

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2022

7:00 PM

REMOTE MEETING

MINUTES

1. Open Meeting, Introductions, and Announcements

Chairman G. Corbosiero called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Chairman 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.

P. Cunningham announced he had attended a virtual meeting regarding a legislative trails caucus on Beacon Hill. They will be meeting again in early January. There are several representatives and regional planning agencies there. The hope is to get communities to band together to have a cohesive voice on trail issues.

2. Approval of November 3, 2022, MRPC Minutes – Approval of Commissioners Requested

Having no objections to the November 3, 2022 minutes, G. Tillotson moved to accept the minutes as written. Motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed:

A. Pease- yes
A. Reid- yes
B. Yocum- yes
D. Valliere- yes
G. Tillotson- yes
K. Nartowicz- yes
L. Shifrin-yes
P. Cunningham- abstain
R. Hoyt- yes

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

L. Quinlivan read the November 2022 cash schedule. The opening balance for November was

\$834,483.82, total receipts and transfers this month were \$128,141.04, total cash on hand before this warrant was \$962,624.86, less the amount of this warrant \$296,598.79, left a balance after the warrant of \$666,026.07.

L. Shifrin noted that it appears that we have had more cash on hand than last year and asked why. G. Eaton stated it is a result of Planning Assistance Grants (PAG) paying for services upfront. The other considering factor is that the revolving loan fund is also being paid promptly which was not always the case. Additionally, we have been saving money in the MMDT account which is a high-interest-bearing account.

Having no objections to the cash schedule, P. Cunningham moved to accept the November 2022 cash schedule as presented subject to audit. The motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed:

A. Pease- yes
A. Reid- yes
B. Yocum- yes
D. Valliere- yes
G. Tillotson- yes
K. Nartowicz- yes
L. Shifrin-yes
P. Cunningham- yes
R. Hoyt- yes

4. Guest Announcements and Questions

G. Kahale experienced technical issues and was unable to speak at this time.

5. Administrative Matters

G. Eaton presented the following:

5.1 Digital Equity Planning (DEP) Program, Mass Technology Center (MassTech) and Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) and First Lunch and Learn Meeting to Be Held December 1, 2022 – Information Only

MRPC's first Lunch and Learn meeting was held on Thursday, December 1st. Six communities attended the session. The program was recorded and is available on the MRPC's YouTube channel.

The topic was the new Digital Equity Planning (DEP) Program overseen by Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) and the Mass Technology Center (MassTech). Some goals of this project include identifying disenfranchised groups and identifying projects needed to bring broadband to more people throughout Massachusetts. The completion of local plans will lead to improvements in local broadband networks.

MRPC has been approved as a qualified consultant and will deliver DEP charrettes and/or digital equity plans to communities in the Montachusett region. The primary responsibility for the delivery of these plans lies with the Planning and Development Department (P&D). Non-P&D staff may be directed to assist, as needed. Learn more about this statewide initiative at <https://broadband.masstech.org/digital-equity-programs#:~:text=The%20Digital%20Equity%20Partnerships%20Program,to%20bridge%20the%20digital%20divide.>

If any communities need assistance, please email K. Chapman or G. Eaton.

5.2 MRPC and MEC, Inc. Records Preservation: Digitization of Documents – Action May Be Requested

A quote has been sought by Ricoh for the scanning and storage of paper documents such as old plans, financial, MEC, Inc. administration and Receivership Program files. When digital files are created, they will be “searchable PDFs.” One or more appropriate area(s) on our shared drive system will be designated for the to-be-scanned files. Locations of all files will be shared with all employees.

Digitizing plans will enable MRPC to upload plans to our website and will be downloadable for local officials throughout our region. Digitizing records will ultimately lead to freeing up storage space in our office closets.

The MRPC has not yet received a quote from Ricoh. Costs may be incurred in FY23, FY24, or both fiscal years.

5.3 Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce Executive Roundtable Program – Information Only

The November session revolved around setting goals with employees and progressive discipline.

5.4 Status of Request for Proposals for Grant Writing Consultant(s) – Information Only

The availability of the Request for Proposals for one or more grant writing consultant(s) will be published this month and proposals are due in January 2023. At the Commissioners’ meeting to be held on February 9, 2023 management will seek the approval of a grant writing consultant(s).

