRPC surveyed other Regional Planning Agencies and MRPC is the only Regional Planning Agency (of nine who responded) which provides leave benefits to temporary employees.

The Executive Director recommends that MRPC change its current policy to reflect the practice of other Regional Planning Agencies, but, moreover to eliminate the financial liability to the MRPC.

Discussion took place concerning compliance with the Massachusetts Sick Time Statute.

P. Caron moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission add the

following language to its Personnel Policies and Employee Procedures Handbook, Page 7 Section 2. B. Employees and that the new policy will go into effect no earlier than November 1, 2016.

“Temporary Employee: A person hired on a temporary basis either part-time or full-time will receive no fringe benefits, excluding mandated benefits” (such as those benefits that may be due to these employees under the Massachusetts Sick Time Law).

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **4.2 FY17 Revenue Update**

The Governor vetoed the funding for the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program for FY17. The House of Representatives is taking up the issue of possibly overriding his action. MRPC staff is monitoring this situation along with the other regional planning agencies and councils of government throughout the Commonwealth.

A FY16 Community Development Fund grant has been awarded to Winchendon & Ashby; MRPC assisted with grant proposal preparation and will co-administer this grant with local staff. The \$1 million is for infrastructure improvements to Walnut Street in Winchendon and housing rehabilitation and home heating fuel assistance in both communities. MRPC will be paid a management fee out of the grant in addition to a fee that this agency earned for grant writing.

We are working with a community in an attempt to obtain an Economic Development Fund (EDF) grant of \$750,000 in order to renovate a mixed-use (residential and commercial) building in one of the region’s central business districts.

Staff is preparing a grant proposal to the Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) for funding the MRPC to conduct a Future Industrial Lands (FIL) Report (region-wide). We anticipate submitting the first draft this summer.

We are continuing our negotiations with a major health care provider to conduct economic impact and health epidemiology studies in the region to be completed this fiscal year. The budgets are to be determined.

#### **4.3 Salary Scale Revision**

##### **REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSIONERS REGARDING PROPOSED UPDATES TO MRPC PAY SCALE**

G. Eaton reported that the pay scale was last updated by an outside consultant in 2011. The Pay Scale, adopted by the Commissioners at that time, “Based on Market Average” and Classification Plan of all jobs by title and grade have been attached for reference. Also, please find attached the Executive Director’s proposed changes to both the Pay Scale and Classification Plan. Related research and highlights of his recommendations are as follows.

The Pay Scale proposed to the Commissioners by the Executive Director can be found, below. This pay scale reflects market rate salaries for all positions at the MRPC. Sources of data for salaries include the following:

1. MRPC Compensation Study completed in 2011 by Human Resources Services, Inc. where the comparable positions at other regional planning agencies and councils of government throughout Massachusetts are compensated at levels up to the figures following each title listed, below:
  - a. Executive Director, \$151,939
  - b. Administrative Director, \$82,481
  - c. Administrative Secretary, \$44,135
  - d. Fiscal Director, \$91,430
  - e. GIS Director, \$86,000
  - f. GIS Analyst, \$60,219
  - g. Community Development Director, \$104,954
  - h. Regional Planner (entry level), \$66,320
  - i. Principal Planner, Grade 3 @ \$66,320 and Grade 4 @ \$71,176
  - j. Transportation Director, \$91,882
  - k. Transit Director, \$82,484
  - l. Transportation Planner, Grade 3 @ \$60,220; Grade 4 @ \$66,320 and Grade 6 @ \$84,812
  - m. Intern, \$13.94 per hour
2. US Bureau of Labor Statistics
  - a. Where planners are compensated at a level up to \$77,390 in the Boston-Newton-Cambridge Metropolitan Region which is presumed to be higher than central Massachusetts do to the higher cost of living in eastern Massachusetts
3. Salary data obtained from employment opportunities available throughout Massachusetts and listed at [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org) (Massachusetts Municipal Association)
  - a. Town of Watertown, Senior Planner – Transportation, \$58,356 - \$71,772
  - b. City of Fall River, Network Administrator, \$2,026 bi-weekly or \$52,676 annually
  - c. Town of Littleton, Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator, \$24.27–\$25.99/hour or \$47,326.50 to \$50,680.50 annually
  - d. Town of Chatham, Principal Planner, starting rate for this position is \$2,761.60 bi-weekly or \$71,801.60
  - e. Town of Windham, Community Development Director, NH \$73,082-\$88,817 annually
  - f. City of Chicopee, Assistant Planner, \$25.44 per hour 35 hours per week \$46,300.80
  - g. City of Somerville, Planner – Urban Forestry & Landscape, \$75,000 annually
  - h. City of Leominster, Human Resources Director, \$59,421/year to Max of \$76,691
4. Information related to open planning and related positions throughout the US and found at the website of the National Association of Regional Councils
  - a. Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission, Manchester, Principal

Transportation Planner, \$61,000 to \$70,000 per year

5. Annual Salary Survey of Planners available from the National Planning Association
  - a. [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org) provides a “2016 Planners Salary Calculator” to members; when searching through the 9,709 results from planners across the country in the American Planning Association’s most recent Annual Salary Survey it was learned that the National Average Salary of a planner in the:
    - i. 25<sup>th</sup> percentile (where 25% of those planners earn less than this average) was \$60,300
    - ii. 50<sup>th</sup> percentile (where 50% of those planners earn less than this average) was \$77,300
    - iii. 75<sup>th</sup> percentile the national average (where 50% of those planners earn less than this average) was \$100,000
6. A “dot org” website (ONET Online) that cites the US Bureau of Labor Statistics; according to <http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/19-3051.00>:
  - a. The 2015 median wage of a planner in Massachusetts was \$68,220 or \$32.80 per hour
  - b. Low, median and high annual salaries were at \$50,620, \$68,710 and \$99,560, respectively for the same year

