



MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2021
7:00 PM

MEETING MINUTES

1. Open Meeting, Introductions and Announcements

G. Corbosiero called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Roll Call:

Robert Swartz
Matthew Brenner
Jonathan Kranz
Alan Pease
Guy Corbosiero
John Telepciak
Rick Ward
Roger Hoyt
Stacia Donahue
Veronica Kell

2. Approval of August 5, 2021, MRPC Minutes

Bob Swartz moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the August 5, 2021 minutes as distributed. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call vote to accept the minutes as printed:

Robert Swartz- yes
Matthew Brenner- yes
Jonathan Kranz- abstain
Alan Pease - yes
Guy Corbosiero- yes
John Telepciak- abstain
Roger Hoyt- yes
Stacia Donahue- yes
Veronica Kell- abstain

3. Cash Schedule – August 2021 – Approvals of Commissioners Required

L. Quinlivan read the August 2021 cash schedule.

Opening Balance \$341,727.94; Total receipts this month \$297,702.18; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$639,430.12; Less amount of this warrant \$130,169.52; Balance after this warrant \$509,260.60.

L. Quinlivan pointed out a \$40.00 discrepancy of the debit account on the closing balance of July 2021 and the opening balance of August 2021 due to a transaction that was in a pending status.

A. Pease move to accept the cash schedule as presented subject to audit. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call vote followed.

Robert Swartz- yes
Matthew Brenner- yes
Jonathan Kranz- yes
Alan Pease - yes
Guy Corbosiero- yes
John Telepciak- yes
Roger Hoyt- yes
Stacia Donahue- yes
Veronica Kell- yes

4. Administrative Matters

Before addressing the administrative matters listed on the agenda, G. Eaton added an update for the revenues for our current fiscal year, FY22. When the budget was adopted in June, we had a conservative revenue estimate of \$1,711,582. As of September 7th, our revenue projection now stands at \$1,833,427 or 7.1% over the original estimate. This was due to L. Quinlivan's estimating what the beginning balances would be in June verses what we exact numbers billed from April 1st through June 30th of this year.

G. Eaton also mentioned he spoke with K. Chapman, Planning and Development Director today and learned that MRPC was awarded \$80,500 from the MA Department of Energy Resources (DOER) for a Regional Energy Planning Assistance (REPA) grant. MRPC's Planning and Development Department will provide grant application assistance, annual grant reporting tasks, community greenhouse gas (GhG), and related services inventory to 12 of our 23 local jurisdictions. These are Ashburnham, Athol, Fitchburg, Groton, Harvard, Hubbardston, Lancaster, Royalston, Shirley, Templeton, Townsend, and Westminster.

G. Eaton then addressed the following:

4.1 Update: COVID-19 Office Space Management and Safety – Information

"MASKS REQUIRED" signs have been posted throughout the facility (both on interior and exterior doors) and on the employee bulletin board.

Some public meetings held by the MRPC are now being held both online and in-person. To obtain attendee information, MRPC now requires online meeting attendees to register in advance of the meeting. This new procedure is being implemented in accordance with the Open Meeting Law as amended and enacted on June 16, 2021. The objective of implementing this

new procedure is to account for all meeting attendees and prevent interference with meetings (i.e., “Zoom-bombing”).

4.2 Update: H. 48: An Act Relative to Non-commonwealth Entities within the State Employees’ Retirement System – Information

Legislation supporting the regional planning agencies and councils of governments in Massachusetts has been reported favorably out of the relevant House Committee on Beacon Hill.

4.3 Update: FY19 Community Development Block Grant, COVID Response Award of \$296,100 to Shirley (lead community), Lunenburg, Royalston, Townsend, and Westminster – Information

The Executive Director, with superior assistance received from the Administrative Manager (Holly Ford) and Economic Development Manager (Christopher McDermott), continues to manage this program on behalf of the towns of Shirley, Lunenburg, Royalston, Townsend, and Westminster.

A public hearing will be held at a meeting of the Shirley Board of Selectmen (October 18). The following will be discussed.

- Status of the Microenterprise Assistance Program (MAP) and the Food Bank Assistance Program;
 - Discussion of the closure of MAP due to the lack of interest and applicants in the program; and,
 - Continuation of the Food Banks Assistance Program in Lunenburg, Shirley, and Townsend through December 31st.

4.4 Update: Strategic Planning for the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) and its Affiliate the Montachusett Enterprise Center, Inc. (MEC) – Information

This project is on hold until the current staff transitions have been completed.

4.4.1 Staff Transitions – Action of the Commissioners Requested

REPORT

Principal Planner and Regional Planner Jobs Advertisement

Please be advised that a jobs advertisement has been published for multiple positions. The advertisement includes the positions of Principal Planner (an individual with some planning experience), Regional Planner (typically an entry level position), and one or more Interns, all to assist in the Planning and Development Department. In accordance with the 2020 MRPC Compensation Plan, the Principal Planner would be paid within a range of \$60,000 through \$67,500 DOQ (grade 18 per 2020 Compensation Plan) and the Regional Planner between \$45,100 through \$56,400 DOQ (grade 15 per 2020 Compensation Plan). A future resolution to hire a Principal Planner and/or Regional Planner will be presented after the interviewing process has been completed.

Our primary objectives are to hire a Principal Planner to follow the vacancy that exists after Karen Chapman's promotion to Planning and Development Director (who is exceeding expectations in her new role) and at least one Intern, subject to the availability of funding to the organization. With this advertisement we are casting a broad net for applicants as additional funding may be realized by the MRPC in the future, we want to be prepared for this contingency. Of course, the reverse may also be true (that we may see a decline in funding and in that case, hiring would be frozen).

Intern(s)

In Massachusetts, the current minimum wage is \$13.50 per hour. This rate will rise to \$14.25 per hour on January 1, 2022 and then to \$15.00 per hour on January 1, 2023 (source <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-law-about-minimum-wage#massachusetts-minimum-wage->).

Massachusetts laws		
MGL c.149, § 152A Service charges and tips		
MGL c.151 Minimum Fair Wages. Sections 1 and 7 increase minimum wage over the next several years.		
Minimum wage		
Date	Standard Minimum Wage	Tipped Minimum Wage
January 1, 2021	\$13.50	\$5.55
January 1, 2022	\$14.25	\$6.15
January 1, 2023	\$15.00	\$6.75

In accordance with the MRPC's 2020 Compensation Plan, MRPC's current practice is to compensate Interns (i.e., our Traffic Technicians and other Interns) at \$13.00 per hour. During the summer 2021, the MRPC engaged three Traffic Technicians and paid them in accordance with the State Law at \$13.50/hour during the most recent traffic counting season (which is ending).

Moving forward, MRPC will need one or more Interns to primarily aid in the Planning and Development Department and possibly in the Transportation and Transit Department. To encourage more candidates to apply, the Executive Director recommends that the Commissioners change our current rate of pay for Interns per our 2020 Salary Plan from \$13.00 to \$15.00 per hour and adopt the following resolution.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission will compensate its Interns at an hourly of \$15.00 per hour commencing September 9, 2021.

G. Eaton changed the commencement date of the salary increase for Interns to September 20, 2021.

J. Telepciak moved to accept the resolution with the date change to September 20, 2021. Motion was seconded.

Roll Call vote followed.

Robert Swartz- yes
Matthew Brenner- yes
Jonathan Kranz- yes
Alan Pease - yes
Guy Corbosiero- yes
Jacqueline Doherty- yes
John Telepciak- yes
Roger Hoyt- yes
Stacia Donahue- yes
Veronica Kell- yes

4.4.2 Change Fiscal Assistant position from Part-Time to Full-Time Position

REPORT

The position of Fiscal Assistant was first created at the MRPC more than 15 years ago. This position was funded again at the end of FY21 as a part-time position. This was done to provide the Fiscal Director with assistance in the wake of the recently retired Administrative and Human Resources Director, Linda Parmenter. Ms. Parmenter had been providing a significant amount of support to the Fiscal Director. The intention of MRPC's administration was to examine the workload needs of the Fiscal Assistant as a part-timer and determine if a full-time position was necessary.

Mr. Christopher McNamara was hired on May 24, 2021, as the agency's part-time Fiscal Assistant. According to his immediate supervisor, Linda Quinlivan, Fiscal Director, his performance has been exemplary. There are more tasks that the Fiscal Assistant can complete, and fiscal operations would improve by providing more hours to the Fiscal Assistant. Ms. Quinlivan has requested that Mr. McNamara's hours be increased from 18 to 37.5 hours per week with benefits.

MRPC's administration requests that, upon approval of the Commissioners, Mr. McNamara start working full-time as our Fiscal Assistant on the payroll beginning on Monday, September 20, 2021.

