

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)

THURSDAY, MAY 5, 2022

7:00 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

MINUTES

1. Open Meeting, Introductions, and Announcements

Chairman G. Corbosiero called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. G. Corbosiero stated in accordance with Governor Baker's Covid-19 Executive Order regarding the Open Meeting Law and remote participation, votes will be taken through Roll Call.

2. Approval of April 7, 2022, MRPC Minutes – Approval of Commissioners Requested

Having no objections to the April 7, 2022 minutes, R. Swartz moved to approve the April 7, 2022 minutes as written. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

G. Corbosiero- yes
J. Telepciak- yes
K. Nartowicz- yes
L. Shifrin- yes
R. Swartz- yes
R. Hoyt- yes
S. Donahue- yes

3. Cash Schedule – April 2022 – Acceptance of Commissioners Requested

L. Shifrin read the April 2022 cash schedule. Opening balance \$661,235.77, total receipts this month \$220,578.98, total cash on hand before this warrant \$881,814.75, less amount of this warrant \$166,542.90, balance after this warrant \$715,271.85.

R. Swartz moved to accept the April 2022 Cash Schedule as presented, subject to audit. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

G. Corbosiero- yes
J. Telepciak- yes
K. Nartowicz- yes
L. Shifrin- yes
R. Swartz- yes
R. Hoyt- yes
S. Donahue- yes

4. Guest Announcements and Questions

There were no new announcements at this time.

5. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of proposed members of the Executive Committee. Other delegates may be added to this slate as candidates for the various Commission offices and at-large positions by nominations from the floor of the May meeting of the Planning Commission.

Please see Article 2, COMMISSION ORGANIZATION, page 2 of the MRPC's Bylaws, here,
https://www.mrpc.org/sites/g/files/vyhli3491/f/uploads/mrpc_bylaws_amended_8-01-19.pdf

This action will be deferred to June 9, 2022.

6. Administrative Matters

G. Eaton made a verbal note that he asked that all Commissioner provide their name, home address, day job (title), and phone number. This is something we have done in the past and we are trying to update our records. S. Donahue asked why we need the home address vs. the address of the town hall. G. Eaton stated that there may be a time that we need to mail out time-sensitive material. If you do not check mail at the town hall daily, only having the town hall address on file will not work.

6.1 Financial Update Concerning FY23 Budget Process

Table A
(Presented February 3, 2022)

Comparison of FY22 Budget Against FY23 Budget Projection
(Final figures are subject to change through June 9, 2022)

	FY22*	FY23**	\$ Change	% Change
Total Revenue	\$1,965,538	\$1,582,789	(\$382,749)	-19%
Total Expenses	\$1,897,985	\$1,674,934	(\$223,052)	-12%
Estimated Surplus (Deficit)	\$67,552	(\$92,144)		
* As per an internal MRPC Budget update of January 2022				
** As per the first draft of the FY23 MRPC Budget of February 3, 2022				

Table B
(Presented May 5, 2022)

Comparison of FY22 Budget Against FY23 Budget Projection
(Final figures are subject to change through June 9, 2022)

	FY22	FY23***	\$ Change	% Change
Total Revenue	\$1,965,538	\$1,415,900	(\$549,638)	(28%)
Total Expenses	\$1,897,985	\$1,674,934	(\$223,051)	(11.8%)
Estimated Surplus (Deficit) \$	\$67,552	(\$259,033)	(\$191,481)	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Estimated Surplus/(Deficit) %	3.6%	(15.5%)	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

*** As per a draft of the FY23 MRPC Budget (dated May 3, 2022)

G. Eaton presented a draft budget using the tables located within the handout. Table A is what was presented as draft totals when preparing the budget from FY22 to FY23. Table B has updated information with a different view showing a different deficit. We continue to work on this, but we wanted to present the numbers with each update.

G. Eaton will present a report next month to propose raises to all staff of at least a 5% increase to their salaries.

G. Eaton also pointed out that the reason for the significant decrease in expenses was in part due to losing three Directors that were on the payroll.

6.2 Lease Agreement Between the Trustees of Reservations (TOR) and the MRPC

MRPC's Executive Director and the Trustees of Reservations (TOR) are negotiating a five-year extension (minimum) to the current lease that expires on June 30, 2022.

G. Eaton is due to meet with TOR to discuss the renewal of our lease. This is basically an amendment to our current lease changing it from a five-year lease or a ten-year lease. We will present this for approval during the June MRPC Meeting.

