

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

**Held Remotely via GoToMeeting.com
Hosted by the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
464 Abbott Avenue, Leominster, MA 01453**

Minutes May 19, 2021

Stephen Woelfel representing Acting Secretary Jamey Tesler called the remote meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

Stephen Woelfel, MassDOT OTP; Arthur Frost, MassDOT Dist. 3; Guy Corosiero, MRPC; Bonnie Mahoney, MART; Mary Jo Bohart, Fitchburg; Mark Piermarini, Leominster; Tim Kilhart, Subregion 3;

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

Bryan Pounds, MassDOT OTP; Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP; Laura Hanson, MassDOT Dist. 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT Dist. 3; Brian Croteau, Winchendon; Chris Timmel, FHWA; Erik Atkins, Green International Affiliates;

STAFF PRESENT

Brad Harris; Brian Doherty; George Snow; Sheri Bean;

II. Public Comments

S. Woelfel asked those present if there were any public comments to be made. There were none at this time.

III. Approval of April 21, 2021 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the April 21, 2021 MPO Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

IV. Montachusett FFY 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *FFY 2021 Draft Amendment #3 – Review & Discussion of Comments Received*
- *MPO Action to Endorse FFY 2021-2025 TIP Amendment #3*

G. Snow stated that Draft TIP Amendment #3 applies to the FFY 2021 TIP Transit Element. The proposed Amendment reflects the addition of one new project as well as cost changes and adjustments that are based on bid prices and state and federal funding levels to 6 other projects. At the MPO meeting held on April 21st, the MPO reviewed the proposed Amendment and voted that it be released for a 21-day public review and comment period. The period commenced on Monday April 26th and closed at the end of business on Monday May 17th. As of the close of business on Monday May 17th, no comments have been received. At the May 12th MJTC meeting, the MJTC was asked to comment on the Amendment and to recommend to the MPO that it be endorsed by the MPO. No comments were received, and it was the consensus of the MJTC to recommend to the MPO that the Amendment be endorsed by the MPO at the May 19th MPO meeting. G. Snow stated that it is being requested the MPO make and pass a motion to endorse the final TIP Amendment #3.

A motion was made to endorse the FFY 2021 TIP Amendment #3. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

V. Montachusett FFY 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review and Discussion of Draft FFY 2022-2026 TIP Document & Comments Received*
- *MPO Action to Endorse FFY 2022-2026 TIP*

B. Doherty stated that at the MPO meeting held on April 21st, the MPO released the Draft FFY 2022-2026 TIP for a 21-day public review and comment period. The period commenced on Monday April 26th and closed at the end of business on Monday May 17th. As of the close of business on Monday May 17th, staff has received comments from two sources – MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The comments ranged from minor edits to the inclusion of additional information. All the comments have been or will be incorporated into the final TIP. The major comment from both OTP and FHWA pertained to breaking down project costs into different categories based on investments. Staff will explore this comment and enter into further discussions with MassDOT and the MJTC/MPO during the development of the 2024 Regional Transportation Plan.

A motion was made to endorse the FFY 2022-2026 TIP. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

NOTE: Due to COVID and virtual meeting restrictions, S. Woelfel as Chair would be the only signature on the endorsement page, but his signature is on behalf of the entire MPO and the vote taken.

VI. Montachusett FFY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- *Review and Discussion of Draft FFY 2022 UPWP*
- *MPO Action to Release Draft UPWP for 21 Day Public Review & Comment Period*

S. Bean stated that at the MPO meeting held on April 21st, the MPO released the Draft FFY 2022 UPWP for a 21-day public review and comment period. The period commenced on Monday April 26th and closed at the end of business on Monday May 17th. As of the close of business on Monday May 17th, staff has received comments from two sources – MassDOT OTP and the FHWA. The comments ranged from minor edits to the inclusion of additional information. All the comments have been or will be incorporated into the final UPWP. Overall, the comment's general themes included referencing any type of COVID related impacts that may have occurred; virtual public outreach efforts and how staff will utilize them going forward; accessibility throughout the UPWP; include updates from the current year UPWP; and elaborate on specific transit tasks to focus on transit planning.