Results of the analysis of the above data are, as follows:

- In order to adjust the entire pay scale to reflect current market conditions the Executive Director examined the possibility of eliminating the bottom two or three steps and adding an equal number of steps to the uppermost end of the pay scale. This was not possible as two employees are in Step Two (at grades Two and Six) at this time.
- A significant amount of salary data has been reviewed by the Executive Director from no less than six sources. Compensation levels for our employees are comparable with other parts of the state and nation, however our entry level salaries may be too low to obtain more competitive candidates. This should be addressed by the Executive Director and Commissioners with future advertising for jobs available at this agency.
- The ten step grade system does not provide for a sufficient number of grades to provide the MRPC with the flexibility that is needed in order to hire planners and other employees.
- Within the outside consultant’s 2011 report, she indicated that employees should be compensated for “performance, longevity or some other type of system applied consistently.” The longevity of the employees at this agency, follow:
  - At least two employees have been with the MRPC for 30 years; Linda Parmenter at 34 years and Brad Harris at “30 years 6 months 3 weeks 3 days”
  - George Kahale, 25 years with the MRPC and another 15 years of prior, related experience
  - George Snow, 19 years
  - Glenn Eaton, 17 years with the MRPC (and a total of 30 years [this summer] in community and economic development, local and regional planning,

- municipal finance and leadership and government administration)
- John Hume, a total of 17 years with the MRPC and the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC)
- Sheri Bean, 12 years full time and another five years as an intern while in high school and college
- Jason Stanton, more than 14 years
- Bobbi Jo Johnson, 13 years
- Chantell Fleck, 11+ years
- Brian Doherty, nine years
- Noam Goldstein, Brian Keating, Holly Ford, Shubee Kalra and Kaitlyn Olbrich have been with the agency from one to eleven months

From page 9 of the Compensation Study prepared by Human Resources Services, Inc. the author stated that “performance, longevity, or some other type of system applied consistently for all (employees) in the organization” should be used to enable management to decide which employees “move within the grade range.” See excerpt, below.

How employees move within the grade range should be based on performance, longevity, or some other type of system applied consistently for all in the organization. The salary schedule as a whole should be adjusted annually or at a minimum every other year to reflect the cost of living, a rise in goods and services experienced by everyone. Most comparable organizations are budgeting between 2% - 3% for cost-of-living wage increase for fiscal year 2012.

MRPC uses a performance based review system. The Commissioners and management of this agency could also take into account an employee’s “longevity.” According to [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com), longevity was defined as “3. length of service, tenure, etc.; seniority: (example) promotions based on longevity.” Generally speaking employees with more longevity and thus, experience, should be compensated at a level higher than those with lesser years of service to the agency and in the relevant field. In the cases of employees that have been with the agency a longer period of time Commissioners and management should consider the benefits of compensating those employees that have greater longevity, loyalty and experience with this agency as a part of the formula in addition to performance.

The Executive Director recommends that the first step in the current Pay Scale should be dropped; there are no employees in this step at this time. Also, especially at the lowest end of the pay scale (i.e. grades one, two and three [all step one]) the salary amounts are insufficient to attract an appropriate number of qualified candidates for the positions. This has been experienced by the Commission while advertising and hiring five open positions since the

summer of 2015.

The Pay Scale adopted by the Commissioners in 2011, follows.

HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES, INC.  
Compensation Plan

FINAL REPORT

**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
*Planning and Administrative Staff*

**Proposed FY 2011 Compensation Plan - Based on Market Average**

Step % = 2.50      Range 0.22

Hrs/Wk = 37.50

Grade	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9
1 Annual	33,500.00	34,337.50	35,185.94	36,075.84	36,977.73	37,902.18	38,849.73	39,820.97	40,816.50
2 Annual	41,205.00	42,235.13	43,291.00	44,373.28	45,482.61	46,619.68	47,785.17	48,979.80	50,204.29
3 Annual	43,265.25	44,346.88	45,455.55	46,591.94	47,756.74	48,950.66	50,174.43	51,428.79	52,714.51
4 Annual	45,428.51	46,564.23	47,728.33	48,921.54	50,144.58	51,398.19	52,683.15	54,000.23	55,350.23
5 Annual	49,971.36	51,220.65	52,501.16	53,813.69	55,159.04	56,538.01	57,951.46	59,400.25	60,885.25
6 Annual	59,965.64	61,464.78	63,001.40	64,576.43	66,180.84	67,845.61	69,541.75	71,280.30	73,062.31
7 Annual	70,759.45	72,528.44	74,341.65	76,200.19	78,105.19	80,057.82	82,059.27	84,110.75	86,213.52
8 Annual	93,402.48	95,737.54	98,130.98	100,584.25	103,098.86	105,676.33	108,318.24	111,026.19	113,801.85

11

327

The Executive Director advises the Commissioners to adopt the following pay scale (see resolution, below).