7. Department Updates

7.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

No new information at this time

7.2 Planning & Development

Request of Commissioners to Approve Out-of-State Travel for Karen Chapman's Attendance at the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfield Conference to be held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma from August 16 – 19, 2022 – Action Requested

REPORT:

The US EPA Brownfields Conference is being held from August 16 through August 19, 2022. The Executive Director requests approval for one MRPC staff person, Karen Chapman, Planning and Development Director, to attend. Several employees have attended these events since the late 1990s. Continued attendance at these events assists our staff to obtain and administer EPA Brownfields Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) funds advancing cleanup projects leading to the creation of new jobs, affordable housing, and the creation of new open spaces. In addition, attendance at these conferences expands employees' awareness of best practices in assessing and redeveloping brownfields across the country and helps staff improve MRPC's management of our EPA grants.

Attendance by the MRPC staff at approximately one-third of the conferences held since 1998 has contributed to the success of this agency being awarded at least eight ESA grants at \$200,000 to \$300,000 each and one Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) award for another \$480,000. An additional grant for \$500,000 was recently applied for from the EPA (this application is pending).

MRPC's current EPA ESA grant contract with EPA (or cooperative agreement) includes a line item for attendance at these conferences. EPA strongly encourages grant recipients to attend as their attendance benefits our understanding of brownfield redevelopment examples, legal and financial matters, and increases our awareness of new contaminants such as "per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances" (PFAS, https://www.cdc.gov/biomonitoring/PFAS_FactSheet.html#:~:text=The%20per%2Dand%20polyfluoroalkyl%20substances,in%20a%20variety%20of%20products).

The total cost for travel, hotel, registration, and meals will not exceed \$2,000 for the employee. Conference costs for this conference will be charged to the existing EPA-MRPC contract.

RESOLUTION REQUIRING COMMISSION ACTION:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approves of the out-of-state travel of Karen Chapman, Planning and Development Director to the US EPA Brownfields Conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma from August 16-19, 2022, at a total cost not to exceed \$2,000.

J. Telepciak moved to accept the resolution as presented. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

G. Corbosiero- yes
J. Telepciak- yes
K. Nartowicz- yes
L. Shifrin- yes
R. Swartz- yes
R. Hoyt- yes
S. Donahue- yes

K. Chapman presented the following:

1. New bill filed by Gov. FORWARD - An Act Investing in Future Opportunities for Resiliency, Workforce, and Revitalized Downtowns includes \$2.3 billion in funding from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and over \$1.256 billion in capital bond authorizations.

- \$1.2 billion in ARPA funds for climate resiliency and preservation efforts
 - \$42 million for programs that support clean transportation or result in greenhouse gas emissions reductions from the transportation sector
 - \$232 million to support 67 projects for parks, trails, and campground expansion and rehabilitation
 - \$7 million for fishing and boating access projects
 - \$4 million for open space acquisition
 - \$1.4 million for culvert projects
- \$413 million to support over 100 projects across state parks and trails, water and sewer, and environmental infrastructure grant programs.
- COVID-19 Response (ARPA funding)
 - \$250 million for fiscally distressed hospitals
 - \$100 million for future COVID-19 response needs, including testing
 - \$30 million for ongoing efforts to adapt state government services to a post-pandemic world
 - \$25 million for compliance and oversight costs associated with optimizing federal COVID funds
 - \$20 million for local workforce training grants to recruit and train municipal employees that deliver important public services across the Commonwealth
- \$970 million for investments to support revitalizing the Commonwealth's downtowns and communities
 - \$108 million for downtown recovery grants for 246 municipalities
 - Almost \$550 million for MassWorks grants for local infrastructure projects, including \$147 million in ARPA funds to support 100 local projects and \$400 million in capital reauthorization
 - \$32 million for the Community OneStop for Growth competitive grant program
 - \$10 million for site readiness evaluation projects
 - \$7 million for brownfields redevelopment projects
 - \$8 million for underutilized property program projects
 - \$3.5 million for rural redevelopment grants
 - \$1.2 million for community planning grants
 - \$104 million in authorization for Clean Water Trust Fund grants
 - \$50 million in authorization for the Revitalizing Underutilized Properties Program
 - \$50 million in authorization for broadband matching funds in anticipation of competitive programs at the federal level
 - \$12 million in authorization for "middle mile" broadband grants
 - \$10 million in authorization for the Rural and Small-Town Development