Relevant dollar figures follow:

- The new amount needed in the salary line item for the balance of the FY22 that would bring Mr. McNamara to full time would be \$22,790.04 for 18 hours weekly and his hourly rate is \$23.69/hour;
- If the resolution passes, to move him from part- to full-time, his new annual salary would be \$46,195.76 for 37.5 hours weekly (at the same hourly rate as stated above);
- Additional funds that would be needed in the benefits line item would be up to \$7,000;
- Additional dollars needed to fund leave time so that the MRPC will be in compliance with the MRPC Personnel Policies and Employee Procedures Handbook would be \$6,751.65.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approves of the change in status of Mr. Christopher McNamara, Fiscal Assistant from part- to full-time status, his new annual salary will be \$46,195.76, and all other changes to the MRPC's FY22 Budget are hereby approved, as printed in the above report.

R. Swartz moved to accept the resolution as read and presented. Motion was seconded.

Roll Call vote followed.

Robert Swartz- yes
Matthew Brenner- yes
Jonathan Kranz- yes
Alan Pease - yes
Guy Corbosiero- yes
Jacqueline Doherty- yes
John Telepciak- yes
Roger Hoyt- yes
Stacia Donahue- yes
Veronica Kell- yes

4.5 Montachusett Enterprise Center, Inc. (MEC) – Information

Members of the Board of Directors of MEC, Inc. responded to an inquiry about the best time and day to meet for our annual meeting of the board of directors. The majority of the respondents are available late in the month and in the evening. Therefore, this meeting will be held virtually at 7:00 p.m. on September 29th.

4.6 Other Administrative Matters

4.6.1 Housekeeping Editions to the MRPC Personnel Policies and Employee Procedures Handbook – Action of the Commissioners Requested

REPORT

Early in August the Executive Director requested a quote from the Employers Association of New England (EANE) to provide MRPC's administrative staff with updates to the existing Personnel Policies and Employee Procedures Handbook. The work will involve reviewing the existing Handbook, reviewing edits proposed by the administration, and ensuring compliance with applicable personnel laws and regulations. On August 10th, the Executive Director received a quote from EANE for \$1,395, plus \$125 per hour. The Executive Director recommends that the MRPC execute a contract with EANE for a total not to exceed \$3,000. Upon completion of EANE's review of the Handbook recommended changes will be provided to the Commissioners (date TBD).

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission hereby approves of a budget not to exceed \$3,000 for improvements to the MRPC's Personnel Policies and Employee Procedures Handbook. The Commissioners will receive monthly reports from the Executive Director concerning progress and expenses toward this project.

L. Shifrin moved to accept the resolution as presented, budget not to exceed \$3,000 to have EANE review all edits to the Employee Policies and Employee Procedures Handbook. Motion was seconded.

Roll Call vote followed.

Robert Swartz- yes
Matthew Brenner- yes
Jonathan Kranz- yes
Laura Shifrin- yes
Alan Pease - yes
Guy Corbosiero- yes
Jacqueline Doherty- yes
John Telepciak- yes
Roger Hoyt- yes
Stacia Donahue- yes
Veronica Kell- yes

4.6.2 Flexible Work Locations and Scheduling Policy – Information

G. Eaton asked for a deferment. With the staff transitions, this task has not been completed. The work policy is in place and has been adopted, it just needs to be presented.

4.6.3 Reminder - Meeting Schedule of the Commissioners throughout FY22 – Information

This section serves as a reminder that the FY22 meeting schedule of Commissioners' meetings can be found in the table below.

September 9, 2021
October 7, 2021
November 4, 2021
December 9, 2021
January 6, 2022
February 3, 2022
March 3, 2022
April 7, 2022
May 5, 2022
June 9, 2022

4.6.4 US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Montachusett Brownfields Site Assessment Grant – Information

MRPC requested and received a proposal from its Brownfields consultant, BETA Group, to complete all required work in the US EPA Brownfields online reporting tool known as Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES). ACRES is an online database for Brownfields Grantees to electronically submit properties data directly to EPA. MRPC received clearance from the US EPA on September 1st to engage BETA Group to upload all required data into ACRES to meet a contractual obligation as this task was not completed by a prior employee. Many quarterly reports were also not completed and submitted to the US EPA. The Executive Director and Administrative Director will complete the required reports by December 31, 2021.

A Brownfields Group meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. on September 16th. All, remaining funds for the consultant and administration of the grant will need to be used to complete all required paperwork. Therefore, there will not be any funds remaining for any site assessment work. Please see the relevant public meeting notice available at <https://www.mrpc.org/calendar/month/2021-09>. This meeting will take place online and in-person at the MRPC office using the new “Owl” tele videoconferencing technology recently acquired by the MRPC.

4.6.5 US Economic Development Administration (EDA), Montachusett Economic Development District (MEDD) and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Meetings – Action Requested

REPORT

The Montachusett region has the highest concentration of manufacturing firms and jobs in the Commonwealth. However, new industrial development is rare outside of the planned business community of Devens. The private sector lacks information which could facilitate and expedite industrial land development. The MRPC’s use of existing DLTA program funds (above) and the pursuit of Federal economic development planning funds (explained in more detail below) will fund relevant analyses and reports to identify areas in the region to encourage industrial development.

A current DLTA project involves the identification and mapping of infrastructure (water and wastewater pipes) in Ashburnham for the purpose of facilitating economic development.

Ms. Chapman and Mr. McDermott have initiated the process of amending the current EDA COVID planning contract to utilize approximately \$27,000 within this contract’s budget for the continuation of this project in one or more communities in the region. We’ll identify the candidate communities by analyzing factors such as high unemployment and poverty rates, low workforce participation rates, the presence and percentage of environmental justice populations, and other relevant factors. During the week of September 13th, a team of employees will begin the process of discerning how much infrastructure can be analyzed and mapped and the number of communities that can be assisted. Key teammates are Jason Stanton, GIS and IT Director and Kayla Kress, GIS and IT Analyst (who will complete the GIS work necessary to complete data collecting and mapping activities), Karen Chapman, Planning and Development Director, and Christopher McDermott, Economic Development Manager, and Glenn Eaton, Executive Director.

Mr. Eaton will work closely with Ms. Chapman and Mr. McDermott, to prepare a Future Industrial Lands Analysis (FILA) grant proposal. This grant application will be submitted to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in response to a recent Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the EDA's Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program. This program has recently been funded at \$500 million with an injection of funds coming from the recently enacted Federal Build Back Better Act.

The overall goal of this proposal is to provide information concerning the availability of infrastructure, in areas zoned for industrial use, with superior highway access and other amenities. This information will be provided to the public and private sectors to facilitate industrial land redevelopment and development to create additional manufacturing opportunities in our region of the Commonwealth. The information could also be used by local planning officials to identify new areas for future industrial zones.

Objectives related to the goal will be the:

- Creation of an industrial site finder service to the communities, site finders, and businesses expanding within and relocating to the Montachusett region (provided free of charge to public and private sector partners);
- Provide site finder services to the communities surrounding Devens that do not have the information available to provide alternatives to this planned business community that receives injections of funding for capital improvements and staffing from a quasi-state economic development entity;
- Position the communities in the Montachusett region for the future receipt of state and federal funds to replace and expand the infrastructure needed by the private sector;
- Reengage with our communities on the importance of adopting the streamlining permitting procedures for industrial development as allowed under the opt-in statute (G.L. of MA, c. 43D, <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleVII/Chapter43d>) as only 50% of our cities and towns have adopted "43D" (Athol, Ayer, Clinton, Fitchburg, Gardner, Groton, Lancaster, Leominster, Lunenburg, Shirley, and Westminster);
- Comply with EDA's Investment Priorities (here <https://www.eda.gov/about/investment-priorities/>); Support Clustering by Industry to create new employment opportunities (<https://eda.gov/about/cluster-mapping/>);
- and, Work in cooperation with the Commonwealth to bolster opportunities for new jobs in concert with the Massachusetts economic development plan entitled Partnerships for Growth (web link here <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/partnerships-for-growth>).

We are proposing the submission of a grant application to the EDA in the amount of \$400,000 and using \$100,000 in matching funds from the MRPC to fund a \$500,000 project utilizing Local Technical Assistance (LTA) and District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) funds as detailed in the resolution, below. Under the Federal Build Back Better Act grant applicants do not need to provide the required 20% in matching funds. However, MRPC's Administration recommends that the MRPC provide the 20% in matching funds to improve the competitiveness of MRPC's proposal.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission understands the importance of providing information concerning public utilities to facilitate appropriate industrial development in the region to spur the expansion of private sector businesses that will create high paying jobs, especially in

the manufacturing sector. MRPC will submit the Future Industrial Lands Analysis (FILA) proposal to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) under the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program for \$400,000. MRPC will provide a 20% match of \$100,000 over two years which will include \$50,000 from this agency's State allocation to our organization of District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) dollars in FY22 and FY23 (Program Year 15) and another \$50,000 from the DLTA allocation in FY23 and FY24 (Program Year 16).

J. Telepciak asked if this is guaranteed funds or is this a competitive application? G. Eaton confirmed it is a competitive funding round.

S. Donahue asked if communities would lose out on DLTA funding because they don't have an industrial zone. G. Eaton confirmed yes, there would be less money available through DLTA however there are additional funding options available. MRPC would assist with finding alternative funding resources.

