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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
 January 2, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
 Virtual Meeting

Attending Officers	Attending Sub-Regional Delegates
Chairperson: Howard N. Drobner, Boylston*	Northeast: Julianne Hirsh, Northborough*
Vice Chair: Robert Hassinger, Grafton*	Southeast: Walter Baker, Sutton*
Asst. Treasurer: Andrew Coles, Auburn*	Southwest: William Trifone, Dudley*
Asst. Clerk, Barur Rajeshkumar, West Boylston*	West: Jared Grigg, Spencer*
	Central City: David Quiroa, Worcester*
	North: Otto Lies, Holden*
Staff:	Not In Attendance:
Janet A. Pierce, Executive Director *	Clerk: Timothy H. Wheeler, Berlin*
Trish Settles, Deputy Director, RCCP*	Treasurer: Daniel Schur, Westborough*
Sujatha Krishnan, Deputy Director, Transportation*	
Dara Griswold, Finance Manager*	
Stephanie Toupin, Human Resources*	
Anthony Senesi, Communications*	
Sherrie Haber, Executive Assistant*	*indicates remote participation

1. Call to Order:

Chairperson Drobner called the Executive Committee meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. with a roll call to establish a quorum.

2. Approval of Minutes:

Motion: to accept the Executive Committee Meeting Minutes from December 5, 2024.

Moved by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Ms. Hirsh. Roll Call Vote. **Motion Unanimously Approved.** Mr. Grigg, Mr. Quiroa & Mr. Lies Abstained.

3. Public Comment:

None.

4. Motion: to recommend the Fiscal Year 2026 Community Assessment Schedule at the January 9, 2025 Quarterly Commission Meeting. Moved by Mr. Grigg, seconded by Mr. Hassinger.

Ms. Pierce proposed a 2.5% increase which is \$4770.85, bringing the total assessments to \$195,644.90.

Mr. Grigg asked if we are required to charge per capita. Ms. Pierce responded that it is required by law.

5. Executive Director's Report:

I. Staffing and Administration (Janet Pierce, Executive Director)

- Ms. Pierce gave a brief staffing update. There have been 4 new hires, but also some departures.
 - a. New hires: Sandy Amoahohene, Transportation, Taru, RCCP, Ryan Hurley, Transportation, Tina Deater, RCCP
 - b. Departing Staff: Sarah Plutnicki, RCCP, Jasifa Chowdhury, RCCP, Elena Ion, RCCP, Victoria Chavez, RCCP
- Ms. Pierce reported on grants and contracts
 - a. MAPC, Federal FY23 Central Region Homeland Security Staffing – have been waiting on this.
 - b. Community Compact Efficiency and Regionalization Grants for Wachusett Regional School District and Southbridge / Charlton shared Animal Control
 - c. Hubbardston ADA Plan
 - d. DLTA for calendar year 2025 – funding comes in one lump sum
 - e. DLTAA – will be submitting applications on behalf of communities
 - f. Hardwick Complete Streets grant
 - g. Human Resources study for Rutland
 - h. CDBG Grant for Athol, North Brookfield & Warren
- In response to Mr. Hassinger's question regarding where the departing employees are going, Ms. Pierce responded that most are relocating or leaving for personal reasons. Ms. Pierce added that we need to look at this as an opportunity. We can look to see if we need to rehire the exact position or if changes need to be made.

II. Transportation (Sujatha Krishnan, Deputy Director)

- Happy to report that Transportation will have all the cubicles filled. Thank you to Ms. Toupin for her efforts.
- Opportunities
 - Application for Climate Resiliency Grant. Working with MassDOT. Due at the end of February.
 - Attended the MBTA working group with Ms. Pierce. They are taking a holistic perspective to the commuter rail. This could benefit our region from both the Springfield & Cambridge sides.
 - Met with WRTA administration

- Working on RFP's for Vernon Street (draft), Safe Streets for all (waiting on State) and Housing plan RFP is in process
- Transit infrastructure – Lincoln St. and Auburn (Rt. 12)
- Oxford asked for a meeting on Transportation infrastructure but they were redirected to Economic Development.
- Wrapping up first quarter. Kicking off the bicycle plan. Interns will start traffic counting when there is no snow.