Fund

- \$5 million in authorization for Community Planning Grants
- \$325 million in ARPA funding for workforce efforts - HireNow program, which provides grants to employers to train and hire new workers, would receive \$25 million, with \$300 million to the Unemployment Fund
- \$270 million in authorization to support housing production, including affordable rental housing production and rehabilitation, public housing, climate resilient housing, and transit-oriented development.
 - \$243 million in reauthorizations for existing programs to increase affordable rental housing production and rehabilitation, public housing, climate resiliency and transit-oriented development
 - \$26 million in authorization to expand a public housing demonstration program and smart growth housing
- \$50 million for a new competitive and secure future innovation program to make strategic investments in purpose-driven research, technology development, and innovation, and in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML), robotics, quantum information science, cybersecurity, communications, and digital health.
 - \$50 million for a new Competitive and Secure Future Innovation Program
 - \$30 million for the Mass. Manufacturing Innovation Initiative
 - \$24 million for R&D grants
 - \$23 million for the Massachusetts Manufacturing Accelerate Program
 - \$10 million for tourism destination development grants
 - \$200 million for matching funds for anticipated federal grant opportunities in the technology and innovation industry

See ARPA 2.0 Proposed Initiatives chart which shows potential money to go to each community. We are still unsure about the details or what it will need to go towards.

S. Donahue asked if this is proposed or is this definite? K. Chapman confirmed this is just proposed and we are unsure when they will be voting on this. She will keep all informed of any progress.

2. Green Communities Competitive Grants: Ashby, Athol, Groton, Westminster = \$399,593 Technical Assistance to Ashby, Athol and Westminster

We applied for the Green Communities Competitive Grants for Ashby, Athol, Groton and Westminster and they were awarded at the end of the year, however, we were unable to announce this until they announced it first. They announced this information in April, so we are now formally announcing that for those four communities.

3. Planning Assistance Grant – Due May 20th

Master Plan elements, HPPs, OSRPs, Zoning bylaw amendments/review, natural resources protection, 40R zoning, parking studies, climate resiliency and mitigation, strategic

planning, design guidelines, energy planning, LID, zoning for housing, infrastructure planning, master plan implementation.

MRPC is developing an application to evaluate infrastructure in relation to housing in the region and the potential for sharing infrastructure resources and assets. Gather infrastructure location and capacity data, as well as investigating the opportunities for expansion and regional wastewater and water facilities. We can apply for up to \$50K per community interested in participating. Would need support letters from towns that are interested. Is highly likely that we would be awarded due to the MBTA communities law and the state's goal of producing more multifamily housing.

Currently, we have only heard from the town of Shirley. If you are interested, please let K. Chapman know.

4. Grant Opportunities in the handout

See the Excel spreadsheet provided with the handout.

5. New contract: GP-USDA Regional Food System Partnership Program - \$30K nonprofit, catchment area 27 communities started creating a sustainable and resilient local food system. Need planning assistance SWOT/SOAR Analysis, Strategic Planning, Resource Library Development for stakeholders.

This new contract is with Growing Places. Growing Places is a non-profit.

7.3 Transit & Transportation

Presentation was given by B. Doherty

7.3.1 REPORT

Development and Endorsement of FFY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program

The MPO voted to release the Draft FFY 2023 UPWP for a 21-day public review and comment period beginning April 26th and ending on May 16th. The MJTC will discuss on May 11th the draft UPWP as well as any comments received to date. After the close of the comment period, the MPO will meet on Wednesday, May 18th to review and address any and all comments received. The MPO will then likely vote to endorse the FFY 2023 UPWP at that meeting. It is requested that the MRPC authorize its Chairman and the MPO to endorse the FFY 2023 UPWP at the next scheduled MPO meeting. To download pdf copies of the Draft FFY 2023 UPWP, please see the MRPC webpage.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the MRPC has reviewed the FFY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and based upon this review as well as the review of any comments received, authorizes its Chairman to endorse the FFY 2023 UPWP at an MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 18, 2022, at 1:00 PM.

R. Hoyt moved to accept the resolution as presented. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

G. Corbosiero- yes

J. Telepciak- yes

K. Nartowicz- yes

L. Shifrin- yes

R. Swartz- yes

R. Hoyt- yes

S. Donahue- yes

7.3.2 REPORT

Development and Authorization of MRPC Chairman to Endorse the FFY 2023-2027 Transportation Improvement Program

The MPO voted to release the Draft FFY 2023-2027 TIP for a 21-day public review and comment period beginning April 26th and ending on May 16th. The MJTC will discuss on May 11th the draft TIP as well as any comments received to date. After the close of the comment period, the MPO will meet on Wednesday, May 18th to review and address any and all comments received. The MPO will then likely vote to endorse the FFY 2023-2027 TIP at that meeting. It is requested that the MRPC authorize its Chairman and the MPO to endorse the FFY 2023-2027 TIP at the next scheduled MPO meeting. To download pdf copies of the Draft FFY 2023-2027 TIP, please see the MRPC webpage.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the MRPC has reviewed the FFY 2023-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and based upon this review as well as the review of any comments received, authorizes its Chairman to endorse the FFY 2023-2027 TIP at an MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 18, 2022, at 1:00 PM.