V. Kell asked if there is less money available through the DLTA funds and there are towns that would not benefit from this, could the towns who are not benefiting from this be weighted more heavily in their requests for DLTA funding to offset the \$50,000? G. Eaton stated we could do that however, most of the requests that come in could be funded through other resources. We could also use LTA funds to cover the \$50,000 instead of DLTA however this would increase our overhead rate.

G. Eaton stated he is confident; we can help the communities find monies to get the planning assistance grant money. There is plenty out there to be tapped into.

G. Corbosiero asked if we find the \$50,000 affects the DLTA, do we have to continue doing this or can we then change it to use the LTA funds. G. Eaton recommended that instead of waiting a year, we could change the resolution to read that we use \$25,000 from DLTA and \$25,000 from LTA. G. Corbosiero asked by using LTA funds, what would be the impact on the overhead rate? G. Eaton state he would get that information. He did not have that information in front of him.

S. Donahue asked if it is required to put more money on the table. G. Eaton stated it is not required, it would help us be more competitive than others.

G. Corbosiero asked if we have to decide where the funds come from or if a decision could just state approval of the \$50,000, source to be determined. G. Eaton stated the resolution should state both, but we could change the resolution to state options for the source of funds.

G. Corbosiero agreed that we should change the language to reflect approval of the amount and reflect the source as DLTA and/or LTA funds to be used giving G. Eaton time to calculate what would happen to the overhead rate using both scenarios to be presented at the next meeting.

R. Hoyt asked where the \$400,000 number come from. G. Eaton stated EDA in this grant will fund \$500,000,000 to \$1,000,000 or \$5,000,000. We are on the low side. G. Eaton calculated \$500,000,000 and backed into numbers from past experiences.

S. Donahue moved to accept the resolution as amended to say the 20% match from either DLTA or LTA sources and take out the sources of the \$50,000 to be determined. Motion was seconded.

Roll Call vote followed.

Robert Swartz- yes
Matthew Brenner- yes
Jonathan Kranz- yes
Laura Shifrin- yes
Alan Pease - yes
Guy Corbosiero- yes
Jacqueline Doherty- yes
John Telepciak- yes
Roger Hoyt- yes
Stacia Donahue- yes
Veronica Kell- yes

4.6.6 Attendance of Commissioners at Monthly Meetings – Information

Holly Ford, Administrative Manager assembled attendance data of each community attending monthly meetings of the Commissioners for the calendar years 2014 through August 2021. The main takeaways here are that:

1. More communities have been attending monthly Commissioners' meetings since the office relocated from Fitchburg to Leominster and due to the use of tele videoconferencing technology (since April 2020); and,
2. During the pandemic, with the aid of tele videoconferencing technology, there has been a slight increase in the attendance of Commissioners at monthly meetings but, for the period studied, we've reached our highest level of attendance, so far, in 2021.

While MRPC was still a tenant of the Montachusett Area Regional Transit Authority (MART):

- As can be seen in Chart 1, below, an average of 8.75 communities attended monthly Commissioners' meeting in 2014; and,
- From 2014 to 2015, there was a decline in municipalities attending meetings from 8.75 to 7.45 (14.8%) with a slight increase of 2.8% to 7.67 in 2016.

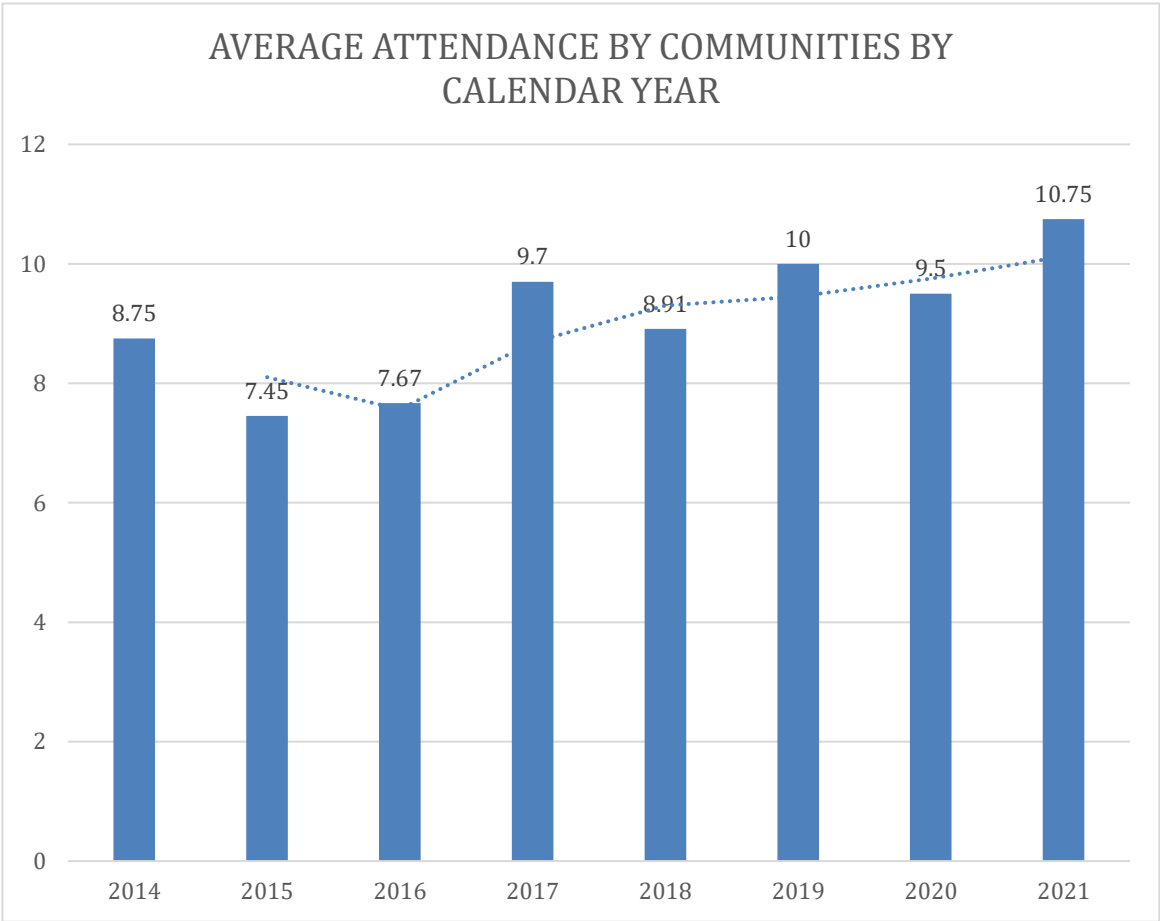
Overall, attendance improved when the office relocated away of the MART facility and into the Doyle Conservation Center.

- The last full year that the MRPC was located at the MART property average attendance in 2016 hit a low of 7.67 for the period studied;
- Attendance by Commissioners at the monthly meetings peaked in the pre-COVID-19 pandemic year of 2019 and declined only slightly throughout all of 2020 (when the office was closed to staff and public meetings from March through December 2020); and,
- Online meetings appeared to have slightly boosted attendance from 2020 through 2021 as an average of 10.75 communities attended the monthly meetings in 2021 (the best attendance record of communities participating in monthly meetings of the Commissioners for any of the years examined from

2014 through 2021 and an increase of 3.3 communities over the lowest, average attendance by communities [which occurred in 2015]).

Chart 1

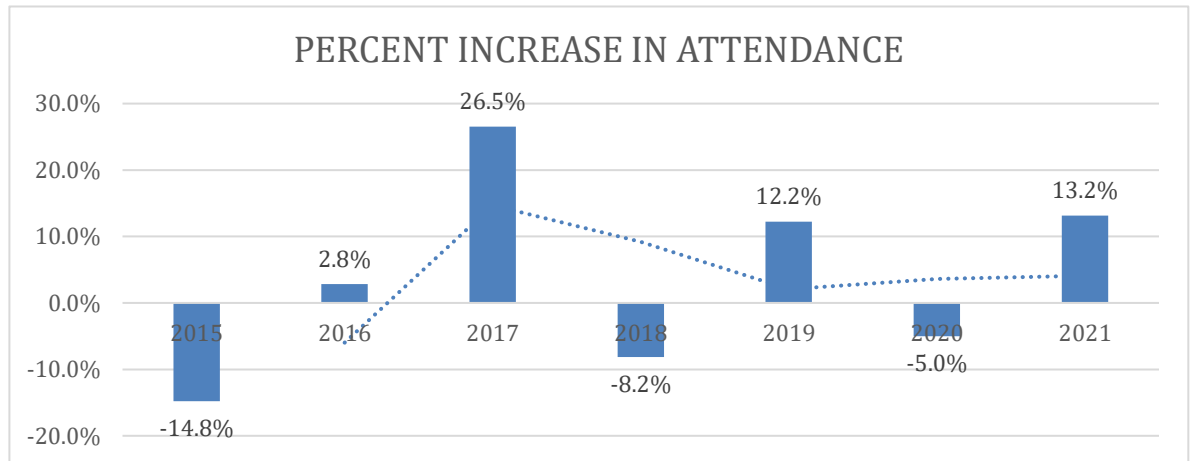
Average Number of Communities Attending MRPC Meetings 2014 – August 2021



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MRPC relocated its office from Fitchburg to 464 Abbott Avenue, Leominster in late June 2017.