A motion was made to endorse the FFY 2022 UPWP. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VII. Updates

- *MassDOT Highway Division*

A. Frost of MassDOT District 3 mentioned the updates for FFY21; Project# 607431, Westminster Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 140 was advertised in January. Project# 608857, Lunenburg Bridge Rehab Route 2A over Pearl Hill Brook was advertised last December. Project# 608888, Gardner Pearson Boulevard is scheduled to be advertised in September. Project# 608891 Gardner Resurfacing and Rumble Strip on Route 140 to be advertised this May.

L. Hanson of MassDOT District 2 mentioned that there are no upcoming TIP project updates for this meeting. For a construction update of the ongoing Athol/Phillipston Resurfacing and Related Work on

Route 2 project, the nighttime milling continues, and daytime paving began last week and will continue for the next month or so.

- *Transit*

B. Mahoney mentioned that MART has several construction projects going on. The parking lot will be repaved, new fencing will be installed, and bus bays are being painted. As of this date, MART has started installing automatic passenger counters, upgrading Where's My Bus equipment and upgrading their website.

- *Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)*

B. Harris mentioned that the MJTC we will begin the election process for a new slate of officers. A Nominating Committee has been selected and will present a slate at the June 9, 2021 MJTC meeting. The election will take place at the July MJTC meeting. Staff met with the Town of Athol on May 5, 2021 to introduce our ADA PROW Data Collection app. The app includes sidewalk, curb ramp, crosswalk, and accessible pedestrian signals surveys and the presentation included a demo of the app. A second app introduction meeting has been scheduled for the Town of Ayer on May 20th and will also be presented at a future MJTC meeting. MassDOT has announced a series of Capital Investment Plan (CIP) virtual public meetings throughout the state. The CIP determines funding for new buses, trains, rail expansion, transit, roadway improvements, transit, municipal projects, and other transportation related projects. The central Massachusetts meeting has been scheduled for May 27, 2021.

- *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)*

G. Corbosiero indicated that the MRPC offices remain closed to the public but are open to all employees. However, local officials are now welcomed to visit with employees by appointment and only in small groups. On July 12th, all full-time employees will be required to work at the office. Comprehensive planning has several projects going on - the region's 2019 Community Economic Development Strategy is being updated; MRPC is delivering District Local Technical Assistance to 17 communities this calendar year; funding in the Brownfields program have been fully committed and the MRPC will pursue another Brownfield grant this winter; staff continues to work on two community health assessments and a small business grant program to be completed by September 30th. For the Community and Economic Development department, staff continues the administration of a CDBG small business grant and food bank assistance program for Lunenburg, Royalston, Shirley, Townsend, and Westminster.

VIII. Administrative Matters

- *Next MPO Meeting*

B. Harris stated that the next scheduled MPO meeting is on June 16, 2021 at 1:00 pm.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:43 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

MPO 5 19 2021 Agenda

MPO 4 21 2021 Minutes

4 Draft Transit FY21-25 TIP Amend #3 Revised 4 13 2021

4 Int Parties Draft TIP Amendment #3

5 22-26 TIP Comments 5 12 2021

5 DRAFT FFY 2022 2026 TIP 4 13 2021

5 DRAFT Project Summary FFY 2022 2026 TIP 4 23 2021
5 Int Parties Draft TIP UPWP Memo 4 23 2021 ENGLISH
6 DRAFT FFY 2022 UPWP Reduced File 4 13 2021
6 UPWP Comments 5 12 2021
7 FINAL FY22 CIP Flyer MBTA edits 20210428 FINAL3
7 New Shared Streets Program Announcement 4 23 2021
7 US DOT TOD Announcement 4 21 2021