

# **MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)**



**Doyle Center  
464 Abbott Avenue  
Leominster, MA 01453**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2019  
7:00 PM**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **1. Open Meeting, Introductions and Announcements**

J. Telepciak called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **2. Approval of May 2, 2019 MRPC Minutes**

G. Corbosiero moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the May 2, 2019 minutes as distributed. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **3. Cash Schedule May 2019**

A. Pease read the May 2019 cash schedule.

A. Pease read the May 2019 cash schedule. Opening Balance \$338,617.68; Total receipts this month \$116,231.11; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$454,848.79; Less: amount of this warrant \$86,995.44  
Balance after this warrant \$367,853.35.

G. Corbosiero moved to accept the cash schedule as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **4. Election of Officers for FY2020**

R. Burke moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission elect the following Slate of Officers for FY2020.

Chair – Guy Corbosiero  
Vice Chair – John Telepciak  
Treasurer – Alan Pease  
Assistant Treasurer – Roger Hoyt  
Secretary – Laura Shifrin  
Members At Large – Phil Duffy and Maribel Cruz

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

G. Eaton mentioned that the July MRPC Meeting falls on the Fourth of July.

After some discussion, R. Burke moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission leave the decision regarding rescheduling or cancelling the meeting to the Chairman. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **5. PowerPoint Presentation Update to the Montachusett Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (MRCEDS) – John Hume and Sean O'Donnell**

J. Hume and S. O'Donnell presented a PowerPoint regarding the information contained the MRCEDS Update.

### **5.1 Endorsement of the MRCEDS Update**

In 1994, the communities within the Montachusett Region worked in cooperation with the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) to create this region's first CEDS. Since then, this document has been updated and maintained by MRPC so that communities in the Montachusett Region will be eligible to access federal Economic Development Administration funding (EDA) as needed. Draft updates of the CEDS were distributed to CEDS Committee Members, Montachusett Economic Development District Committee Members, and Montachusett Regional Planning Commission Members. Comments will be taken up until July 1, 2019.

Also, at the June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 CEDS Committee Meeting, the CEDS Committee voted to recommend that the MRPC endorse the updated CEDS document at the June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Planning Commission meeting conditionally, subject to the incorporation of any relevant comments received up until July 1, 2019.

G. Corbosiero moved that the MRPC endorses the updated Montachusett Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document conditionally, subject to the incorporation of any relevant comments received up until July 1, 2019. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **6. Administrative Matters**

### **6.1 Possible Outsourcing of Payroll – FY18 Audit Corrective Action**

L. Parmenter stated that based on a finding in the FY18 Audit, the Auditor recommends that MRPC outsource payroll. MRPC's Corrective Action Plan indicates that we would bring this issue to the full Commission for vote at the June MRPC Meeting. Linda Parmenter and Linda Quinlivan, met with Harpers Payroll Service located in Worcester. Harpers has over forty years in the business and provides payroll service for the City of Leominster. The annual cost to outsource payroll which also includes state and federal tax filing W2 processing and 1099's would be \$1,849.04 plus a one-time interface set up fee of \$250.00. MRPC can also cancel at any time with 30 days' notice.

MRPC will be conversing with our accounting software supplier, Grants Managements System, in the near future to determine if outsourcing is a viable option with the type of reporting requirements that our current system provides for invoicing and audit purposes.

R. Burke moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) approves outsourcing payroll to Harpers Payroll Service as long it meets all of MRPC's financial reporting requirements. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## 6.2 Room Rental Policy – *Proposed Policy Withdrawn*

G. Eaton indicated at this time our landlord does not want to proceed with this policy.

## 6.3 Revolving Loan Fund Lending Policy

G. Eaton explained that he presented the policy at last month's MRPC Meeting.

The MRPC has a balance of Program Income from the former US EPA Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grant of \$124,824.25+/- . At the Commissioners' meeting held in May the Executive Director proposed a new lending policy to be implemented in order to receive applications and make loans for Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) and new loans that would lead to the on-site cleanup of currently-contaminated properties. The Commissioners directed the Executive Director to seek legal counsel's opinion on the proposed narrative. Below is the proposed loan policy after legal review.

### **BROWNFIELDS CLEANUP REVOLVING LOAN FUND MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

#### 1. Program Goals

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission's (MRPC) goals are to:

- Finance, through gap funding, the removal of hazardous substances from Brownfields sites within the Montachusett Region.<sup>1</sup>
- Support a sustainable revolving loan fund (RLF) program
- Finance, via loans, the assessment and remediation of Brownfields properties
- Identify and work with property owners to make properties available for redevelopment
- Contribute to the revitalization of the community and region through the:
  - Improvement of the environment
  - Elimination or reduction of public health risks associated with these sites
  - Retention and creation of jobs
  - Creation of housing units for the workforce

#### 2. Program Objectives

MRPC's objectives are to:

- Create an incentive for private investment in Brownfields areas in the Montachusett Region
- Assist in the assessment and safe clean up Brownfields properties through funding in order to facilitate their sustainable use
- Foster development and implementation of financial and administrative approaches that can support self-sustaining efforts to facilitate Brownfields cleanup efforts
- Assist through funding in the prevention or spread of contamination on or between properties so as to protect the public health by minimizing exposure to hazardous materials in the environment

#### 3. Program Description

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<sup>1</sup> Communities within the Montachusett Region are Ashburnham, Ashby, Athol, Ayer, Clinton, Fitchburg, Gardner, Groton, Harvard, Hubbardston, Lancaster, Leominster, Lunenburg, Petersham, Phillipston, Royalston, Shirley, Sterling, Templeton, Townsend, Westminster and Winchendon and the Planned Business Community of Devens as managed by MassDevelopment.