ADD FIVE STEPS PROVIDING THE MRPC WITH A GREATER SALARY RANGE TO REFLECT THE BROAD RANGE OF SKILLS AVAILABLE AND MARKET CONDITIONS															
MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION															
GRADE AND STEP SCHEDULE															
STEP % = 2.5%															
HRS./WK. = 37.5															
GRADE	STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6	STEP 7	STEP 8	STEP 9	STEP 10	STEP 11	STEP 12	STEP 13	STEP 14	STEP 15
1	\$34,338	\$35,196	<b>\$36,076</b>	\$36,978	\$37,902	\$38,850	\$39,821	\$40,816	<b>\$41,837</b>	\$42,883	\$43,955	\$45,054	\$46,180	\$47,335	\$48,518
2	<b>\$42,235</b>	\$43,291	\$44,373	<b>\$45,483</b>	\$46,620	\$47,785	\$48,980	\$50,204	\$51,459	\$52,746	\$54,065	\$55,416	\$56,802	\$58,222	\$59,677
3	\$44,347	\$45,455	\$46,592	<b>\$47,756</b>	\$48,950	\$50,174	\$51,428	\$52,714	\$54,032	\$55,383	\$56,767	\$58,187	\$59,641	\$61,132	\$62,661
4	\$46,564	\$47,728	\$48,921	<b>\$50,144</b>	\$51,398	\$52,683	\$54,000	\$55,350	\$56,733	\$58,152	\$59,605	\$61,096	\$62,623	\$64,189	\$65,793
5	\$51,220	\$52,501	\$53,813	\$55,159	\$56,538	\$57,951	\$59,400	\$60,885	\$62,407	\$63,967	\$65,566	\$67,205	\$68,886	\$70,608	\$72,373
6	<b>\$61,464</b>	\$63,001	<b>\$64,576</b>	\$66,190	<b>\$67,845</b>	\$69,541	\$71,280	<b>\$73,062</b>	\$74,888	\$76,760	\$78,679	\$80,646	\$82,662	\$84,729	\$86,847
7	\$72,528	\$74,341	\$76,200	\$78,105	<b>\$80,057</b>	\$82,059	\$84,110	\$86,213	<b>\$88,368</b>	<b>\$90,578</b>	\$92,842	\$95,163	\$97,542	\$99,981	\$102,480
8	\$95,737	\$98,130	\$100,584	<b>\$103,098</b>	\$105,676	\$108,318	\$111,026	\$113,801	\$116,646	\$119,562	\$122,552	\$125,615	\$128,756	\$131,975	\$135,274
INTERNS ARE PAID AT AN HOURLY RATE OF \$13.00.															



The existing Classification Plan for each job title by grade, follows.

**PROPOSED CLASSIFICATION PLAN**  
**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

**GRADE 1**

Traffic Technician

**GRADE 2**

Administrative Secretary  
Administrative Assistant  
Fiscal Assistant

**GRADE 3**

*No position assigned.*

**GRADE 4**

Regional Planner (*vacant*)

**GRADE 5**

Economic Development Specialist (*vacant*)  
GIS Analyst/GIS Project Planner

**GRADE 6**

Principal Planner  
Principal Planner – Transportation  
Office Manager/Principal Planner  
Fiscal Manager

**GRADE 7**

Director of Planning and Development  
Transportation Project Director  
Transit Project Director

**GRADE 8**

Executive Director of MRPC

The Executive Director advises the Commissioners to adopt the following Classification System for Grades by Job Title (see resolution, below).

Classification System for Grades by Job Title

GRADE 1

Administrative Secretary  
Administrative Assistant (vacant)  
Fiscal Assistant

GRADE 2

Administrative Secretary  
Administrative Assistant (vacant)  
Fiscal Assistant

GRADE 3

Administrative Assistant  
Fiscal Assistant  
Regional Planner  
Principal Planner  
Economic Development Specialist (vacant)  
Community Development Manager

GRADE 4

Regional Planner  
Principal Planner  
Economic Development Specialist (vacant)  
Community Development Manager

GRADE 5

Regional Planner  
Principal Planner  
Economic Development Specialist (vacant)  
Community Development Manager  
Administrative and Human resources Director  
Fiscal Director  
Geographic Information System & Information Technology Director (GIS & IT Director)

GRADE 6

Principal Planner  
Economic Development Specialist (vacant)  
Community Development Manager  
Administrative and Human resources Director  
Fiscal Director  
GIS & IT Director  
Planning and Development Director  
Transit Projects Director  
Transportation Projects Director

GRADE 7

Administrative and Human resources Director  
Fiscal Director  
GIS & IT Director  
Planning and Development Director  
Transit Projects Director  
Transportation Projects Director

GRADE 8

Executive Director of MRPC and Director of MEC, Inc.

## RESOLUTION REQUIRING COMMISSION ACTION:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission hereby adopts the new classification plan, pay scale and also hereby adjusts the annual salary of Mr. Brad Harris, Transportation Projects Director from \$88,368 to \$90,578 commencing on July 1, 2016, the beginning of FY17.

The above, proposed resolution was not adopted. After much deliberation the Executive Director was directed to:

- Drop the extra five steps in the proposed pay scale
- Increase each grade/step “cell” within the Excel spreadsheet by the following factors:
  - 1.5% for merit (performance); and,
  - The average percentage for the cost of living increase
- The formula for each cell would be, thus (as an example):
  - (Grade One/Step One present salary of \$34,338) \*
  - (merit [performance] increase of 1.5%) \*
  - (the average percentage for the cost of living increase) =
  - (the new level of compensation for this grade and step)
- Insert grades where necessary in between certain grades where he deemed it would be appropriate to do so, such as between grades 7 and 8
- Provide an updated pay scale to the Commissioners at their next meeting scheduled to be held on Tuesday, August 30, 2016

### 4.3 Discussion Regarding Changing MRPC Meetings from Monthly to Quarterly

G. Eaton explained the following is a report concerning a survey of Commissioners conducted in April 2015 related to monthly meetings and a subsequent resolution to alter the monthly meeting day from the last Tuesday of each month to the third Thursday of each month in order to boost educational programming, attendance and communication with the MRPC 22 client communities and Devens.