- Attendance immediately rose by 26.5%, from 7.27 municipalities in 2016, to 9.7 cities and towns in 2017
- There was a slight decrease of 8.2% from 2017 to 2018 to 8.91 communities in 2018 and,
- Attendance quickly rebounded by 12.2%, to 10.0, in 2019, fell by 5% in 2020, and rose 13.2%, to the 2019 level, in 2021.



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Meetings of the Commissioners during the COVID-19 pandemic totaled 17 (not including the meeting of September 9, 2021). Average attendance during the entire pandemic period stands at 10.41 communities per meeting: 10.11 in 2020 and 10.75 in 2021. The average attendance of the pandemic period of 10.41 is only slightly lower, by 0.34 (3.2%), than the highest average achieved in 2021 of 10.75.

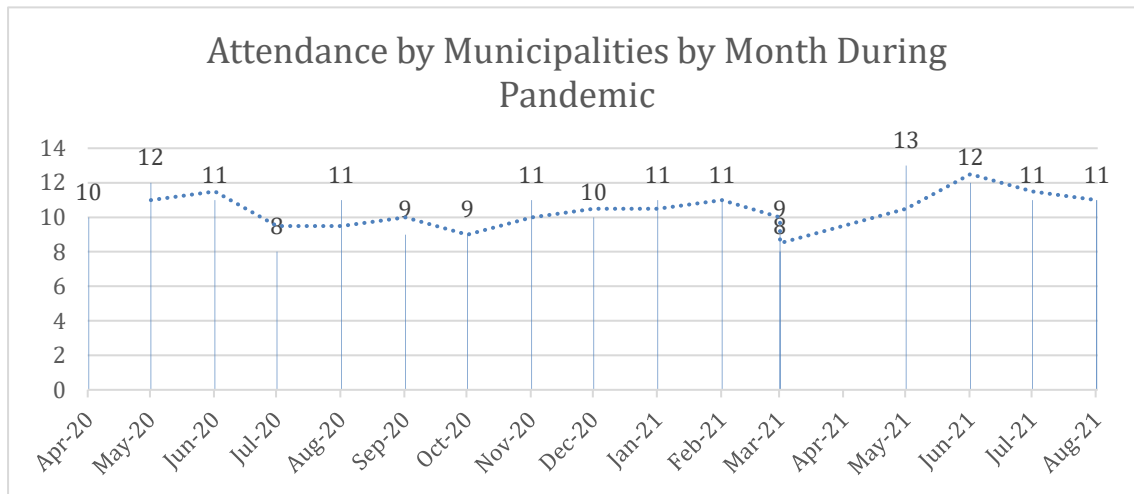


Table 1

	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20
Total	10	12	11	8	11	9	9	11	10

Table 2

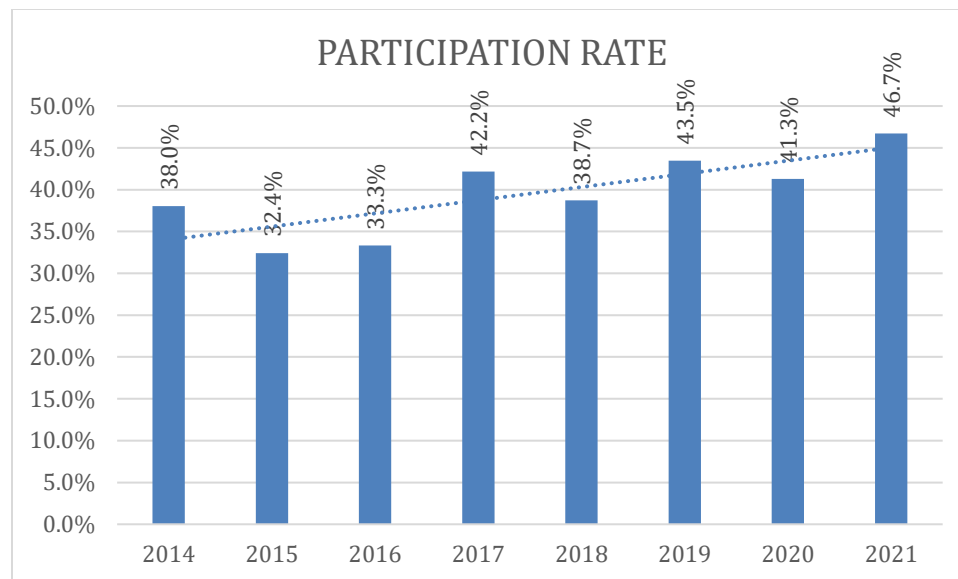
	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Mar-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21
Total	11	11	9	8	13	12	11	11

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More communities are participating in monthly meetings. As a credit to the communities and the individuals appointed to the Commission, the participation rate of our municipalities has been steadily increasing from 2014 when the participation rate stood at 38.0% (according to the data illustrated in Chart 2, below). This rate has steadily risen to 46.7% through August 2021.

Chart 2

Commissioners' Participation Rate at MRPC Monthly Meetings 2014 through 2021



There is a correlation between Commissioners' attending meetings and their respective cities and towns receiving more services from the Commission's staff. The common denominator is communication. The more local officials attend regional meetings the greater the number of conversations between Commissioners and employees of the regional planning agency which leads to more services being delivered to this communities. MRPC's administrative staff will point this out in future dialogs between staff and local officials of municipalities that attend meetings sporadically or not at all.

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5. Status Reports

5.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

302230 MISC. GIS CONTRACTS

1. Data & Applications: Continuous project to update and maintain data and applications throughout the year; Project Lead/Staff – Jason Stanton
 - Updates to the data and applications on the site are continuously performed. Check back periodically at <https://mrmapper.mrpc.org> to see what's new.
2. Ayer Parcel Updates: Project to update the parcel data, maps and MRMapper sites for the Town of Ayer; Project Lead/Staff - Kayla Kress/Jason Stanton
 - GIS staff is working on updating the Town's MRMapper parcel web app. There are a couple of outstanding issues that we are trying to work out before we finalize this project.
 - This project is expected to be completed by the end of September.
3. Crocker Pond Recreation Area Trail Mapping: Project to create a trail map of the Crocker Pond Rec. Area in Westminster with points of interest; Project Lead/Staff – Kayla Kress
 - No new information. This project is ongoing
4. Lunenburg Conservation Lands Mapping: Project to create a series of "You Are Here" trail maps that will be installed at the kiosks and intersections of multiple conservation lands owned by the town; Project Lead/Staff – Kayla Kress
 - No new information. This project is ongoing.
5. Royalston Parcel Updates: Project to update the parcel data, maps and MRMapper sites for the Town of Royalston; Project Lead/Staff - Jason Stanton/Kayla Kress
 - GIS staff received the extract from the assessor, completed the Quality Assurance documents, and exported the final map products. The QA documents and maps were sent to the Assessor
 - GIS staff is working on updating the Town's MRMapper parcel web app.
 - This project is expected to be completed by the end of September.
6. Townsend Parcel Updates: Project to update the parcel data, maps and MRMapper sites for the Town of Townsend; Project Lead/Staff - Kayla Kress/Jason Stanton
 - GIS staff completed the annotation updates and received some additional parcel updates. However, there were questions regarding the updates, and they have been posed to the Town's Assessor. GIS staff is currently waiting for a response. Once the questions have been answered, GIS staff can complete the parcel updates and calculate the new Loc IDs.
 - Once the parcel data is complete staff will work on updating the Town's MRMapper parcel web app.
 - This project is expected to be completed by the end of summer.

304700 AYER ADA SELF EVALUATION PLAN 4/16/20 - 6/30/20

ADA Compliance Checklist Survey Creation: Project to facilitate the collection of data regarding the ADA compliance of features and amenities of public spaces; Project Lead/Staff – Jason Stanton/Kayla Kress

- GIS staff created four digital surveys that can be completed out in the field using tablets. GIS staff trained other MRPC staff in the use of the surveys which were used by MRPC staff to inventory the features and amenities of public spaces to assess their ADA compliance.
- Once data collection was complete, GIS staff exported the results and accompanying photos and provided them to MRPC planning staff for analysis.
- This project has been completed.