This program is designed to encourage the environmental assessment and remediation/ cleanup of eligible sites and activities associated with removing, mitigating, or preventing the release, or threat of a release, of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant from Brownfields sites. This will be achieved through funding environmental site assessments and remediations on eligible properties through loans to private- and public-sector entities for properties owned by such entities or affiliates.

All work under this Program is to be completed in accordance with the requirements outlined in the Closeout Agreements between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission.

Flood insurance will be required.

The MRPC will be named by the borrower as an additional insured party on the borrower's insurance policy.

#### 4. Program Funding

Funding for the MRPC Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) was provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the MRPC in the form of a 2001 Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund grant. ~~The MRPC provided one loan in the amount of \$350,000 to the owner of a property in Clinton. Said owner has been making payments on the loan to the MRPC for a number of years. Loan repayments are maintained by the MRPC in its EPA RLF Program Income account.~~

The MRPC will continue to pursue the US EPA's Brownfields Cleanup revolving Loan Fund (BCRLF) grant dollars to recapitalize this program.

#### 5. Eligible Project Applicants and Threshold Requirements

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- The property to be assisted is located within the Montachusett Region
- The project applicant or owner must owe no outstanding property taxes, fees, judgments, or liens to the municipality in which the subject property is located
- The project applicant or owner is not considered potentially responsible for the contamination on the property
- The project applicant or owner is not currently suspended, debarred or otherwise ineligible to participate in Federal financial assistance programs
- The project applicant or owner is not in environmental non-compliance with Federal or State agencies at the subject property
- Public- and private-sector applicants are eligible to apply

#### 6. Eligible Activities

Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) and Remediation of Environmental Contaminants so long as both ESA and cleanup activities occur on the same property and under the same loan. Assessments leading to the near-term remediation of hazardous substance(s), pollutant(s) or contaminant(s) on the same site. Assessments and remediation activities associated with removing, mitigating, or preventing the release or threat of a release of hazardous substance(s),

pollutant(s) or contaminant(s) including all, eligible methods of encapsulation and/or remediation.

Loan clients' ESA and cleanup advances, related to invoices for eligible activities, provided to the MRPC for reimbursement will be submitted to the MRPC's environmental site assessment consulting firm for review and approval. MRPC will complete Title searches every thirty (30) days/upon the submission of reimbursement requests. MRPC will issue two-party checks to the borrower and vendor for payments.

## 7. Financing Terms

Terms of financing, follow:

- ~~The maximum loan amount shall not exceed \$25,000~~ No Loan should be greater than 50% of the available balance. When the balance available reaches \$50,00 no loan should be greater than \$25,000.
- The maximum loan term will generally be five (5) years
  - The interest rate will be:
    - Up to 50 to 100 basis points below the current, competitive commercial lenders' market rates quoted as of the MRPC's loan approval date; and,
  - Fixed for the duration of the term of the loan
- The real estate to be assessed and/or remediated shall be used as collateral for the loan.
- The MRPC reserves the right to require additional collateral including, but not limited to, other real estate and other business assets
- MRPC will secure loans with real and personal property as collateral; personal guaranties are also required as security
- An origination fee will generally be ~~one~~ ten-percent (10%) of the total loan amount
- Recording and legal fees will be paid by the borrower also

## 8. Requests for Amendment to Loan Terms:

- ~~The MRPC will:~~
- - ~~Charge a ten percent (10%) (NOTE: ORIGINAL ORIGINATION FEE OF TWO PERCENT INCREASED TO 10% BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMISSIONERS)~~ origination fee. Origination fee will not exceed 10% for amendments to loan terms (based on the current loan balance at the time of the request for an amendment[s] to loan terms); and,
  - Require the borrower to pay for any and all costs for changes to the origination documents, consulting, legal, closing and recording fees associated with preparing any additional loan documents/modifications.
  - Origination fee will be recommended by the Loan Review Committee.

Requested loan amendments may be considered by the Planning Commissioners.

## 9. Underwriting Criteria

Project review will include, but not be limited to the necessity of Brownfields funds from this Program to make the project economically feasible and at the same time have a high potential for economic success.

## 10. Application Review Criteria

MRPC will review project proposals to determine eligibility and work with applicant(s) to determine the viability of the project and the least amount of public resources necessary to make the project(s) feasible.