- Respondents identified “meeting fatigue” as one of the two reasons for not attending monthly meetings
  - the other was that the fact that some of the appointees were only available during the day for meetings (as the MRPC has been meeting once monthly on evenings since 1968 the MRPC staff presumes that some communities have not appointed persons with the flexibility necessary to meet during the evenings)
- Barely half of the respondents indicated that Tuesday evenings were the best time to meet as Commissioners
- A Thursday evening is the best day and time of the week to meet (According to the MRPC’s Bylaws, meetings may be held each month on a day and time to be determined most appropriate by the Commissioners, as follows: *“According to Article IV. MEETINGS, A. Meetings of the Commission shall be held monthly, except by vote of the membership. Special meetings may also be held at the call of the Chairman. The Secretary shall mail (via mail, email or fax) notice of all meetings to all members of the Commission at least five (5) days prior to such meetings.”*)
- Nearly two-thirds of the respondents indicated that they would prefer to have quarterly

meetings of the Commission while the Executive Committee should meet on those months when the full Commission does not meet. A schedule such as the one below is hereby presented for consideration by the Commissioners:

- Quarterly meetings of the Commission shall be held on the third Thursday in March, June, September and December
  - In the case of FY17 quarterly Commission meeting dates would be:
    - September 15, 2016
    - December 15, 2016
    - March 16, 2017
    - June 15, 2017
- Eight meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held on the third Thursday at 6:00 p.m. in January, February, April, May, July, August, October and November (Executive Committee meetings shall be held on the second Thursday in November when the third Thursday falls on the National Thanksgiving Day Holiday)
  - In the case of FY17 Executive Committee meeting dates would be:
    - August 18, 2016
    - September 15, 2016 (Only if deemed necessary prior to the meeting of the Commissioners)
    - October 20, 2016
    - November 17, 2016
    - December 15, 2016 (Only if deemed necessary prior to the meeting of the Commissioners)
    - January 19, 2017
    - February 16, 2017
    - March 16, 2017 (Only if deemed necessary prior to the meeting of the Commissioners)
    - April 20, 2017
    - May 18, 2017
    - June 15, 2017 (Only if deemed necessary prior to the meeting of the Commissioners)
- In order of priority, topics of interest to be explored in more depth at meetings of the commissioners include the following: economic development; renewable energy; transportation; zoning; land use; cooperative purchasing; housing; environment; training for municipal officials; municipal finance; and, open meeting law.
  - Utilizing guest speakers and employees the MRPC would provide seminars and updates in each of these, and other, areas of interest at the quarterly meetings
- MRPC's Executive Director requests that the commissioners consider holding quarterly meetings outside of its regular office location at public buildings that are compliant with ADA access requirements coupled with sufficient parking for commissioners, staff and guests. Holding the meetings throughout the region would increase interaction of the agency with its client communities and serve to boost attendance by commissioners. Some of the proposed locations would include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - Any city and town hall in the region subject to the approval of the local municipality for use of a meeting room in each hall and the MassDevelopment-Devens Municipal Building, 33 Andrews Parkway, Devens

## **RESOLUTION REQUIRING COMMISSION ACTION:**

BE IT RESOLVED that, as of August 2016, the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission shall:

- Hold quarterly meetings on the third Thursday of each month in the months of March, June, September and December
  - All Directors and Planning Staff will be required to attend the quarterly meetings of the MRPC.
- Conduct Executive Committee meetings:
  - On the third Thursday of each month on the eight months of the year when quarterly meetings are not held
  - Prior to full Commission meetings in March, June, September and December when deemed appropriate or necessary
  - The Executive Director will attend the Executive Committee Meetings and at his discretion instruct other staff to attend as needed.
- Meet in accordance with all dates listed above and in order to achieve the aforementioned goals
- Maintain this system shall continue in years subsequent to FY17 unless otherwise amended by the Commissioners

The above resolution was not adopted, but was discussed at length. Commissioners expressed concern that a provision of 40B requires that two-thirds of the members must have voted or must vote in the affirmative in order to delegate certain responsibilities to the Executive Committee. The question was raised as to whether or not this vote took place in the past. The Commissioners directed the Executive Director to identify the point in time that this vote took place allowing the Executive Committee to act on behalf of the full Commission or to hold such a meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup> of this year. Mr. Eaton indicated that he would discuss this matter with the staff historian, Ms. Parmenter, Administrative and Human Resources Director upon her return from vacation and research this matter in more depth.

There was debate as to whether or not moving to quarterly meetings was in the best interest of the Commission. Mr. Corbosiero reaffirmed his opposition. After lengthy persuasion by Mr. Eaton, Mr. Corbosiero changed his opinion and said that he would support quarterly meetings in FY17.

R. Burke moved that the MRPC direct the Executive Director to survey delegates to determine what the best night of the month is to get the members to monthly meetings. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **4.4 Esri User Conference Report**

To be provided at the next meeting of the Planning Commissioners.

### **4.5 GMS Annual Summit**

This year's GMS financial summit was held in June in St. Pete Florida and offered over 30 educational sessions led by experts in the industry as well as opportunities to network with my peers. Interaction with GMS staff this year was tremendous.

Summit kick-off - charity networking event: Helping Communities by Giving Back. Participants assembled hygiene kits to be donated to Daystar Life Center in Pinellas County.