305400 COMBINED PLANNING GRANT (PL) 10/1/20-9/30/21

1. Climate Change Report: Program to update the yearly Climate Change Report: Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris/Brian Doherty and Kayla Kress

- GIS staff was asked to update the region-wide maps that depict flood zones, high hazard dams, structurally deficient bridges, and the FFY 2022-2026 TIP projects within flood zones. GIS staff provided lists of all high hazard dams, structurally deficient bridges in flood zones, and the FFY 2022-2026 TIP projects in flood zones.
- GIS staff was also asked to create a map per community that depicts all high hazard dams, structurally deficient bridges in flood zones, 100-year flood zones, FFY 2022-2026 TIP projects, fed-aid eligible roadways in flood zones, non-fed-aid eligible roadways in flood zones, and all roads not in flood zones. GIS staff provided a mileage breakdown by community of fed-aid eligible roadways in flood zones, non-fed-aid eligible roadways in flood zones, fed-aid eligible roadways not in flood zones, and non-fed-aid eligible roadways not in flood zones.
- This project has been completed

2. Data Collection & Analysis Program: Program to collect and analyze various data sources in support of studies and regional databases: Project Lead/Staff – Kayla Kress

- Four communities have provided information/updates to the bike/ped infrastructure data and GIS staff will work on incorporating it into the dataset.

3. Fitchburg Corridor Study: Program to review and identify issues and deficiencies along the Route 12 corridor in Fitchburg; Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris/George Snow, Sheri Bean, Brian Doherty, and Kayla Kress

- GIS staff created a series of maps for sidewalk data collection. After the data was collected, GIS staff digitized the data and created a series of sidewalk inventory maps to aid in Transportation staff's analysis.
- This project is ongoing and GIS staff will assist as requested.

4. GIS Mapping & Analysis: Program to conduct GIS work & support; Project Lead/Staff – Jason Stanton/Kayla Kress

- GIS staff is working with the Town of Hubbardston to update their road inventory to complete an Official Street map for the Town. We received the updates from the Town and are working on processing those edits. It is expected that this project will be completed in September.

5. Intersection Analysis: Program to review regional locations to identify issues and/or deficiencies and develop potential alternatives to address them; Project Lead/Staff – Brian Doherty/George Snow and Kayla Kress
 - GIS staff created an environmental constraint map, land use map, and a data table of the study area for the review of the intersection of Main Street (Rt. 119), West Elm Street, and Canal Street in Townsend. This will aid in developing potential alternatives to the current intersection layout and determining the feasibility of the alternatives.
 - This project is ongoing and GIS staff will assist as requested.
6. Regional Pedestrian Plan: Program to develop a regional bike plan based upon the statewide bike plan. Additionally, a program to develop a handheld app for use in the field to collect data on trails throughout the region: Project Lead/Staff – Jason Stanton/Kayla Kress
 - Four communities have provided information/updates to the bike/ped infrastructure data and GIS staff will work on incorporating it into the dataset.
 - This project is ongoing.
7. Walkability Study(s): Program to improve walkability and access in identified study areas in Sterling and Townsend; Project Lead/Staff – Sheri Bean / Brad Harris, Kayla Kress
 - No new information. This project is ongoing.

305500 COMBINED PLANNING GRANT (5303) 10/1/20-9/30/21

1. MART Human Service Transportation Brokerage Area Map Update: Project to update the map that depicts MART's HST Brokerage Area; Project Lead/Staff – Kayla Kress
 - No new information but GIS staff will work on resizing the map to 11"x17" when time allows.
2. MART Intercity Shuttle Map Update: Project to update the map of MART's Intercity Shuttle route; Project Lead/Staff – Kayla Kress
 - No new information but GIS staff will update the Fitchburg/Leominster system map with the updated route when time allows.
3. MART Route Calculations: Project to update MART's route calculations; Project Lead/Staff – Kayla Kress
 - GIS staff updated the route calculations for the updated Wachusett schedule. When time allows, GIS staff will calculate the distance traveled by community for the new Clinton/Worcester shuttle and the updated Intercity route.

305600 STERLING COMPLETE STREETS 9/30/20-8/31/21

- A project to conduct and complete a Complete Streets Tier 2 Prioritization Plan: Project Lead/Staff – Jen Burney and Sheri Bean/Kayla Kress

- GIS staff reviewed the updated project locations and updated the Project Prioritization Plan accordingly. GIS staff also updated the geography files to reflect the new project locations. GIS staff updated the town-wide map and the individual project maps to reflect the new project locations and titles.
- This project has been completed.

306200 PAG STERLING, HUBB, ATHOL 11/10/20-6/30/2022

Sterling Master Plan Maps: A project to develop Master Plan chapters for the Town of Sterling; Project Lead/Staff – Jen Burney and Jonathan Vos/Kayla Kress

- GIS staff updated the layout of eights maps for the Sterling Master Plan to match the layout of the maps used in the rest of the plan.
- This project has been completed.

306400 HEYWOOD COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT 11/23/20 - 9/30/2021

A project to update the Community Health Needs Assessment reports for Heywood Group and HealthAlliance/UMass Memorial; Project Lead/Staff – Blair Haney/Bruce Hughes, Jonathan Vos, and Kayla Kress

- GIS staff was requested to create a series of maps for each of the two CHNA reports and created drafts of 18 maps for Heywood Group's CHNA and drafts of 13 maps for HealthAlliance/UMass Memorial's CHNA. GIS staff also provided data points relating to open space and trails.
- GIS staff will create an additional four draft maps for HealthAlliance/UMass Memorial's CHNA if Emergency Department data become available and will complete any changes to the maps if they are requested.
- This project will be completed by the end of September.

306500 DLTA 14 1/20/2021- 12/31/2021

1. Ashburnham Zoning Map Update: A project to update the Town of Ashburnham Zoning Map.
 - GIS Staff received edits from the Town and are working to process those edits ASAP.
 - This project is expected to be completed in early/mid-September.
2. Ayer Form Based Code Buildout: A project to analyze potential future impacts of Form Based Code Zoning on the Downtown Area; Project Lead/Staff – Karen Chapman/Jason Stanton
 - GIS staff met with the Town of Ayer to discuss project specifics.
 - Data was provided to the Town for them to begin their data collection for the analysis.
 - GIS Staff have received the data from the Town and is working on processing that information.
 - This project is expected to be completed by mid-September.

3. Hubbardston Master Plan – Land Use: A project to create a series of maps to be used in the Land Use chapter of Hubbardston’s Master Plan; Project Lead/Staff – Jason Stanton/Kayla Kress
 - Further updates to the open space layer were identified by Town staff. After reaching out to both Town staff and East Quabbin Land Trust staff to fully understand the updates, GIS staff completed the changes and updated the map. GIS staff also updated the Town Center Smart Growth map to reflect changes that were desired by MRPC Planning staff.
 - This project has been completed.
4. North Lancaster 40R Smart Growth Overlay District: A project provide aid in the completion of a 40R application in North Lancaster; Project Lead/Staff – Karen Chapman/Kayla Kress
 - GIS and Planning staff is collaborating to complete the application for the 40R district. Staff is filling out the spreadsheet that details the acreage of constrained land, substantially developed land, undeveloped land, and more within the proposed 40R Smart Growth Overlay District. GIS staff is working on the maps that are required for the application.
 - This project will be completed by early September.

306900 EDA Year 3 of 3- 4/1/2021 - 3/31/2022

Green Communities: A DOER REPA project to assist communities in the region with tasks associated with maintaining status as a Green Community with a concentration on data collection, entry, and verification for annually reporting; Project Lead/Staff – Karen Chapman/Jonathan Vos and Kayla Kress

- MRPC Planning staff provided training to other MRPC staff regarding workflows, project organization, and data requirements from the communities. The twelve communities were split evenly between the two assisting staff and the identification of the data needed to complete the annual reports has begun.
- This project will be ongoing until mid-November when the annual reports are due.

Please contact Jason Stanton, GIS/IT Director and/or Kayla Kress, GIS & IT Analyst for further information concerning GIS projects.

5.2 Planning and Development

303660 ROYALSTON GREEN COMMUNITY

Karen Chapman will be meeting with the Building Committee on Sept. 16th to review the status of their current Designation Grant. Royalston will be completing this grant in time to apply for a Competitive Grant in April.

303800 EPA BROWNFIELDS

Grant Award Amount: \$300,000 Grant Period: 10/1/2019 – 9/30/2022

Status: Joe McLoughlin of BETA Group is providing a status report for all the individual projects and locations to MRPC. A meeting of the Montachusett Brownfields Group is scheduled for 9/16/21 at 3pm to discuss and potentially vote on the use of the remaining assessment funds.

Please contact Glenn Eaton, Executive Director, for information regarding this project.

303870 AFFORDABLE ACCESS REGIONAL COORDINATION (AARC) (DOER)

Grant Award Amount: \$104,039 Contract End Date: 6/30/2022

Status: No new information to report.

Please contact Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director, for information on this contract.

304300 MEC TUFTS GRANT

Grant Award Amount: \$10,000 Contract End Date: 6/30/2022

Status: No progress on this project since the last update.

Please contact Jonathan Vos, Regional Planner or Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director for further information.

305000 MONTACHUSETT AGE FRIENDLY PROJECT

Grant Award Amount: \$75,000 Contract End Date: 6/30/2022

Status: Jonathan and Karen met with the grant manager on 8/10/21 to answer standard questions asked of all grantees concerning any concerns or difficulties with the project. The Grant Manager has additional budget paperwork to be filled out and as soon as she provides that information, MRPC will complete and return the forms.