Remediation plans must be implemented efficiently and redevelopment projects completed on schedule to maximize the community benefit goals of the projects. The loan application, approval and closing process is, as follows:

- A. Applicants seeking funds for remediation are required to submit all, necessary and appropriate environmental reports concerning the subject property to the MRPC and all appropriate state and federal environmental agencies;
- B. The Brownfields funding application will be submitted to the MRPC, along with all Environmental Site Assessments and evidence of required submittals to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP);
- C. Applicants environmental site assessment reports prepared by other parties are subject to peer review by the MRPC and its agent(s)
- D. The MRPC and its environmental engineering consultant will determine if the Applicant, subject property and preliminary project costs are eligible for Brownfields funding;
- E. If Applicant, site and project costs are determined to be eligible, the MRPC will have its underwriting consultant prepare an analysis of the financial components of the application along with recommended terms and conditions for the MRPC's review and consideration;
- F. MRPC will appoint and utilize a Loan Review Committee (LRC) for a detailed analysis of loan proposals.
  - a. The LRC will be comprised of the Chairman and Treasurer of the MRPC or their designees, and three private sector representatives that will be chosen by the MRPC from fields such as legal, finance, property development/redevelopment and/or related discipline. **The LRC will make a recommendation to the Commission for vote.**
- G. The MRPC will accept comments on the project at a MRPC meeting prior to the Commission's vote on whether to approve the funding request (the MRPC reserves the right to have more than one meeting to review a loan proposal prior to awarding or denying a loan request);
- H. Based on a favorable analysis of the financial qualifications of the applicant, and the MRPC's approval, a commitment letter or will be provided to the applicant;
- I. The Applicant should prepare a final budget of cleanup activities, work schedule, Health and Safety Plan and a Work Plan in accordance with the MA DEP Contingency Plan if recommended to do so by the MRPC and/or the MRPC's agent(s);
- J. The loan documents are prepared by the underwriting consultant (e.g., loan agreement, promissory note, mortgage agreement) and reviewed by the loan applicant prior to loan closing.

## Checklist

The following is a checklist of information needed from Applicants:

- A. Applicant Information a. Applicant Overview: name, location, principal owners/stockholders, type of business and products or services, date established; b. Financial Overview: cash flow projections and profit/(loss) statements from start-up enterprises; c. From ongoing businesses, cash flow projections and profit/(loss) statements, historical financial statements for the past three years, most recent quarter and copies of both personal and business IRS income tax returns for a period of no less than two years prior to the date of application; d. Management Overview: resumes of principals; and d. Credit References: financial institutions and other creditors.
- B. Site Related Conditions a. Environmental Site Assessments in accordance with American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standards; b. Status of the borrower as a potentially responsible party at the site; c. Environmental compliance history; d. Whether the Applicant is currently or ever has been subject to any penalties resulting from environmental non-compliance at the site; e. Whether the Applicant is a generator or transporter of contamination at the site; and f. Whether the Applicant falls under a statutory exemption from liability; or that the EPA could use its enforcement discretion and not pursue the party as a responsible party under CERCLA if the Applicant is currently the owner/operator of the site.
- C. Remediation Plan Remediation Plan Summary: Remediation plan including a technical description of work to be done and costs estimates.
- D. Redevelopment Plan a. Financing Project: a description of the cleanup project and the reuse plan; b. Business Plan: a description of the business goals, strategies and action plans; c. Financial Plan: pro-forma financial statements which demonstrates the economic viability of the project and identifies the sources of repayment for the loan; and, d. Any and all agreements (i.e. leases) between the loan applicant and any and all lessors of the subject property, if applicable.
- E. Community Benefits a. Employment and/or Housing Units Impact(s) anticipated to be generated from the cleanup and redevelopment of the site: Number of current and new jobs, wage levels and job training and/or Housing Units that would be created on the subject property; b. Investment Impact: Serves as an incentive for communities within the Montachusett Region; and, c. Any other community or regional benefits.

After much discussion changes in red font above were made to the policy.

B. Yocum indicated that she emailed edits to the Executive Director. Those edits should be made so the document is more professional. After the edits are made, the policy should be sent to the MRPC members.

G. Corbosiero moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the loan policy with the corrections above and that additional edits to the loan policy will be brought to the Commission for approval at an upcoming meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **6.4 FY19 Budget Revisions for Review and Approval and FY20 Budget Review**

G. Eaton explained the items below.

##### **FY19 Budget Revisions for Review and Approval**

No budget revisions were proposed.

##### **FY20 Budget Review**

Budget Exhibits A, B, B-1, C, C-1, D were distributed to the Commission.

##### **Filling the Gap During the Fiscal Year and Other Financial Information**

The projected revenue to the MRPC in FY20 is \$1,532,512, the total in projected expenses has been projected to be \$1,743,785 yielding a potential shortfall in FY20 of \$211,274; or 12.1% of the revenue needed for the upcoming fiscal year. The Executive Director has indicated in the past and still advocates that so long as the percentage of revenue that has been locked-up in contracts, awards and recurring revenue (i.e. entitlement grants) is at least 80% when the budget is adopted in June, then the other 20% has been usually very easy to obtain to fill the gap during the upcoming fiscal year.

While we have a 12.1% gap to fill, this could easily be filled by about 67%+/- of the projected revenue that the agency may earn this summer and throughout the year (see Exhibit D). Our projected indirect cost rate for FY20 is approximately 1.1476 or 114.76% (Exhibit C), down from the FY19 rate of 1.2273 or 122.73%.

##### **Included in the FY20 Budget**

In FY18 the MRPC had 18 employees on the payroll. At present we have 14, not including part time interns (of which there are three). In the past 11 years the MRPC's revenue has significantly increased every five years followed by downfalls in revenue leading the reduction in the total number of employees. The Executive Director wishes to avoid future large swings in up-and down-swings in revenue and staff. He is proposing, in the FY20 budget, that placeholders be included for two, part-time planners (one in Planning and Development and another in Transportation and that the MRPC forge partnerships with the University of Amherst (planning support), University of Amherst (workforce development/economic development), Fitchburg State University (economic development and technical support) and Mount Wachusett Community College (technical support) to tap into Graduate and Ph.D. level students through studios and internships in order to fill our short-term employment needs. Additional, short-term staff would be engaged only as needed throughout the fiscal year as the 12.1% gap in funding is filled. Should this organization realize a windfall in new projects, then the above "part-timers" would be hired and housed in the basement of this facility; in this case we would need to rent the room on the lower level – an offer provided to the MRPC approximately one year ago (for about \$5,000).