5.5 FY23 Budget Update

In June 2022, the FY23 budget was adopted. At that time the total revenue had been projected to be \$1,503,848, expenses were \$1,750,948, and the projected deficit was 14.1%.

This month we updated the revenue and expenses projection for the current fiscal year. Total revenue is now projected to be \$1,618,917, expenses are \$1,750,948, and the projected deficit is 7.5% which is 6.6% less.

B. Yocum asked what happens if we have a deficit at the end of the year. G. Eaton stated it

has not happened. If a line item had a deficit, we would adjust that line item as needed or adjust spending as needed.

P. Cunningham asked what the statutory regulation from the Ma general laws is on having a deficit in your budget for regional planning agencies. G. Eaton stated he would need to research and get back to him.

G. Tillotson said he thought we had an opening for a part-time planner, but we said we didn't plan on filling it. Is this due to a lack of applicants or a lack of funds? G. Eaton stated we are not currently looking. It is just a line item in case it was needed. G. Eaton did state that we do have a current need for a grant writing consultant due to all planners being so busy with delivering grants. This position would be for a consultant, not an employee.

5.6 Other Administrative Matters

G. Kahale stated regarding the snow removal that was discussed at the last meeting, MART is responsible for clearing and removing snow from the Ayer parking garage as well as the rail trail section. From Groton St. to Main St., they will remove the snow end to end and edge to edge. The fence was installed to hold back some of the debris from the hill and to help create a visual barrier between the facility and private properties. The fence was located at the edge of the property to increase safety along the rail trail stretch of the facility.

6. Department Updates

6.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

K. Kress stated it is the end of the year and reminded communities that if they have not used their eight hours of free GIS Planning Systems. If your town has not used your hours, please contact us.

J. Stanton and K. Kress have been working with MAPC which is coordinating the development of a statewide digital Trail inventory, which will be great for planning purposes. RPA's will be collecting this data and will bring it all together which is a huge task. We are in great shape and in a good position to present what we would like this data to look like.

6.2 Planning & Development

No new information at this time

6.3 Transit & Transportation

No new information at this time

7. New Business

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

8. Adjournment

There being no further business L. Shifrin moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

This meeting will be recorded by the GoToMeeting app and will be made available for viewing at <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	7.2020.		X
Doherty, Jacqueline	M	Athol	7.2020.		X
Copeland, Shaun	A	Ayer	7.2020.		X
Tillotson, Geoffrey	M	Ayer	7.2022	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
Butland, Alyne	M	Fitchburg	7.2020.		X
DeRoy, Jessica	A	Gardner	7.2021		X
Swartz, Robert	M	Gardner	7.2019		X
Cunningham, Peter	M	Groton	7.2016	X	
Burke, Russell	A	Groton	7.2022		X
Minar, Kara	A	Harvard	7.2021		X

Donahue, Stacia	M	Harvard	7.2018		X
Williams, Jeff	A	Hubbardston	7.2022		X
Livdahl, Alice	M	Hubbardston	7.2021		X
Vacant	A	Lancaster			X
Williston, Russ	M	Lancaster	11.2018		X
Vacant	A	Leominster			X
Valliere, Dean	M	Leominster	7.2019	X	
Vacant	A	Lunenburg			X
Reid, Amanda	M	Lunenburg	7.2020.	X	
Ermini, Annette	A	Petersham	7.2022		X
Vacant	M	Petersham			X
Jackson, Melanie	A	Phillipston	7.2022		X
Telepciak, John	M	Phillipston	7.2001		X
Barclay, James	A	Royalston	7.2017		X
Nartowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015	X	
Oelfke, Bill	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
Sexton-Diranian, Chaz	A	Townsend	7.202		X
Shifrin, Laura	M	Townsend	7.2019	X	
Vacant	A	Westminster			X
Buckman, Gregg	M	Westminster	7.2021		X
Ward, Rick	A	Winchendon	7.2019		X

Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	
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Staff: G. Eaton, H. Ford, L. Quinlivan, K. Kress

Guests: George Kahale, MART Representative

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS DISTRIBUTED AT THE MEETING:

November 3, 2022 MRPC Minutes

December 8, 2022 Agenda

December 8, 2022 Handout