Please contact Jonathan Vos, Regional Planner for further information.

305100 EDA COVID-19

Grant Award Amount: \$400,000 Contract End Date: 6/30/2022

1. Recruit and onboard an Economic Development Manager - **COMPLETE**
2. Recruit and onboard an intern to assist the EDM – **COMPLETE** -intern contract ended in May.
3. Review 2019 CEDS according to subtasks below:
 - a. Locate and obtain relevant data – **COMPLETE**
 - b. Present findings from demographic research and collect feedback – **COMPLETE**
 - c. Outreach to local officials/Draft and prioritize development goals based upon feedback – Review and redraft of project request form was completed and sent to stakeholders in June and July. MRPC staff is awaiting responses on the forms.
 - d. Distribute business leaders survey – **COMPLETE**
 - e. Compile findings and incorporate into CEDS - **COMPLETE**
 - f. Present Goals to MRCEDS Committee for approval – **COMPLETE**
 - g. 30 Day Public Comment Period – To be posted to MRPC website and shared with municipal clerks in September.
 - h. Publication and promotion – To be accomplished in September.
 - i. Develop adequate technological capacity for MRPC Staff Members – **COMPLETE** – under continuous review as needs evolve.

- j. Hire a Marketing Survey Consultant – **ABANDONED** due to North Central MA Chamber’s recent market analysis.
- k. GIS mapping project for regional water and sewer infrastructure locations in proximity to industrially zoned land along major transportation routes in the region – **IN PROCESS** - EDA & GIS staff are collaborating on the development of a scope of services and cost estimating. An amendment will be submitted to EDA to eliminate Subtask j in favor of this subtask k. This will be completed in conjunction with MRPC’s project to identify Future Industrial Lands in the region.
- l. Conduct a regional marketing study – **ABANDONED** - see Subtask j.
- m. Publish and promote regional marketing study - **ABANDONED** – see Subtask j.
- n. Locate and secure funding for CEDS priority projects – to be completed once revised CEDS is completed – October 2021-June 2022.
- o. Pursue goals and objectives identified within CEDS - to be completed once revised CEDS is completed – October 2021-June 2022.
- p. Conduct annual review of CEDS and projects – May 2022 – June 2022.

Please contact Chris McDermott, Economic Development Manager, for more information on this grant.

305600 STERLING COMPLETE STREETS

Contract Grant Award: \$38,839.25 Contract End Date: 8/31/2021

Status: MRPC staff attended a site walk with town officials to finalize a list of projects for the Prioritization Plan. Sheri Bean coordinated with engineers Fuss and O’Neill to develop cost estimates for the list of projects. All final documents, including maps developed by Kayla Kress, were provided to Sterling on August 20th.

Contact Jennifer Burney, Senior Planner or Sheri Bean, Principal Planner for further information.

305900 HUBBARDSTON GREEN COMMUNITY

Status: No progress this month.

Contact Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director for information on this contract.

306000 LUNENBURG GREEN COMMUNITY

Status: Karen Chapman met with the Lunenburg Green Communities Committee on August 24th to discuss closing out the current Competitive Grant and developing the final report which is due within 60 days of completing all the grant funded projects.

Contact Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director, for information on this contract.

306100 SHIRLEY CDBG CV

Reports concerning the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) can be found above under section 4.3.

306200 Planning Assistance Grant (PAG) FY21

Grant Amount: \$98,000 Contact End Date: 6/30/2022

306200 Planning Assistance Grant (PAG) FY21

Grant Amount: \$98,000 Contact End Date: 6/30/2022

Athol: \$40,000: to use mapping and recommendations from various studies and reports to inform zoning district revisions for Athol's downtown area, develop new zoning use regulations and zoning district language to accommodate changes and begin drafting new zoning district map.

Status: Town stakeholders have reviewed a draft Shared Parking Bylaw developed by Meagen and she is working on the requested edits.

Contact Senior Planner Meagen Donoghue for questions regarding this project.

Hubbardston: \$18,000: To develop an Implementation Element for their Master Plan as well as formatting the entire Master Plan into a final document. This is the last chapter to be completed by MRPC.

Status: MRPC staff are working to pull together all the chapter that were completed and approved by the Planning Board to develop an Implementation Chapter. A meeting with the Hubbardston Planning Board is scheduled for 8/5 to review progress.

Contact Senior Planner Jen Burney and/or Regional Planner Jonathan Vos for information regarding this project.

Sterling: \$40,000: To develop the following Master Plan Chapters – Housing, Open Space, and Implementation.

Status: Jonathan Vos met with the Sterling Master Plan Committee and VHB (contractor for the remaining chapters) on August 26th to review the final draft chapters and discuss public input strategies.

Please contact Regional Planner Jonathan Vos or Senior Planner Jen Burney for information regarding this project.

306400 HEYWOOD COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Contract Award Amount: \$28,000 Contract End Date: 9/30/2021

Status: A final draft was sent to Heywood Hospital for review. The Heywood report is tentatively scheduled to be released publicly for comment the week of September 9th and the presentation of the final report to the Board of Trustees is scheduled for September 23rd.

Please contact Senior Planner Blair Haney for information on this project.

Other Contributors: Jonathan Vos, Bruce Hughes, Kayla Kress, Rhiannon Duggan, Nick Mellis

306500 DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (DLTA) YEAR 14

Grant Award Amount: \$207,495 Contract End Date: 12/31/2021

Ashburnham: Land Use Master Plan Chapter.

Status: No progress to report.

MRPC Team Leader, Jen Burney, Senior Planner.

Other staff assigned: GIS staff for any needed mapping.

Ashburnham: MRPC will work with local officials to correct and improve the current Zoning Map.

Information related to district boundaries shown on previous versions of the map is omitted from the current version of the map.

Status: See GIS section of Status Report.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

Other staff assigned: Jason Stanton, GIS and IT Director.

Ashburnham: Infrastructure Mapping: water distribution system, sanitary sewer system, and storm drainage infrastructure.

Status: See GIS section of Status Report

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

Other staff assigned: Jason Stanton, GIS and IT Director.

Ayer: Create build-out study for parcels in the Downtown Ayer/Park Street Form Based Code Districts.

Status: MRPC staff received data from town officials on 8/24 and will meet with town officials if there are any questions. See GIS Status Report for more information.

MRPC Team Leader, Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

Other staff assigned: Jason Stanton, GIS and IT Director.

Harvard: MRPC will create a sustainable transportation plan and an agricultural staff study.

Status: Contract is fully executed. Data collection is beginning.

MRPC Team Leader, Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

Other staff assigned: Jonathan Vos and Transportation staff

Harvard: Agricultural Commission Staff Study

Status: MRPC is awaiting contract signature by Harvard and then work will begin.

MRPC Team Leader, Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

Other staff assigned: None at this time.

Hubbardston: Town Center Overlay District Bylaw: examination of existing town center and zoning bylaws and the production of a relevant report for the purpose of zoning changes to enhance the Town Center visually and economically.

Status: Jen Burney has contacted the Economic Development Committee and a meeting is being scheduled for September.

MRPC Team Leader: Jennifer Burney, Senior Planner.

Other staff assigned: None as of this point in time.

Lancaster: 40R District Development/Village District Bylaw.

Status: Final documents will be provided to town officials for review by 9/1/2021.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

Other staff assigned: Kayla Kress, GIS/IT Analyst.

Leominster: Open Space & Recreation Plan Mapping (nine maps), Revised Community Setting and tabulating a community survey.

Status: Karen will give a presentation to the City Council on 9/27/21 and then any comments from the public and city council will be incorporated into the Plan.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

Other staff assigned: Kayla Kress, GIS/IT Analyst

Nashoba Regional Greenways (NRG): This project involves managing public outreach, coordinating meetings, and developing marketing materials for this group to fulfill its mission to illuminate bike and ped assets, mapping proposed connections of trails throughout the region. This project is related to a MRPC UPWP Task being completed by Sheri Bean, Principal Planner in Transportation.

Status: Jonathan and Karen met with the NRG Executive Committee on 8/24/21 to discuss progress of the project and tasks moving forward. Jonathan is working on a Strategic Outreach Plan for the NRG to approach communities, as well as managing the contact list for the group and developing one page fact sheets for distribution.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

Other staff assigned: Jonathan Vos, Regional Planner; Sheri Bean, Principal Planner.

Petersham: Nichewaug Inn and Academy Redevelopment Evaluation. This project involves presenting town wide survey results concerning this property's future, researching potential funding options, and two public meetings.

Status: Karen and Glenn met with the Nichewaug Inn and Academy Committee on 8/30/21 to participate in a site walk of the property and attended a meeting to provide funding opportunities for redevelopment of the property to the committee.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

Other staff assigned: none at this time.

Royalston: MRPC will continue work to prepare a bylaw for Assisted Living and Multi Family housing needs and to prepare a bylaw which will increase potential small business opportunities.