The labor pool is shrinking. Six months ago, the MRPC attempted to find a new Regional Planner for the Planning and Development Department. Only four persons submitted applications while in the past we

used to receive 25-50 jobs applications per job opening. This issue heightens the imperative that we seek out and forge new partnerships with universities to engage part-time students (that live in this region or nearby) in order to cultivate them into future employees for the MRPC.

The Executive Director wishes to inform the Commissioners and all current and future employees that we are going to work more diligently with a few less people than in the past. Instead of only having two grant writers on staff (for many years) we now have five that are bringing-in new revenue. It is imperative that the MRPC not only reward those employees that are performing above expectations, but also work within our budget to maintain the very talented pool of employees on the payroll. Mean tenure of an employee's time with the MRPC is 15 years while the median is about 16.5 years.

A number of our employees have exceeded their work expectations and have brought in and are also about to land new contracts with this agency. I've recommended that we reward these superior efforts of those employees that have working above and beyond the call; the additional dollars for working above-and-beyond the call have been noted in the table, below.

Revenue to the agency declined throughout FY18 and the workforce was reduced from 18 to 13. In addition, there were no salary increases for employees last year, therefore salary increases are being proposed for the beginning of this fiscal year.

#### **Proposed Annual Salary Increases for MRPC Staff effective July 1, 2019**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>From/To</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Glenn Eaton	Executive Director	Grade 9, Step 5 \$105,676 to Grade 9 Step 6 \$109,401	July 1, 2019
Brad Harris	Transportation Director	Grade 7, Step 10 \$90,578 to \$92,842 (2.5% increase)	July 1, 2019
Linda Parmenter	Administrative and HR Director	Grade 7, Step 9 \$89,252 to Grade 7, Step 10 \$91,483	November 4, 2019
George Kahale	Transit Director	Grade 7, Step 6 \$82,059 to Grade 7, Step 8 \$87,075 Two step increment	July 1, 2019
John Hume	Planning and Development	Grade 6, Step 9 \$74,888 to Grade 6, Step 10 \$77,528	July 1, 2019
Jason Stanton	GIS/IT Director	Grade 6, Step 9 \$74,888 to Grade 6, Step 10 \$77,528	July 1, 2019
Linda Quinlivan	Fiscal Manager	Grade 6, Step 4 \$66,190 to Grade 6, Step 6 \$70,236 Two step increment	September 16, 2019
Sherilyn Bean	Principal Planner	Grade 5, Step 4 \$55,159 to Grade 5, Step 6 \$58,531 Two step increment	July 1, 2019
Brian Doherty	Principal Planner	Grade 5, Step 2 \$52,501 to Grade 5, Step 4 \$55,710 Two step increment	July 1, 2019
Karen Chapman	Principal Planner	Grade 5, Step 6 \$57,951 to Grade 6, Step 5 \$68,523 Promotion to Senior Planner	July 1, 2019
George Snow	Principal Planner	Grade 6, Step 6 \$69,541 to Grade 6, Step 7 \$71,992	July 1, 2019
Kayla Kress	GIS Technician	Grade 1, Step 6 \$38,850 to Grade 2, Step 7 \$49,470 Promotion to GIS Analyst	July 1, 2019
Sean O'Donnell	Regional Planner	Grade 2, Step 4 \$45,483 to Grade 2, Step 6 \$48,263 Two step increment	December 31, 2019
Holly Ford	Executive Assistant	Grade 2, Step 7 \$48,980 to Grade 2, Step 8 \$50,706	November 4, 2019

D. Maki asked what was the amount of the OPEB liability.

L. Parmenter replied over \$1,000,000.

G. Eaton explained he plans on funding a trust for a portion of the liability in the near future.

A. Pease stated that there should be a performance evaluation of the Executive Director by the Board in the same way the Executive Director reviews his employees. An evaluation should be done every year before salary increase occurs.

G. Eaton agreed and indicated he would work with the new Chairman to schedule a meeting of the Executive Committee to review the performance of the Director, possibly before the July meeting.

G. Corbosiero moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission adopt the proposed FY20 budget with the following correction: increase of \$2,000 from (\$27,200 to \$29,200) to the Subscriptions and Periodicals line item. The Commission also approves the adoption of salary increases depicted in the table above. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **6.5 Quorum Requirement: Possible Action Needed**

G. Eaton stated that our Winchendon member has raised the issue of how the MRPC has been calculating the quorum requirement in accordance with the State enabling statute (MGL Ch. 40B, Sec. 4) and the MRPC's Bylaws. He has informed the Chairman and Executive Director that the two source materials are in conflict. Please find below the entirety of Section 4 from the Statute and, attached are the current Bylaws of the MRPC.