Out of the 30 sessions offered, Bobbi Jo Johnson participated in the following:

***Design and Implementation of Internal Controls*** – Jason Brooks, CPA

- Internal control is a major part of managing an organization. It comprises the plans, methods, and procedures used to meet the agencies goals and objectives and the grants they administer.
- Internal controls serve as the first line of defense in safeguarding assets and preventing and detecting errors and fraud.

***OMB Super Circular: How it Affects Your Organization*** - Jason Brooks, CPA Watkins

- OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. Published in the Federal Reserve on 12/26/16 (2 CFR Chapter I, Chapter II, Part 200.
- Effective for grants received on or after 12/26/14.
- Audit provisions effective for fiscal years beginning on or after 12/26/14.
  - The objectives:
    - reduce administrative burden for those receiving federal awards, while also reducing risk of waste, fraud and abuse,
    - improve the integrity of financial management and operations of federal programs,
    - strengthen accountability for federal dollars by improving policies the protect against waste, fraud and abuse,
    - increase impact and accessibility of programs by minimizing time spent complying with unnecessarily burdensome administrative requirements,
    - refocus recipients toward achieving program objectives
    - award grants based on merit
    - increased management focus on performance outcomes,
    - streamlined rules governing federal funds,
    - single audit oversight tool is better focused to reduce waste, fraud and abuse.

***Month End Processing: Advanced and Troubleshooting*** – GMS Staff

- An in-depth review of reports generated at Month End to both help disseminate the proper information as well as do some “detective work” in problem solving and troubleshooting.

***Payroll Processing: Advanced and Troubleshooting*** – GMS Staff

- Payroll processing with an emphasis on recognizing problems and the proper timing and steps for correction.
- This included direction on setup files, employee entry, timesheet entry, expense reimbursements, quarterly processing, and annual W2 processing.

***Balance Sheet Reconciliations*** – GMS Staff

- Covered the importance and benefits of timely reconciling of all accounts on the Balance Sheet.
- Examples of some of the dangers of making certain assumptions during the process.
- Some of the topics included were cash account reconciliations, project balances and Revenue and Expense Reports.

### ***Introduction to Indirect Costs*** – Jason Brooks, CPA

- Covered the complex concept of indirect costs and its application to grants and other programs in accordance with Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

### ***Cost Allocation Options*** – GMS Staff

- This is one of the most important implementation issues associated with the operation of the GMS Accounting and Financial Reporting System.
- Selecting the cost allocation procedures most suited to our specific agency is key.
- Pools for leave, fringe benefits, common/indirect costs and program specific allocations were discussed.
- Supplements offered by GMS to help assist in this were also discussed.

### **June 2016 – Intensive 2-Day Training: Year-End Procedures/Preparing for Audit**

- This intensive was a step-by-step review of what you need to do at year end to close the books and get ready for audit.
  - Reconcile all account balances
  - Properly record revenue and expenses
  - Prepare year end entries to close projects and control accounts in the general ledger
  - Process the “final” year-end reports
  - Prepare schedules, reports and files for the auditor
- This session was designed to help keep audit costs under control and to help comply with current audit standards and requirements.

## **5. STATUS REPORTS**

### **5.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**

Mr. Stanton prepared a spreadsheet showing the status of the budget including the original estimated and actual costs related to the MRPC's information technology improvements completed as of this date. Expenses have occurred within each line item with the exception of the purchase of the 3D printer. Significant savings have been realized in the plotter and software line items while we exceeded our desktops line by about 10%+/-.

IT Upgrades	Estimated	Actual	Difference
Desktops	\$9,870.00	\$10,915.98	-\$1,045.98
Laptops	\$2,200.00	\$2,211.92	-\$11.92
Monitors	\$1,910.00	\$1,813.61	\$96.39
Server	\$2,179.00	\$2,163.35	\$15.65
Software	\$6,424.00	\$3,089.57	\$3,334.43
APC Battery Backups	\$0.00	\$229.36	-\$229.36
Plotter	\$13,000.00	\$7,359.00	\$5,641.00
WebCams	\$0.00	\$560.34	-\$560.34
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$200.00	-\$200.00
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>\$35,583.00</b>	<b>\$28,543.13</b>	<b>\$7,039.87</b>
3D Printer	\$9,000.00	???	???
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$44,583.00</b>	<b>???</b>	<b>???</b>

### MRMAPPER & MOBILE APPS

We are consistently adding data, applications and/or enhancing tools in *MRMapper* as the need arises so please check back frequently to see what's new. MRPC has completed converting all Flex/Flash (Legacy) applications to JavaScript/HTML5 (WebApps). This is a core change that allows users to consume *MRMapper* content on most browsers and, most importantly, without plugins that currently restrict usage on mobile devices. Legacy applications will be available for a short time only and will not be updated.

In addition, Mobile Apps are becoming increasingly popular. They are designed for two main purposes- (1) informing the public and (2) improving efficiency in data collection and field work. Public apps are created to allow the public to view data online in any browser and on any device. Data collection apps are custom designed by the MRPC to the users' field of work or area of interest.

- Shirley – We are in the process of finalizing updates to the internal and public MRMapper sites for the Town.
- Ayer – We are in the process of finalizing internal and public MRMapper sites for the Town.
- Royalston – We are in the process of finalizing internal and public MRMapper sites for the Town.

### COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

- Distressed Property Identification and Revitalization (DPIR) – Staff is currently gearing up to create several mobile apps for use in the DPIR program.
- District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)
  - Ashby Land Use Analysis – A map depicting the Town's Land use was created and data analysis was performed regarding the acreage and percentages of particular land uses throughout the town. This project will be ongoing as necessary.
  - Templeton Land Use Analysis – A map depicting the Town's Land use was created and data analysis was performed regarding the acreage and percentages of particular land uses throughout the town. This project will be ongoing as necessary.
  - Templeton Residential Development Potential Analysis – A map depicting the Town's Residential Development potential was created. In addition data analysis was performed regarding (1) Absolute Development Constraints, (2) Partial Development Constraints and (3) Developable Lands. This project will be ongoing as necessary.