Status: Karen provided the Planning Board with models of Village Center Bylaws on 8/23/21. Karen will provide a map of the South Royalston area to Royalston on 9/16/21 with details regarding parcel acreage, zoning, current uses, and potential for allowing more uses and possibly mixed uses.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.
Other staff assigned: Kayla Kress, GIS/IT Analyst

Shirley: MRPC will assess the feasibility of the creation of a 40R Smart Growth Zoning District and/or Starter Home District.

Status: Contract fully executed. Karen met with the Planning Board on 8/25/21 to discuss the project and give a presentation on the fundamentals of 40R. The next meeting is scheduled for 9/22/21 where specific parcels will be discussed.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.
Other staff assigned: Kayla Kress, GIS/IT Analyst

Sterling: MRPC will complete a streamlined permitting guidebook for businesses and a supplemental study to review the Town's existing bylaws for any potential impediments to economic growth.

Status: Bruce Hughes is evaluating Sterling's Zoning Bylaws for impediments to economic growth, which will be discussed with the Economic Development Committee at a yet to be determined meeting.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.
Other staff assigned: Bruce Hughes, Principal Planner.

Townsend: MRPC will create maps for the Townsend Master Plan update and 24-32 hours of planner consulting for questions and review/update of relevant regional data.

Status: Jonathan reviewed the Master Plan draft provided by the town and updated any data needing update. The comments were sent back to the town on 8/16/21. review for clarity and complete any data updates needed.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.
Other staff assigned: Jonathan Vos, Regional Planner; Kayla Kress, GIS/IT Analyst.

306600 TEMPLETON GREEN COMMUNITY

Status: Karen is assisting Templeton with their Designation Grant projects and discussed the Green Communities processes and procedures with Town Administrator Adam Lamontagne on 8/25/21. Karen submitted new projects to DOER for approval by 9/1/21.

MRPC Team Leader: Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director.

306700 HEALTH ALLIANCE CLINTON COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Contract Award Amount: \$33,950 Contract End Date: 9/30/2021

Status: Blair and his team presented the data gathering results to the stakeholders on 8/30/21. The UMass Memorial draft and final reports are scheduled for completion by end of September and mid-October, respectively.

Please contact Senior Planner Blair Haney for information on this project.

Other Contributors: Jonathan Vos, Bruce Hughes, Kayla Kress, Rhiannon Duggan, Nick Mellis

306900 EDA Year 3 of 3

Grant Award Amount: \$70,000 Contract End Date: 3/31/2022

1. **MEC, Inc. Project Planning:** MRPC will provide staff support to the Montachusett Enterprise Center, Inc., to:
 - a. Support, develop, coordinate, and manage a variety of training programs that assist the rehabilitation and construction of housing (i.e., foreclosure, credit, home improvement training programs) and retention and creation of jobs (i.e., practice interviews, enhancing life skills through training, and assisting entrepreneurs in locating and obtaining financing to launch or expand their businesses).

Status: No progress on this task to report.

- b. Support the planning and development of job retention and creation projects.
 - c. Create plans for the development of affordable priced housing to low, moderate-, or middle-income families in the Montachusett Region by identifying affordable housing or “mixed-use” projects to be implemented by non-EDA planning funding within the next one year (short term), two to three years (moderate term), and more than three years (long term).
 - A. Support the planning and development of job retention and creation projects.
Status: No progress on this task to report.
 - B. Create plans for the development of affordable priced housing to low, moderate-, or middle-income families in the Montachusett Region by identifying affordable housing or “mixed-use” projects to be implemented by non-EDA planning funding within the next one year (short term), two to three years (moderate term), and more than three years (long term).

Status:

- Development of an updated Housing Production Plan and Housing Master Plan Chapter for the Town of Ashburnham are underway under DLTA contracts.
- A 40R Feasibility Study is being completed for the Town of Shirley under a DLTA contract.
- A 40R Bylaw and application are being developed for the Town of Lancaster under DLTA contract.

Task #2- Provide Municipalities Technical Assistance Preparing Community and Economic

Development Grant Requests: This will include assistance to at least three towns or cities with the pursuit of grant resources addressing local projects that improve economic vitality. These efforts will focus on, but not be limited to, food systems, energy systems and siting, sustainability, regionalize municipal services, housing related to the bolstering of the construction industry and workforce housing, transit and transportation planning and other related disciplines as they relate to the mobility of the workforce and the efficient movement of goods and services. The human resources, hardware, and software within the MRPC's

Geographic Information System and Information Technology Department (GIS&IT) will provide data collection, warehousing, analysis, and 2d and 3d modeling of data supporting this and other tasks when appropriate.

Status:

- Chris McDermott met with Town of Townsend stakeholders on August 1st to discuss improving upon their previously unfunded grant application for an ADA Planning Grant from the Mass Office on Disability, due by October 8th. Chris provided a revised version of the grant application, based on stakeholder comments, to the town on August 25th for their review. The grant will provide Townsend the funds necessary to update their ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan to allow them to apply for Action Grants to make necessary ADA improvements to their facilities and programs. Grant request - \$35K.
- Staff are awaiting grant award announcements for three Planning Assistance Grants MRPC submitted on behalf of:
 1. Ashburnham to complete several Master Plan Chapters - \$50K requested.
 2. Hubbardston to complete a solar bylaw - \$25K requested
 3. Townsend to update Open Space & Recreation Plan - \$28K requested

Task #3- Continue Increasing Public and Private Sector Participation on the Montachusett Brownfields Group (MBG) Steering Committee and Obtain Additional Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Resources: Since 1998, MRPC has had a successful Brownfields Site Assessment Program, which utilizes EPA grant funds (awarded for the period 10/1/2019-9/30/2022). MRPC will work to increase the level of public/private sector participation in the MBG and complete one EPA Brownfields Grant Application for the reuse of brownfields sites within the Montachusett Region.

Status: See Brownfields status under the EPA section.

Task #4- Maintain the Regional CEDS: The Montachusett Region will continue to maintain and implement its long-term Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to create a strong and diversified economy. Work is currently under way to update this critical document to account for COVID-19's impact on the region. MRPC will provide economic development data at least annually to community and economic development professionals; train student interns on a regular basis in fields directly or indirectly related to economic development; and complete other joint efforts that would foster job retention and creation in the Montachusett Region.

Status: See status report for EDA COVID Award below

Please contact Christopher McDermott, Economic Development Manager, or Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director, regarding this program.

07000 LANCASTER HAZARD MITIGATION

Contract Award Amount: \$25,000 Contract End Date: 12/15/2021

Status: The Town of Lancaster engaged the MRPC to update their 2016 Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). The 2016 HMP was a Multi-Jurisdiction (MJ) HMP for all 22 MRPC communities and the plan expired May 2021. Lancaster requested a scope of work to update their plan this calendar

year for certification by FEMA. The town will be submitting a Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC) grant application this year and all FEMA grant programs require an updated and certified HMP to be considered for funding.

MRPC hosted the kick-off meeting with Town Manager Orlando Pacheco and the town's working committee. The committee recommended a public meeting be held on Wednesday, September 15, 2021. MRPC will host this virtual meeting to solicit community insight on localized hazard issues. MRPC will update all data tables from 2016, as well as all maps. The goal is to submit a draft report to MEMA for review by mid-November.

Please contact Senior Planner Blair Haney for info on this project.

MONTACHUSETT ENTERPRISE CENTER, INC.

Reports concerning the Montachusett Enterprise Center, Inc. (MEC) can be found above under section 4.5

5.3 [Transit](#)

305500 COMBINED PLANNING GRANT (5303) Contract No. 112305

MRPC staff is working on the following projects:

1. Support of Transportation Planning Operations (Referred to as "3C" which is defined as comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing transportation planning process): To provide administrative and technical support to the 3C Process such as providing community liaison and short-term technical planning assistance on mass transit matters to the following: local officials and member communities, state representatives and federal representatives. Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris

- **Public Meetings:** Staff met virtually with the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) – August 11th; and a meeting with U.S. Rep. Lori Trahan regarding the Transportation & Infrastructure legislation – August 3rd.

2. Technical Assistance to MART: Provide technical planning services and assistance to the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART), which included the coordination of short-range special transit planning projects, technical assistance at MART advisory board meetings. Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris

- **Ayer Depot Square Pedestrian Plaza:** No new information.
- **Shirley Station Commuter Parking:** No new information.
- **Fare Collection System (FCS):** No new information.

3. Bus Stop ADA Accessibility Evaluation: During the past month, MRPC staff created a digital survey that can be completed out in the field using a personal tablet to compile data on The Path to Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI)**, which is a state recommendation. The purpose of the study is to determine the level of accessibility of each stop in the MART system by collecting field information and then ranks the capital improvement (critical, high, medium, or low). The higher the "score," the less a bus stop complies with accessibility requirements and

the more it needs capital improvement. Staff has continued to inventory bus stops in Fitchburg and Leominster based on the current MART routes. Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris

*** (the Governor created a Council to assess the barriers to healthy aging and living independently in the communities; hence the Governor's Council to Address Aging was created (EO576). The Council had five workgroups, each focusing on significant barriers to independent living at an older age, including housing, employment, long-term care, transportation, and technology. The workgroups came back with a set of recommendations to the Governor at the end of 2018. Among other things, the transportation workgroup recommended that transit officials across the state understand the accessibility of each bus, rail, subway stop in the Commonwealth}.*

Contact Brad Harris, Transportation Project Director, for further information.