Section 4: District planning commissions; membership; employees; meetings

Section 4. In each planning district so established there shall be a district planning commission consisting of one member of the planning board of each city and town voting to join such district, elected annually by said planning board and certified in writing to the district planning commission. Said member may be replaced by a two-thirds vote of his planning board before the termination of his annual appointment. In the case of the planning board's failure to elect a delegate in any year the previously named delegate shall continue to serve until his successor is qualified, as long as he shall remain a member of his local planning board. There may be an alternate designee, who may or may not be a planning board member, who shall be a resident of the city or town he represents, appointed annually and certified in writing to the district planning commission by the mayor in a city, confirmed by the council, or in the case of a city with a plan E form of government, appointed annually by the city manager, or in a town by the selectmen or in towns with a manager form of government, by the town manager, who may attend meetings of the district planning commission and who shall assume the rights and duties of the planning board member in his absence. The alternate designee shall be named in writing to the district planning commission annually in order that he may perform the duties and exercise the powers authorized in this section. In a member town which has not established a planning board, the selectmen shall annually appoint a member of the district planning commission. Such district planning commission shall annually elect a chairman, a vice chairman, a treasurer, and a clerk from among its members and alternate designees, and may elect an assistant clerk, from among such members and alternate designees. The treasurer and assistant treasurer shall give the commission a bond, with a surety company authorized to transact business in the commonwealth as surety, for the faithful performance of their duties in such sums and upon such conditions as the commission may require. The said commission may employ experts and clerical and other assistants. All meetings of the commission shall be held at

the call of the chairman and at such other times as the commission may determine. A quorum of the commission shall consist of at least one fourth of the duly named members or alternate designees. Lack of a quorum shall not prevent the members at an officially called meeting from coming to order, making motions, discussing or passing a motion to continue said meeting to a later time. The commission shall establish rules of procedure for its activities and shall keep a record of its meetings, transactions, resolutions, findings and determinations, all of which shall be public records.

**Mass.** General Laws c. 40B, § 4. (Citation format follows advice provided by <https://lib.westfield.ma.edu/c.php?g=354010&p=2388435>.)

1. The 25% quorum matter
  - a. According to the Statute (MGL Ch. 40B, Sec. 4), "A quorum of the commission shall consist of at least one fourth of the duly named members or alternate designees." ... So 25%.
    - i. If we multiply  $22 * 25\%$  then we get a result of 5.5, so say 6 rounded-up.
    - ii. If we multiply  $23 \text{ (include Devens)} * 25\%$  then we get a result of 5.75, so say 6 rounded-up.
  - b. According to our senior staff member the quorum of seven (7) was instituted at the time that the organization was founded.
2. According to a portion of the statute, "A quorum of the commission shall consist of at least one fourth "of the duly named members or alternate designees." **Not 25% of the communities (which we have traditionally referred to as "members").**
  - a. The MRPC's current attendance book (see attached sheet) identifies that only 20 of our 22 or 23 communities have both "duly named members or alternate designees" been appointed. As Ayer and Leominster have not appointed either "members or alternate designees" our total number of available people (not communities) decreases to 21 or 20.
    - i. If we multiply  $21 * 25\%$  then we get a result of 5.25, so say 5 rounded-down.
    - ii. If we multiply  $20 \text{ (include Devens)} * 25\%$  then we get a result of 5.
  - b. According to the State's definition of a quorum combined with our current number of slots filled by "duly named members or alternate designees", our actual quorum requirement for FY19 has been five (5). This conflicts with our MRPC Bylaws which state seven (7).

Objectively, the Commissioners have at least three paths available to them. They are as follows:

1. Increase the quorum requirement beyond seven (7).
  - a. Instill more participation into local and regional planning by the communities.
2. Change the MRPC's Bylaws to eliminate the number seven (7).
  - a. State that the MRPC will comply with the State enabling statute at the beginning of each fiscal year by calculating the number of appointed members or alternates from each community to formulate the total number of people appointed annually to the MRPC. This number will be multiplied by 25% and the result will be reported to the Commissioners at each October's meeting. At this meeting the quorum requirement would be set for the next 12 months. In this way we would be in full compliance with the statute. However, we would require an annual vote to be taken (say by each September).
3. Do not change the current quorum requirement of seven (7).
  - a. Lowering the quorum requirement may reduce participation.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission will adopt option #2, above and will proceed with the appropriate changes to the quorum requirement in the Bylaws of the MRPC in accordance with the appropriate section of the MRPC's Bylaws which state:

*"Article VIII. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS ... 1. These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Commission by a two-thirds vote of those voting, a quorum being present, provided that a proposed amendment, and notice of its pendency, has been sent (mailed, emailed or faxed) to all delegates at least one (1) week prior to such meeting. If an amendment is proposed at a meeting, voting on such amendment may not take place until the next meeting."*

After much discussion it was decided that a vote would be taken on the above amendment to the bylaws at the next MRPC Meeting changing the quorum requirement from seven members to six members.

## **7. Status Reports**

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

#### **MRMapper & MOBILE APPS (GENERAL)**

We are working on updating a number of transportation-related layers as well as creating/updating WebApps related to these layers. It is anticipated that this project will be completed in June.

#### **COMMUNITY-RELATED**

Shirley Cemetery Mapping – We have received the database regarding plots and interments and are working with the Town to tweak the database for GIS conversion. The end results will be internal and public MRMapper applications for the two cemeteries. The MRMapper applications will allow users to search for interments and print maps showing plots. Additionally, the internal version will allow for editing/updates, as well as increased search functions, by the Town.