- Devens Economic Impact Study – This project has been completed.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- Harvard Town Center – This project has been completed.
- Stormwater App Development – We are gearing up to begin the development of a Stormwater App for data collection in order to aid communities in the (Environmental Protection Agency) EPA (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) MS4 compliance. We are in the process of gathering data and will be working with the communities of Lunenburg and Winchendon to develop and test the app. This project will be ongoing through the Spring/Summer.

## **CENTRAL REGION HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

- Evacuation and Critical Infrastructure App Trainings – We are in the process of coordinating several trainings related to the Evacuation and Critical Infrastructure Apps that were developed for the council. These training are expected to be completed in August.

### **5.2 Planning and Development**

#### **FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA) AND FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA), MONTACHUSETT REGION BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

A joint Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)/ Montachusett Brownfields Group (MBG) meeting was held on June 9, 2016 at MRPC offices. MRPC's brownfields environmental consultant (TRC) presented a status report of on-going environmental Site Assessments (ESA's) and answered questions. No additional site nominations were received.

MRPC's Community Development Manager (Brian Keating) presented and answered questions about how MRPC can assist communities to prepare a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application. CDBG applications take considerable time and effort to put together and communities should begin the process now.

#### **HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE PROJECT**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) completed its review of the Montachusett Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for the jurisdictions referenced below and found them approvable pending local adoption of the plan. As of July 11, the following communities have adopted the plan and are eligible to apply to Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for mitigation grants administered by FEMA: Ashburnham, Ashby, Athol, Ayer, Fitchburg, Groton, Lancaster, Leominster, Petersham, Phillipston, Royalston, Townsend, Westminster, and Winchendon.

#### **ECONOMIC IMPACT OF DEVENS**

MRPC received a grant on behalf of the region facilitated by the City of Leominster and funded through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) and its Office of Performance Management and Oversight (OPMP) to analyze and report on information related to the Economic Impact of Devens on the Montachusett Region. The study included analysis of the housing market, economic development, transportation infrastructure, open space, government services and facilities, and land use. The stakeholders of this project were provided opportunities to meet with the MRPC and its consulting team (Mullin Associates, Inc.) and participate in an interactive dialogue on three separate occasions. The grants termination date was June 30, 2016 and the report has since been

completed.

Mr. Eaton indicated that eight of the 16 employees contributed to the preparation of this report that was completed in May and June of this year.

#### **DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (DLTA)**

MRPC staff is initiating work on the following DLTA projects:

1. **Templeton:** Master Plan Land Use Element
2. **Shirley:** Feasibility Study comprised of recommendations to potentially join or not join a regional dispatch center. There are two regional dispatch centers in the neighboring communities of Groton and Devens. The study would evaluate each one and recommend the best option for Shirley.
3. **Sterling:** A DLTA report near completion for Sterling consists of recommendations to update zoning bylaws to encourage the development and redevelopment of commercial property in a manner that reflects the interests and needs of the community. This proposed project would implement recommendations.
4. **Townsend:** A DLTA report near completion for Townsend consists of recommendations to update bylaws to increase opportunities in Townsend. This proposed project would implement recommendations.
5. **Central Mass Grown:** Work with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission on Central Mass Grown by utilizing \$7,500 in DLTA funds. The mission of Central Mass Grown is to strengthen the purchases and awareness of local goods in Worcester County.
6. **Winchendon:** Master Plan Land Use Element
7. **Westminster:** Planning assistance to prepare a senior housing feasibility study for land behind the new senior center at 69 West Main Street.
8. **Winchendon:** Potential conversion of the Central Street commercial area into its own zoning district to be known as "The Winchendon Village District".
9. **Ashby:** Identify how Ashby can accommodate Compact Development/ Investigate how Ashby can promote Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) through ANR development.
10. **Fitchburg:** Assist Fitchburg to meet requirements for becoming designated as a "Green Community".
11. **Lancaster:** Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT).
12. **Harvard:** Cluster Bylaw Revisions.

### **SHIRLEY MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

MRPC staff has completed all elements under contract with the exception of the Open Space and Recreation Element – to complete this element, the Town must first complete its Open Space and Recreation Plan (scheduled for completion in September).

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS**

#### **SHIRLEY- LANCASTER HOUSING REHABILITATION/FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Housing Rehab Program has facilitated ten loan closings for work to be completed on ten projects. These projects include lead abatement, window and door upgrades, electrical upgrades, a new roof, and a connection to public sewer where the property had until now been serviced by a cesspool, and a new septic system. This month one additional property has been approved and three qualifying intakes are scheduled. A total of nineteen projects – one less than the program goal – are either completed or are in the pipeline.

- All approved properties have been inspected for code violations and lead contamination. The program goal is to service 20 units of housing. To date the program has bid out 15 units and 4 units are scheduled to be bid out.
- Program staff is now scheduling a loan closings and homeowner-contractor agreement for the 1 remaining project that has gone out to bid. A title search attorney is running title searches on all properties before loan closings are scheduled.
- Approximately 90% of HR program funds are earmarked for approved projects. The program staff continues to work with applicants who are not yet approved with the objective of committing 100% of funding available.
- As a CDFII community Lancaster is restricted to 35% of total program funds. To date, the program has approved 9 units of housing in this community and is up against 35% of the available funds for the housing rehab portion of the grant. It is improbable that additional properties in Lancaster will be approved as housing rehab projects in this grant cycle.
- The Fuel Assistance Program has received 29 applications and has delivered \$\$5,434.03. (18% ) in fuel. The delivery schedule is accelerating as applicants' LIHEAP benefits are being exhausted.