5.4 [Transportation](#)

305400 COMBINED PLANNING GRANT (PL) Contract No. 112305

Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)

- The MJTC met on August 11th. At that meeting, members elected Nicolas Bosonetto, Fitchburg, as Chair, Dick Kilhart, Athol, as Vice Chair and Guy Corbosiero, Winchendon, as Secretary. They will serve until next July/August 2022. Members also voted to not meet in September. The next meeting will be on Wednesday October 13th at 2:30 pm.

Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

- The Montachusett MPO did not meet in August and will not meet in September. The next MPO meeting is scheduled for Wednesday October 20th at 1:00 pm.

Unified Planning Work Program FFY 2021

- The MRPC has continued work on various tasks included in the FFY 2021 UPWP which runs from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021. The following summarizes this work.

1. Support of 3C: Program to assist with Various meetings and activities with Communities, Regional Groups, Federal and State Officials; Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris/George Snow, Sheri Bean, Brian Doherty

- Staff attended various meetings during the month including:
 - U.S. Rep. Lori Trahan Infrastructure Site Visit Meeting in Ashburnham on 8/3/2021
 - MRPC Meeting on 8/5/2021
 - RPA Data Users Group Meeting on 8/11/2021
 - MJTC Meeting on 8/11/21
- Staff also prepared and submitted to MassDOT various documents for the next Combined PL/FTA Transportation Planning Contract that will go into effect on October 1, 2021.

2. Environmental Justice and Title VI: Program to develop and report on Environmental Justice and Title VI issues across the planning process; Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris/George Snow, Sheri Bean, Brian Doherty

- Staff reviewed and identified various EJ populations figures for the region with members of the MJTC.

3. Regional Demographics & Model: Program to implement/maintain a regional model as well as various demographics for the region; Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris/Kayla Kress, George Snow, Sheri Bean, Brian Doherty

- Staff attended a meeting of the RPA Data Users Group held on 8/11/2021.

4. GIS Mapping & Analysis: Program to conduct GIS work & support; Project Lead/Staff – Jason Stanton/Kayla Kress

- Staff continued to conduct GIS Data Warehouse and MRMapper Maintenance.
- Other project and study support can be found under the GIS Status report.

5. Data Collection & Analysis Program: Program to collect and analyze various data sources in support of studies and regional databases; Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris/George Snow, Sheri Bean, Brian Doherty

- Developed mobile applications for in-field data collection regarding bus stops, sidewalk conditions, and public right of way elements. Data collection for sidewalk condition and public right of way elements has begun in specific areas to support studies.
- Traffic counts continued in the region.

6. Pavement Management Systems: Program to collect, analyze and support pavement conditions on regional roadways; Project Lead/Staff – Brian Doherty

- Staff is continuing data collection and analysis. Annual profile will be available by September 30.
- Pavement Management Software troubleshooting conducted to utilize prior data.

7. Intersection Analysis: Program to review regional locations to identify issues and/or deficiencies and develop potential alternatives to address them; Project Lead/Staff – Brian Doherty/George Snow

- Created an environmental constraint map, land use map, and data table of the study area for the review of the intersection of Main Street (Rt. 119)/W Elm Street/Canal Street in Townsend. This will aid in developing potential alternatives to the current intersection layout.

8. Walkability Study(s): Program to improve walkability and access in identified study areas in Sterling and Townsend; Project Lead/Staff – Sheri Bean / Brad Harris, Kayla Kress

- Work continued on the drafts for Sterling and Townsend. Updated information sent to communities for review.

9. Fitchburg Corridor Study: Program to review and identify issues and deficiencies along the Route 12 corridor in Fitchburg: Program Manager – Project Lead/Staff – Brad Harris/ George Snow, Sheri Bean, Brian Doherty

- Sidewalk condition review conducted along corridor.
- Staff has created visuals of the sidewalk condition data to aid in analysis.

10. Climate Change Program: Program to review and assess climate change issues and impacts on various vulnerable infrastructure in the region: Project Lead/Staff – Brian Doherty

- Staff is analyzing flood and infrastructure data throughout the region. Vulnerable Infrastructures report will be available by Sept. 30.

11. Regional Pedestrian Plan: Program to develop a regional ped plan based upon the statewide ped plan: Project Lead/Staff – Sheri Bean/George Snow

- Staff finalized the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure maps for each community. Outreach made to communities for their review of the data and priority areas.

12. ADA Prow Database: Program developed to provide technical assistance to member communities with issues related to the Public Right of Way (PROW) elements of their ADA Plans: Project Lead/Staff – George Snow

- Staff continued the initial survey of ADA issues along Route 12 corridor.

13. Roundabouts and The MRPC Region: Program developed to review, analyze and document roundabouts in member communities: Project Lead/Staff – George Snow

- Staff continued development of draft Roundabouts in the Region study. Corrections and updates made as needed.

14. Bus Stop ADA Accessibility Evaluation: Program to conduct an analysis of fixed route transit stops for ADA compliance; Project/Lead Staff – George Snow/Brad Harris

- Bus stop inventory examined and refined for Fitchburg and Leominster. Initial review of locations conducted through online maps.

Please contact Brad Harris, Transportation Project Director, George Snow, Principal Planner, Sheri Bean, Principal Planner and/or Brian Doherty, Principal Planner for further information concerning the Transportation program.

S. Donahue asked if there would be a link on our website to access the information from the Climate Change Report. B. Harris stated the information should be completed and available on our website by the end of the month.

S. Donahue also asked about a grant that was mentioned at the beginning of the meeting, \$80,000 for energy planning assistance. How would communities apply and when would it be available. G. Eaton stated K. Chapman would have this information who is unavailable tonight. Glenn will email Karen and request she email this information out to all communities.

6. New Business

This time is being reserved for topics that the chair did not reasonably anticipate would be discussed.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Meeting Attendance					
Name	M/ A	Representing	Appointment Date	PRESENT	ABSENT
Janssens, Leo	A	Ashburnham	7.2021		X
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011	X	
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001	X	
Stacy, Wayne	A	Ashby	7.2021		X
Doherty, Jacqueline	M	Athol	7.2020	X	
Rebecca Bialecki	A	Athol	7.2017		X
Kranz, Jonathan	M	Ayer	7.2021	X	
Copeland, Shaun	A	Ayer	7.2020		X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011		X
Vacant	A	Clinton			X
Lowitt, Peter	N/ V	DREZ	7.2001		X
Butland, Alyne	M	Fitchburg	7.2020		X
Bohart, Mary Jo	A	Fitchburg	7.2021		X
Swartz, Robert	M	Gardner	7.2019	X	
DeRoy, Jessica	A	Gardner	7.2021		X
Burke, Russ	M	Groton	7.2016		X
Haddad, Mark	A	Groton	7.2021		X
Donahue, Stacia	M	Harvard	7.2018	X	
Maiores, Richard	A	Harvard			X
Livdahl, Alice	M	Hubbardston	7.2021		X
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston			X

Christopher, Thomas	A	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Williston, Russell	M	Lancaster	11.2018		X
Valliere, Dean	M	Leominster	7.2019		X
Vacant	A	Leominster			X
Brenner, Matthew	M	Lunenburg	7.2020	X	
Marino, James	A	Lunenburg	7.2020		X
Vacant	M	Petersham			X
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Vacant	M	Phillipston			X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.2001	X	
Nartowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015		X
Barclay, James	A	Royalston	7.2017		X
Oelfke, Bill	A	Shirley	7.2020		X
Yocum, Barbara	M	Shirley	8.2017		X
Page, Patty	M	Sterling	7.2019		X
Kilcoyne, John	A	Sterling	7.2014		X
Rich, Dennis	M	Templeton	7.2017		X
Bennett, Jeff	A	Templeton	7.2020		X
Shifrin, Laura	M	Townsend	7.2018	X	
Kell, Veronica	A	Townsend		X	
Smith, Mike	M	Westminster	7.2019		X
Vacant	A	Westminster			X
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	
Ward, Rick	A	Winchendon	7.2019		X

STAFF PRESENT: Glenn Eaton, Holly Ford, Linda Quinlivan, Brad Harris, Kayla Kress, Christopher McNamara

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING:

August 5, 2021, MRPC Minutes

September 9, 2021, Meeting Handout

September 9, 2021, Meeting Agenda

Personnel Policy Revision Checklist
MRPC Personnel Policy and Employee Procedures

This meeting will be recorded by GoToMeeting app and will be made available for viewing on <https://www.youtube.com/user/MontachusettRegion/videos> .

This notice is subject to change with reasonable notice provided to all.