J. Telepciak moved to accept the resolution as presented. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

G. Corbosiero- yes

J. Telepciak- yes
K. Nartowicz- yes
L. Shifrin- yes
R. Swartz- yes
R. Hoyt- yes
S. Donahue- yes

7.3.3 REPORT

Development and Authorization of MRPC Chairman to Endorse the FFY 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #4

The MPO voted to release the Draft Amendment #4 to the FFY 2022-2026 TIP for a 21-day public review and comment period beginning April 26th and ending on May 17th. The MJTC will discuss, on May 11th, the draft TIP Amendment #4 as well as any comments received to date. After the close of the comment period, the MPO will meet on Wednesday, May 18th to review and address any and all comments received. The MPO will then likely vote to endorse the Draft Amendment #4 to the FFY 2022-2026 at that meeting. It is requested that the MRPC authorize its Chairman and the MPO to endorse the Draft Amendment #4 to the FFY 2022-2026 at the next scheduled MPO meeting. To download a pdf copy of the Draft Amendment #4 to the FFY 2022-2026, please see the MRPC webpage.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the MRPC has reviewed the Draft Amendment #4 to the FFY 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and based upon this review as well as the review of any comments received, authorizes its Chairman to endorse Amendment #4 to the FFY 2022-2026 TIP at an MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 18, 2022, at 1:00 PM.

J. Telepciak moved to accept the resolution as presented. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

G. Corbosiero- yes
J. Telepciak- yes
K. Nartowicz- yes
L. Shifrin- yes
R. Swartz- yes
R. Hoyt- yes
S. Donahue- yes

8. New Business

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

No new business at this time.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, this meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.

This meeting will be recorded by the 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.

Meeting Attendance					
<u>Name</u>	<u>M/A</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Janssens, Leo	A	Ashburnham	7.2021		X
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011	X	
Stacy, Wayne	A	Ashby	7.2021		X
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001		X
Bialecki, Rebecca	A	Athol	7.2017		X
Doherty, Jacqueline	M	Athol	7.2020		X
Copeland, Shaun	A	Ayer	7.2020		X
Kranz, Jonathan	M	Ayer	7.2021		X
Vacant	A	Clinton			X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011		X
Lowitt, Peter	N/V	DREZ	7.2001		X
Bohart, Mary Jo	A	Fitchburg	7.2021		X
Alyne Butland	M	Fitchburg	7.2020		X
DeRoy, Jessica	A	Gardner	7.2021		X
Swartz, Robert	M	Gardner	7.2019	X	
Haddad, Mark	A	Groton	7.2021		X

Burke, Russell	M	Groton	7.2016		X
Minar, Kara	A	Harvard	7.2021		X
Donahue, Stacia	M	Harvard	7.2018	X	
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston	7.2020		X
Livdahl, Alice	M	Hubbardston	7.2021		X
Jackson, Carol	A	Lancaster	7.2021		X
Williston, Russell	M	Lancaster	11.2018		X
Vacant	A	Leominster			X
Valliere, Dean	M	Leominster	7.2019		X
Marino, James	A	Lunenburg	7.2020		X
Brenner, Matthew	M	Lunenburg	7.2020		X
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Vacant	M	Petersham			X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.2001	X	
Vacant	M	Phillipston			X
Barclay, James	A	Royalston	7.2017		X
Nartowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015	X	
Oelfke, William	A	Shirley	7.2020		X
Yocum, Barbara	M	Shirley	8.2017		X
Kilcoyne, John	A	Sterling	7.2014		X
Page, Patty	M	Sterling	7.2019		X
Bennett, Jeff	A	Templeton	7.2020		X
Rich, Dennis	M	Templeton	7.2017		X
Kell, Veronica	A	Townsend	7.2021		X
Shifrin, Laura	M	Townsend	7.2018	X	
Buckman, Gregg	A	Westminster	7.2021		X

Smith, Michael	M	Westminster	7.2019		X
Ward, Rick	A	Winchendon	7.2019		X
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	

Guests: George Kahale- MART Representative

Staff: Glenn Eaton, Holly Ford, Karen Chapman, Jason Stanton, Linda Quinlivan, Brian Doherty

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING:

April 7 2022 Minutes

May 5, 2022 Agenda

May 5, 2022 MRPC Meeting Handout

2023 2027 Draft CIP Notice

ARPA 2.0 State Funding

Current Grant Opportunities

Int Parties Draft TIP Amendment #4 & Transit Summary

Int Parties Draft TIP UPWP Memo