#### **Montachusett Enterprise Center, Inc. (MEC)**

### **RECEIVERSHIP PROJECTS**

MEC has made significant progress this month towards closing out its receivership projects. On June 29<sup>th</sup> the Court approved a motion that the bank of record pay off MEC's lien for the property located at 41 Lewis St and for MEC to go to foreclosure auction for the property at 2017 Adams St. Construction is completed at 119 Everett St and MEC will also make a motion to go to foreclosure auction for this property as well. As of this month, each receivership project has been terminated or will be scheduled to be auctioned by August 31.

## **MONTY TECH PROJECTS**

Both projects are completed and Certificates of Occupancy were received on July 12. MEC is now in the process of marketing and selling the homes to qualified homeowners. The Community Development Manager is working with MassHousing, the subsidizing agency, to develop the scope of work to achieve this objective.

## **30 POWERS MILL RD**

MEC has received an estimate of \$32,250 to complete the repairs needed at this property due to the water damage. This will put MEC's investment into this property at \$177,250. The appraised value for the property is \$175,021. In order to realize revenue from this project MEC intends to lease the property for one year before putting it on the market.

### **5.3 Transit**

#### **AYER PARKING FACILITY**

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at the Ayer Town meeting, the town approved an article to take the pedestrian access to the Commuter Rail Station by eminent domain after three years of hard work and good faith negotiations with the property owner. The property taking will enable access to the train station with a pedestrian walkway and a proposed driveway with a vehicular drop-off and turnaround. MRPC Staff assisted MART in drafting a Request for Response and reviews the submitted proposals for the following: Property Appraisals, Property Appraisals Review, Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA), and a Request for Qualifications for Architectural and Engineering. The construction process of the Ayer Parking Facility is moving forward.

#### **FITCHBURG COMMUTER RAIL LINE IMPROVEMENTS**

The MBTA has released the final revision of the Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line Schedule effective 5/23/2016. Two trains have been added; the early reverse commute train to Fitchburg arriving at 7:38 AM and a train leaving Fitchburg at 6:53 AM. The One hour service to Boston has been achieved; the express train leaving Fitchburg at 6:33 AM arriving at the North Station at 7:43 AM weekdays. For the weekend schedules were no changes, the early train arriving in Fitchburg is 10:01 AM; a Ski Train is needed for the weekend to arrive at Fitchburg by 8:00 AM at least in the Ski Season.

#### **ATHOL / ORANGE FIXED BUS ROUTE**

Staff attended a meeting with MART regarding public transportation in the Athol/Orange region. Additional changes have been added to the Bus Route to serve new Neighborhoods in Orange/Athol area. Staff continues working on new bus route and schedule to shift riders from para-transit to fixed route service.

#### **WACHUSETT COMMUTER RAIL STATION AND LAYOVER FACILITY**

The construction work on the Wachusett Commuter Rail Station in Fitchburg and on the MBTA's Commuter Rail Layover Facility at the Westminster Business Park has been expedited to have a substantial project completion by September of 2016 with full completion scheduled for Early 2017. The Development Road Extension is approximately 99% complete. Staff is working with the City of Fitchburg and Westminster to transfer the ownership of the Development Road property to Westminster. Staff continues to work with Pan Am Railways and the City of Fitchburg to transfer 5<sup>th</sup> Mass Turnpike property to MART. Staff is also assisting MART and the Consultant in obtaining a temporary construction

easement from the adjacent properties owners to construct the sidewalk on Authority Drive; and continues to attend and assist at the monthly project coordination meeting with FTA, MBTA and the Engineers.

#### **5.4 Transportation**

##### **TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FFY 2017-2021**

MRPC staff has completed the development of the Draft FFY 2017-2021. Staff presented funding scenarios to the MPO at their meeting on June 29<sup>th</sup>. At that meeting the MPO decided on a draft project listing for both highway and transit and then voted to release the draft document for a 30 day public review and comment period. That comment period began on Friday July 1<sup>st</sup> and will close on Monday August 1<sup>st</sup>. After the close of the comment period, the MPO will meet on Wednesday August 3<sup>rd</sup> to review and address any and all comments received. The MPO will then likely vote to endorse the FFY 2017-2021 TIP at that August 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Public comment opportunities have been scheduled for the MJTC on July 20<sup>th</sup> and this MRPC meeting. Therefore, after a review of comments received to date, it is requested that the MRPC authorize its Chairman and the MPO to endorse the FFY 2017-2021 TIP at the MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday August 3, 2016 at 1:00 P.M. at the MRPC offices.

G. Corbosiero moved that the MRPC has reviewed the FFY 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and based upon this review of comments received to date, authorizes its Chairman to endorse the FFY 2017-2021 TIP at a MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday August 3, 2016 at 1:00 PM at the MRPC offices. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

##### **UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) 2016-2017**

MRPC staff has completed the development of the Draft 2016-2017 UPWP. The UPWP is a budget and programming tool that outlines our work activities for the year that will cover October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017. Our PL allocation for FY 2017 is set at \$621,347. Staff presented draft work tasks and budgets to the MPO at their meeting on June 29<sup>th</sup>. At that meeting the MPO decided to release the draft document for a 30 day public review and comment period. That comment period began on Friday July 1<sup>st</sup> and will close on Monday August 1<sup>st</sup>. After the close of the comment period, the MPO will meet on Wednesday August 3<sup>rd</sup> to review and address any and all comments received. The MPO will then likely vote to endorse the 2016-2017 UPWP at that August 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Public comment opportunities have been scheduled for the MJTC on July 20<sup>th</sup> and this MRPC meeting.