Royalston Assessor Mapping – This project is complete.

Lunenburg & Townsend Truck Exclusion Mapping – We have completed a draft map identifying proposed truck exclusions and alternative routes for these two communities. The map will be reviewed by the communities and additional mapping may be necessary based on feedback.

Ayer Marijuana Establishment Buffer Zones Mapping – We recently completed a working map for the Town depicting Marijuana Establishment Buffer Zones. The Town will use this map to determine where Marijuana Establishments may or may not be placed in Town. Additional work may be necessary based on the needs of the Town.

Shirley Assessor Mapping – This project is complete.

Fitchburg Smart Growth Overlay Mapping – This project is complete.

Lunenburg Trail Maps – We have been working on trail maps for six town-owned conservation/recreation lands. We produced a contour layer solely of the town that will reduce processing time. We sent maps to the town to review the possible contour interval that will be shown on the maps and are waiting to hear back from them. We are also waiting for bridge data from the town which may need to be digitized. We also provided GIS data to the state as requested by the town to facilitate the review of the town's trail-improvement grant application. The town utilized their eight hours of free GIS planning assistance so this project is on hold as of now but if the town is awarded the trail-improvement grant, we continue the project.

Lunenburg Walkability Maps – We are aiding the MRPC Transportation Department in map creation for a walkability study to be done for the town of Lunenburg. The town has approved the two study areas and MRPC Transportation staff have gone and collected sidewalk data using the study area maps. We then digitized the data and made sidewalk inventory maps. We also created a map showing town-owned parcels in the Center. This map will be used internally to help identify possible parking areas in Lunenburg Center. This project is complete up to this point but additional work will be necessary based on the needs of our Transportation Department. This project is expected to be completed by late summer.

Sterling Open Space – We are currently working on updates to the maps for the Sterling Open Space Plan update. This project is expected to be completed in June.

Ayer Assessor Mapping – We are working on updating the parcel data and maps for the Town of Ayer. Once complete the Town's MRMapper sites will be updated accordingly. This project is expected to be completed in early/mid-June.

Clinton Assessor Mapping – We are working on updating the parcel data and maps for the Town of Clinton. Once complete the Town's MRMapper sites will be updated accordingly. This project is expected to be completed in early/mid-June.

Townsend's Mikko and John Aho Nature Walk and Park Mapping – We are working on making a trail map of the Townsend Conservation Land Trust's Mikko and John Aho Nature Walk and Park. We have to collect GPS data of the trail, as well as GPS data of points of interest within the Park. We will then have to process the data. We have created a 'base map' for the park that includes roadways, open space parcels, contour lines, and an inset of the town so that we will simply need to add the data when it's finalized and the map will be very close to being completed. This project is expected to be completed by the end of June.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING**

2020 Census Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP) – We finalized the proposed census boundary changes for our Worcester county municipalities and sent them to the CMRPC who will send them to the US Census Bureau. MAPC received our proposed changes for our Middlesex county municipalities and transcribed them to a 'master file'. They also proposed their own changes to the census boundaries in Ayer, Groton, and Shirley. We are currently sending them out to those three towns to review. We are planning on hearing back from the towns and sending MAPC the feedback by the end of May. Once we give our feedback of their transcribed data, they will go ahead and send the data to the US Census Bureau. Our proposed changes will be reviewed by the Census Bureau in July 2019 and they will send out their finalized data for verification in January 2020 at which point we will have to approve their finalized data or give justification for not approving it.

## **TRANSPORTATION-RELATED**

Trail Guide Update – The design of the brochure has been finalized and we ran it by the trail group for their approval. There were some minor edits that had to be made regarding the points of interest but it has since been finalized. Once the Transportation staff obtain quotes for printing, the brochure will be sent out to print and the project will be done. We will assist with any technical questions as they arise. This project is expected to be completed by the end of Summer 2019 but our portion of the project has been completed.

Working Towards the Future 2020 Comment Apps – We have created two different apps for use in obtaining public input regarding the Regional Transportation Plan Update. One app allows users to view and provide comment on the current Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) projects. The other allows users to view a variety of transportation-related data sets and provide feedback regarding these data sets. The comment period for these apps will be open for quite some time so monitoring will continue throughout the process.

Pavement Management Updates – We have completed data and map updates for the pavement management program. We will be updating MRMapper ASAP.

#### **TRANSIT-RELATED**

MART Non-Rider Opinion Report – We have written the text of the report and sent it to our Transit department and MART for review. We are waiting for their approval before we finish formatting the appendices. This project is expected to be completed by June.

MART Route Calculations – We are currently working on recalculating the route mileage for the bus routes that have been updated/added since we last did route mileage. We have updated the route mileage for routes 9 and 11 in Fitchburg/Leominster, routes 1 and 2 in Gardner, all Devens routes, all Littleton/Westford routes, and all Athol/Orange routes. We worked through as much of the route calculations for the Boston Shuttle as we could but we need information regarding the closed-door service in order to complete the route calculations. We updated a map of the Boston shuttle so that officials at MART can mark which parts of the route are closed-door. Once that is returned to us, we can complete the route calculations for the Boston shuttle. Once we get a finalized Worcester shuttle schedule, we will recalculate the route mileage for all the stops along that route. This project is complete as of now but we will continue when we receive more information.