III. Regional Collaboration and Community Planning (Trish Settles, Deputy Director RCCP)

- Wrapping up 25 DLTA projects and opening up the next round
- Wrapping up Oxford, Warren and Holland Hazard Mitigation Plans
- Spencer Conservation Commission has a new agent
- Dudley and Spencer are looking for a shared Town Planner
- As Ms. Ion leaves, they are working to complete the Grafton and Spencer Master Plans.
- We will be following up on Wachusett Regional School District Phase 1
- EEA Planning Assistance Grants – waiting on decisions.
- Potential projects:
 - East Brookfield: Open Space, ADA & CDBG
 - Grafton: CDBG – not shovel ready
 - Sutton: Housing Production Plan
 - Sturbridge: Housing Production Plan
 - Northbridge: Master Plan
- Quarterly meeting topic will be Outdoor Recreation
- Regional Healthy Aging will be run again in a month
- Legislative Breakfast is coming up
- RFP's – looking for proposals that are advantageous to the region.
- In response to Mr. Dobner's question regarding DLTA, Ms. Settles said that it is based on the calendar year, not the fiscal year.
- In response to Mr. Dobner's question regarding when we can expect the state to deposit the money, Ms. Settles said that the contract is already signed. Ms. Pierce added that we should have it by the end of the month. Ms. Settles noted that Physical Development will meet on the 16th to look at requests.

IV. Human Resources (Stephanie Toupin)

- Ms. Toupin discussed that four employees are leaving, most due to relocation. In her discussions with them they have reflected about their time at CMRPC in a

positive manner and would be interested in coming back if their situation were to change. Mr. Dobner added that these are “Life Events”.

- Mr. Dobner asked for an update on new laws on salary postings. Ms. Toupin stated that we are posting salary ranges and being very transparent and the law is not yet going into effect.
 - Ms. Pierced added that there is also a difference between showing the hiring range and the whole salary scale.
 - Mr. Hassinger suggested that we list the range or scale, but also state what you’re expecting to hire at to narrow down applicants.
 - Mr. Grigg suggested that we add criteria to quantify the top of the scale. Ms. Pierce said that we’ve tried that but it is still viewed differently by different people. We do have criteria that is used but not published.
 - Mr. Grigg suggested that we move to a more structured pay scale with standardized steps and grades. Ms. Pierce said that we have done that in the past. Ms. Toupin said that it limits performance-based increases. Ms. Pierce doesn’t want to simply promote staff to increase their pay.

6. Approval of Warrant for Payment of Bills and Review of Financial Statements:

Ms. Griswold presented Warrant 25-06 for the month of December totaling \$115,103.87. She stated that \$93,396.75 is pass-throughs and \$21,707.12 is CMRPC expenditures.

Motion: to approve Warrant 25-06 for the month of December in the amount of \$115,103.87. Moved by Mr. Grigg, Seconded by Mr. Quiroa. Roll Call Vote. **Motion Unanimously Approved.**

7. Committee and Sub-Regional Briefings:

- a. Transportation** – Mr. Hassinger stated that there is no report.
- b. Legislative Affairs** – Mr. Quiroa stated that the Legislative Breakfast will be held on January 17th at 10:30am at the Charlton Library. The topic will be Advancing Traffic & Pedestrian Safety. Please RSVP.
- c. Physical Development Committee-** Ms. Settles stated that there will be a virtual meeting on January 16th. DLTA applications are due by Thursday at 5pm.
- d. Southern Worcester County Economic Development Organization** – Ms. Pierce stated that there is no report.
- e. Sub-regions**– Mr. Drobner asked if anyone had a report
 - Ms. Hirsh stated Kerrie Salwa did a great analysis for Northborough on Economic development. It is a great start for getting feedback. Mr. Dobner asked if it was presented in an open meeting. Ms. Hirsh responded that it was presented at a selectboard meeting, and it was well attended by the public. Ms.

Pierce gave kudos to the Northborough boards and staff for a well-attended, well-run meeting.

- Mr. Rajeshkumar stated that the town of West Boylston has hired James Ryan as Town Administrator, and he will start in mid-January.
- Mr. Quiroa stated that the Vision Zero report will be coming out soon. He also stated that the 25mph speed limit in Worcester has been announced.
- Mr. Lies stated that Main Street in Holden is the same.
- Mr. Grigg stated that Rt. 20 is looking good with construction coming to an end.
- Mr. Baker & Mr. Trifone have nothing to report.

8. New Business:

- No new business.

9. Adjournment:

- Having completed all business, Chair Drobner adjourned the meeting at 7:58pm.

Documents:

December 2024 Warrant

Draft Minutes December 5, 2024

Executive Director Report

Staffing Report

FY26 Community Assessment Schedule

Respectfully submitted by Sherrie Haber, CMRPC.