G. Corbosiero moved that the MRPC has reviewed the 2016-2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and based upon this review of comments received to date, authorizes its Chairman to endorse the 2016-2017 UPWP at a MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday August 3, 2016 at 1:00 PM at the MRPC offices. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

##### **TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FFY 2016 AMENDMENT NO. 2**

###### **REPORT:**

The MPO reviewed requests to amend the FFY 2016 Highway Element as well as the FFY 2016 Transit Element. On the Highway side, the amendment involves a funding cost change to one (1) Target eligible project (#604699 Sterling Intersection Improvements at Route 12 and Chocksett Road); the addition of a Statewide STP project (#604699 Sterling that results in a total project cost of \$5,633,000); and a funding

cost increase to another statewide project (#607242 Fitchburg South Street Elementary Safe Routes to School). Several changes are planned to the FFY 2016 Transit Element to address the addition of projects based on projects recommended by the state for funding through the Community Transit Grant Program; cost changes to prior transit projects; the addition of projects due to funding availability; and the corresponding removal of projects. At the June 29th meeting, the MPO decided to release the Draft FFY 2016 TIP Amendment No. 2 for a 30 day public review and comment period. That comment period began on Friday July 1<sup>st</sup> and will close on Monday August 1<sup>st</sup>. After the close of the comment period, the MPO will meet on Wednesday August 3<sup>rd</sup> to review and address any and all comments received. The MPO will then likely vote to endorse the FFY 2016 TIP Amendment No. 2 at that August 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Public comment opportunities have been scheduled for the MJTC on July 20<sup>th</sup> and this MRPC meeting.

G. Corbosiero moved that the MRPC has reviewed the FFY 2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment No. 2 and based upon this review of comments received to date, authorizes its Chairman to endorse the FFY 2016 TIP at a MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday August 3, 2016 at 1:00 PM at the MRPC offices. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **3. TREASURER'S REPORT**

#### **3.1 Approval of Cash Schedules**

B. Johnson reminded the Commissioners that the warrants are now based upon "cash on hand" versus bank statement dates.

A. Pease read the May 2016 cash schedule. Balance after last warrant \$96,994.79; Total receipts this month \$156,349.15; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$253,343.94; Less: amount of this warrant \$232,416.67: Balance after this warrant (\$19,045.31).

A. Pease read the June 2016 cash schedule. Balance after last warrant (\$19,045.31); Total receipts this month \$144,703.45; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$155,658.14; Less: amount of this warrant \$159,896.32: Balance after this warrant (\$4,238.10).

A. Pease read the July 2016 cash schedule. Balance after last (\$4,238.10); Total receipts this month \$206,797.74; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$202,559.64; Less: amount of this warrant \$110,425.06: Balance after this warrant \$92,134.58.

M. Pineo moved to accept the May, June and July 2016 cash schedules as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **3.2 Bank Forms**

B. Johnson indicated that in August we'll be improving our warrant adoption and check signing procedures to have authorized member sign checks on a monthly basis and staff will only endorse checks in between meetings in emergency situations.

### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

## DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING

Cash Schedules - 5/31/2016, 6/16/2016, 7/26, 2016  
Status of Budget for FY17 IT Upgrades  
April, May and June 2016 MRPC Minutes  
July 26, 2016 MRPC Handout  
MRPC Meeting Attendance Spreadsheet  
Draft Summary UPWP  
Interested Parties Memo Draft TIP, TIP Amendment and UPWP  
Proposed Amendment #2 to the FFY2016 Highway Element of the TIP  
FHWA/FTA Release of MPO Coordination Notice or Proposed Rulemaking  
2017 Montachusett MPO Transportation Improvement Program Projects

Meeting Attendance					
Name	M/A	Representing	Appointment Date	PRESENT	ABSENT
Johnson, Kyle	A	Ashburnham	7.2015		X
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011	X	
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001		X
Stacy, Wayne	A	Ashby	7.2005		X
Willis, Stephen	M	Athol	7.2016	X	
Dodge, Alan	A	Athol	7.2016		X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011		X
Lowitt, Peter	N/V	DREZ	7.2001		X
Caron, Paula	M	Fitchburg	7.2002	X	
Gross, Allen	M	Gardner	2.2005		X
Cormier, Joshua	A	Gardner	7.2015		X
Burke, Russ	M	Groton	7.2016	X	
Graham, Don	M	Harvard	7.2015		X
Bratko, Thomas	M	Hubbardston	7.2016		X
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston	7.2016		
Christopher, Thomas	M	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Piazza, Noreen	A	Lancaster	7.2016	X	
Prokowieiw, David	M	Lunenburg	7.2015	X	
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.201	X	
Natrowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015	X	
Hardie, John	A	Royalston	7.2007		X
Widing, Sarah	M	Shirley	7.2015		X
Pineo, Michael	M	Sterling	7.2014	X	
Kilcoyne, John	A	Sterling	7.2014		X
Carroll, Charles	A	Templeton	7.2011		X
King, Cindy	A	Townsend	7.2016		X
Fortin, Mike	M	Westminster	7.2015		X
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	
Cyganiwicz, Austin	A	Winchendon	7.2015		X

**STAFF PRESENT:** Glenn Eaton, Jason Stanton, John Hume. Bobbi Jo Johnson, Brad Harris, George Kahale  
**GUESTS PRESENT:** None present