MART System Map – As requested by Transit staff, we updated the region-wide transit system map with the commuter rail to show the most recent bus route data. This project is complete.

## **7.2 Planning and Development**

### **FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)**

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) applied for three FY20 Planning Assistance grants to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Affairs (EEA) to fund Master Plan Chapters for the Towns of Ashburnham, Hubbardston, and Sterling. Applications were due May 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA), MONTACHUSETT REGION BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

MRPC staff closing out this grant. MRPC applied to EPA for additional Brownfields Environmental Site Assessment funding back in January 2019 and EPA expects to announce the grant awards within the next few weeks.

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

MRPC staff continue working on the following projects.

1. Ashburnham: Housing Production Plan.
2. Clinton: Assist the Town of Clinton with designation as a Green Community.
3. Harvard: Permitting Guidebook.
4. Townsend: Assist to provide the municipality with regional data to update the Town's Housing Production Plan and Master Plan.
5. Athol: Urban Renewal Planning Assistance.
6. Hubbardston: Historical and Cultural Resources Master Plan Chapter.
7. Sterling: Housing Production Plan update.
8. Groton: Housing Production Plan.

9. Ashby, Townsend, and Pepperell: Regional Dispatch Feasibility Study.
10. Lunenburg: ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan - limited partial completion.
11. Ayer: Housing Production Plan
12. Lancaster: Zoning for Alcohol
13. Shirley: Shared Services Feasibility: Tree Warden & Planner
14. Winchendon: Master Plan coordination & Implementation Chapter

### **MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES (DOER)**

MRPC continues to use grant funds from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) to assist the Towns of Hubbardston, and Templeton to become Green Communities and to assist with administration of existing Green Communities for Ashby, Athol, Harvard, Fitchburg, Lunenburg, Shirley, Townsend and Westminster. MRPC staff also applied, prior to the May 25<sup>th</sup> deadline, to the DOER's Regional Energy Planning Assistance (REPA) Grant Program to either assist interested communities with Green Community Designation or assist existing Green Communities with competitive grant application preparation, Annual Report Preparation, and municipal energy data analysis and evaluation.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAMMING**

#### **FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2017 (FFY17) SHIRLEY CDBG PROGRAM**

##### General Program Administration

A three-month extension for the Housing Rehabilitation (HR) and Home Heating Fuel Assistance (HHFA) programs will be filed with the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development in June 2019. The requisite public hearing will be held on June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

##### Housing Rehabilitation (HR) Program

The status of this program is as follows:

- 21 applications for HR assistance have been received
- 10 applications have been approved
- Seven applications are incomplete
- Two clients withdrew their applications
- Two applications were denied as the household income exceeded the CDBG National Objective of providing a benefit to low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons
- Of the 10 approved applications, one is in the construction phase, two are pending approval from the Town of Shirley and DHCD and seven have been completed

##### Home Heating Fuel Assistance (HHFA) Program

The status of this program is as follows:

- 29 applications for HHFA have been received
- 24 have been approved
- Four are pending approval
- One application was denied as the household heats with natural gas (not a qualifying heat source)

- 11 homes have received a portion of their benefit and another 12 have exhausted their benefit.

#### **DEVELOPMENT OF FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020 (FFY20) SHIRLEY CDBG PROPOSAL**

A second public hearing will be held on the evening of June 3<sup>rd</sup> concerning planning for the FY20 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) proposal that is presumed to be due in March 2020.

#### **MONTACHUSETT ENTERPRISE CENTER, INC.**

MEC's Director is in the process of obtaining final quotes for renovations of 30 Powers Mill Road, Phillipston. Contracts should be executed by June. The Director intends to see that renovations will be completed and the house placed on the market for sale by this summer.

### **7.3 Transit**

#### **AYER PARKING FACILITY**

During the past month MRPC staff continues to assist MART and the Town of Ayer; and working with the Engineer (Weston & Sampson) to move forward the construction of the Ayer Commuter Rail parking facility at the Rail Trail parking lot location.

MART signed a contract with Hutter Construction to construct this Parking Facility; the construction of the project started on April 29, 2019 and will be completed by December, 2019; a Groundbreaking Ceremony was held on Monday May 20, 2019 at the Construction Site and was attended by the Elected Officials; in attendance were Senator James Eldridge, Representative Jennifer Benson, Representative Sheila Harrington, Representative Stephan Hay, Ayer Board of Selectmen, Fitchburg Mayor Stephen DiNatale, Federal Transit Administration Acting Administrator Peter Butler, MassDOT Rail & Transit Deputy Administrator Tom Schiavone, Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce and Devens Enterprise Commission.



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

During the past month MRPC Staff continues working on updating and monitoring the performance of the bus route and schedule for the new proposed service of the Athol-Orange Shuttle and providing MART with recommendations.

## **7.4 Transportation**

### **MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Staff will present to the MPO a draft of the 2020 RTP at the June 19<sup>th</sup> MPO meeting. At that time, the MPO will consider to release the full draft 2020 RTP for a 21-day public comment period. The comment period will likely begin around June 24<sup>th</sup> and run until July 15<sup>th</sup> just before the July 17<sup>th</sup> MPO meeting when endorsement will be considered. Progress on the Montachusett Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update can be seen on our RTP website: [www.mrpc.org/montachusett\\_2020\\_rtp](http://www.mrpc.org/montachusett_2020_rtp).

### **FFY 2020-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)**

At the MPO meeting on May 15, 2019, the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) voted to endorse the FFY 2020-2024 TIP. Full copies of the TIP as well as a Summary copy of just the TIP projects under Highway and Transit are available for download from the MRPC website.

#### **7.4.1 Endorsement of the FFY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

##### **FFY 2020 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)**

At the MPO meeting on May 15, 2019, the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) voted to release a Draft of the FFY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for a 21-day public review and comment period. The comment period began on Tuesday May 28<sup>th</sup> and will close on Monday June 17<sup>th</sup>. The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) will review the draft TIP as well as any comments received at its June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. After the close of the comment period, the MPO will meet on Wednesday June 19<sup>th</sup> to review and address any and all comments received. The MPO will then likely vote to endorse the FFY 2020 UPWP at that meeting. After a review of comments received to date, it is requested that the MRPC authorize its Chairman and the MPO to endorse the FFY 2020 UPWP at the next scheduled MPO meeting.

L. Shifrin moved that the MRPC has reviewed the FFY 2020 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 2020 UPWP at an MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday June 19, 2019 at 1:00 PM at the MRPC offices. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously..

##### **BAYSTATE ROADS MAPIT WORKSHOP AT MRPC ON JUNE 18, 2019**

Baystate Roads will present a free workshop here at the MRPC Offices on Tuesday June 18, 2019. This three-hour workshop serves to both introduce and acquaint participants with the Massachusetts Project Intake Tool (MaPIT). MaPIT is a web-based application that streamlines the project initiation procedure and is the primary interface for all MassDOT Highway Division projects. This workshop will include instructor-led step-by-step software training and demonstrations. Features and benefits of MaPIT include:

Automatic screening against all relevant GIS layers:

- Existing facility information
- Condition of assets
- Mobility & Bike/Ped
- Safety
- Economic

- Social equity
- Environmental

- Different workflows for various project types, including TIP-funded roadway projects and Safe Routes to School
- Maps your project location for DOT and public viewing
- Automatic transfer of information to MassDOT
- Saves entry time for forms and applications, allowing you to reference geoprocessing
- Paperless and easy to track where you are in the approval process. Once approved, your project is assigned a number and your information is automatically transferred to the MassDOT Project Info Software System
- Expedites project initiation, environmental permitting, scoring, and project delivery

Interested individuals can sign up at the Baystate Roads website: [baystateroads.org](http://baystateroads.org)

**Next MJTC Meeting – June 12, 2019 at 6:30 PM at MRPC Offices**

**Next MPO Meeting – June 19, 2019 at 1:00 PM at MRPC Offices**

## 8. New Business

It was decided to tentatively reschedule the July MRPC Meeting to July 11, 2019.

## 9. Adjournment

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

Meeting Attendance					
Name	M/A	Representing	Appointment Date	PRESENT	ABSENT
Meissner, Rosemarie	A	Ashburnham	3.2019		
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011	X	
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001	X	
Stacy, Wayne	A	Ashby	7.2005		X
Truehart, Duane	M	Athol	7.2016		X
Rebecca Bialecki	A	Athol	7.2017		X
Vacant	M	Ayer			X
Vacant	A	Ayer			X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011		X
Vacant	A	Clinton			X
Lowitt, Peter	N/V	DREZ	7.2001		X
Caron, Paula	M	Fitchburg	7.2002		X

Vacant	A	Fitchburg			X
Gross, Allen	M	Gardner	2.2005		X
Cruz, Maribel	A	Gardner	8.2017		X
Burke, Russ	M	Groton	7.2016	X	
Vacant	A	Groton			X
Donahue, Stacia	M	Harvard	7.2018		X
Vacant	A	Harvard			X
Vacant	M	Hubbardston	7.2016		X
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston			X
Christopher, Thomas	A	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Williston, Russell	M	Lancaster	11.2018	X	
Vacant	M	Leominster			X
Vacant	A	Leominster			X
Cole, Tanner	M	Lunenburg	7.2018		
Adams, Kathryn	A	Lunenburg	7.2018		X
Vacant	M	Petersham			X
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Vacant	M	Phillipston			X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.201	X	
Natrowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015		X
Barclay, James	A	Royalston	7.2017		X
Widing, Sarah	A	Shirley	7.2015		X
Yocum, Barbara	M	Shirley	8.2017	X	
Vacant	M	Sterling			X
Maki, Dick	A	Sterling	7.2014	X	X
Rich, Dennis	M	Templeton	7.2017		X
Terenzini, Carter	A	Templeton	9.2016		X
Shifrin, Laura	M	Townsend	7.2018	X	
King, Cindy	A	Townsend	7.2016		X
Weist, Linda	M	Westminster	7.2017		X

Vacant	A	Westminster			<b>X</b>
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	<i>7.2011</i>	<b>X</b>	
Barbaro, Michael	A	Winchendon	<i>3.2019</i>		<b>X</b>

**STAFF PRESENT:** Glenn Eaton, Linda Parmenter, Linda Quinlivan, Brad Harris, Sean O'Donnell, Jason Stanton, John Hume

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Patty Page, Sterling; Theresa Page, Sterling; Mike Smith, Westminster

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

June 6 MRPC Handout  
May 2, 2019 Minutes  
FY2020 Budget  
2019 CEDS draft  
Powerpoint Presentation on CEDS Update