1 Mercantile Street – Suite 520
Worcester, MA 01608
P: 508.756.7717 F: 508.792.6818
www.cmrpc.org

CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
September 25, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting

Attending Officers	**Attending Sub-Regional Delegates**
Chairperson: Daniel Schur, Westborough	North: Otto Lies, Holden
Vice Chair: Robert Hassinger, Grafton	Southwest: William Trifone, Dudley
Treasurer: Andrew Coles, Auburn	Central City: David Quiroa, Worcester
Asst. Treasurer: Howard N. Drobner, Boylston	Northeast: Julianne Hirsh, Northborough
	West: Jared Grigg, Spencer
Staff:	**Not In Attendance:**
Janet A. Pierce, Executive Director	Southeast: Mary Bulso, Blackstone
Sujatha Krishnan, Dep. Dir., Transportation	Clerk: Timothy H. Wheeler, Berlin
Stephanie Toupin, Dep. Dir., Administration	Asst. Clerk, Barur Rajeshkumar, West Boylston
Dara Griswold, Finance Manager	
Sherrie Haber, Executive Assistant	

Call to Order:

Chairperson Schur called the September 25, 2025, Executive Committee meeting to order at 7:00p.m. with a roll call to establish a quorum.

Approval of Minutes-

Motion: to accept the minutes of the August 28, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting. Made by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Ms. Hirsh. Roll Call vote. **Motion Unanimously Approved.**

Public Comment:

None.

Executive Director's Report:

- **Staffing and Administration (Janet Pierce)**
    - It was great to have a well attended open house. Thanks to Sherrie and Anthony for the organization of the event.
    - Jane Wyrick (Director of Zoning and Land Use) had planned to move and submitted her resignation but we are glad to report she rescinded the letter and will remain with CMRPC.

- In person versus virtual meetings was part of the Delegate Survey. Keep that in mind when looking at that agenda item.
  - The retirement board has the same status. It has passed out of committee and going to Ways & Means for both the House and Senate.
  - The Treasurer bills have not moved and that is favorable for CMRPC.
- **Transportation (Sujatha Krishnan)**
  - Yahiara presented at the AMPO National Conference
  - Held the MPO North Subregion vote for membership. Two towns attended – West Boylston and Rutland. Kristina Pedone from West Boylston will be the member and Leah Whiteman from Rutland will be the alternate.
  - Ms. Krishnan has someone interested in the alternate member for the Southwest alternate spot. There has been no interest in the West alternate spot.
  - Tuesday, September 30 is the end of the federal fiscal year and Transportation is wrapping up billing, progress reports and signing new contracts.
  - Ms. Pierce asked about the LEAP Program. Ms. Krishnan explained that it is part of the MassDOT Transportation planning to help communities with federal grants. It focuses more on helping communities with technical assistance. They are working to fill in the gaps where CMRPC cannot help. The Federal Funds Infrastructure Office program is also pivoting. Ms. Krishnan hopes that it is well coordinated at the state level.
  - In response to Mr. Grigg's question, Ms. Krishnan said that the MPO alternate cannot be from the same town as the member.
  - Mr. Drobner asked about local bridges closing that do not have funding. Ms. Krishnan said that it was just released that MassDOT is providing $2 million for local bridges. CMRPC has a list of closed bridges and will look at taking advantage of the program.
- **Regional Collaboration and Community Planning (Janet Pierce)**
  - Two masterplans were recently approved and adopted for Leicester and Spencer. They were two very engaged groups.
  - CMRPC received Brownfields grant and 604B grant
  - Request for current indirect rate for DLTA this year. This is ahead of the normal schedule.

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

Ms. Griswold presented Warrant 26-03 for the payment of bills as required by Section 7, Chapter 40B, for the month of September totaling $157,575.94.

- **Motion:** to approve Warrant 26-03 for the month of September in the amount of $157,575.94. Made by Mr. Trifone, seconded by Mr. Lies.

- Mr. Drobner asked about the split in the amount for MARPA dues versus advocacy for the year. Ms. Pierce said that it is about 50/50 for each. The dues is broken out evenly among the 13 RPA's.
- Mr. Hassinger asked if the J. Anthony's item was the total cost for the quarterly meeting and added it was a good price. Ms. Griswold replied that there was an additional $250 deposit and it was for a guaranteed 70 people
- Mr. Hassinger asked about the Interpreter item. Ms. Griswold stated that it was for translation for the 290/Vernon St. project to have in person translation in 3 languages for the meeting. Ms. Krishnan added that it will be charged to the grant and she believes the three languages are Spanish, Polish & Vienamese. Mr. Grigg asked if it was used during the meeting and Ms. Krishnan stated that it is for an upcoming meeting. The languages were identified by block group. The top three were chosen.
- Roll call vote. **Motion approved unanimously**.

Formation of a Bylaw Review Committee

- **Motion:** To form an Ad Hoc Bylaw Review Committee, to be composed of five members, appointed by the Executive Committee Chair. This Committee is to complete its review and submit its recommendations for bylaw amendments to the full Commission within nine months of its formation, and in no event later than the end of Fiscal Year 2026. Made by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Mr. Lies.
    - Chair Schur stated that the main point is to update the bylaws and make sure they are in compliance with State law and OML. The staff is currently going through them. Hopefully this project will be done in January, but no later than June.
    - Mr. Coles suggested that Chair Schur consider adding delegates and alternates that are not on the Executive Committee
    - Mr. Hassinger asked how much of this project is staff facilitated. Chair Schur said that staff will make sure it is in compliance with the law. Ms. Pierce added that staff will make recommendations
    - Mr. Cole asked if there will be legal review and Ms. Pierce answered yes.
    - Mr. Hassinger suggested that it be made of five Executive Committee members because they have experience and knowledge of why things are done the way they are.
    - Chair Schur said that he will try to add members outside the Executive Committee but would not want to be limited in case there is not interest.
    - Mr. Coles, Mr. Hassinger, Mr. Trifone and Mr. Grigg volunteered to be part of the committee.
    - Ms. Haber clarified that amendments to the bylaws require a 2/3 vote of those present and voting at a duly held Commission meeting.

  - Ms. Hirsh asked if staff has looked at other RPA bylaws. Ms. Haber stated that they are being collected.
  - Mr. Hassinger would like to ensure CMRPC is complying with meeting posting.
- Roll call vote. **Motion approved unanimously**.

Virtual or In Person Quarterly Meetings Discussion

- Ms. Haber presented the Delegate survey results showing 12 in favor of in person, 17 in favor of virtual and 4 chose either. It was noted that the results may be skewed because 15 responses were collected at an in person meeting.
- Mr. Hassinger asked if hybrid meetings are an option. Mr. Drobner replied that the technology logistics make that very difficult.
- Mr. Trifone stated that virtual meetings are needed in inclement weather.
- Ms. Hirsh suggested doing half in person and half online
- Mr. Grigg likes in person meetings
- Ms. Hirsh added that many people will not come in person.
- Mr. Hassinger said that it is getting harder for him to attend in person
- Mr. Drobner mentioned that in the winter it is darker earlier and can have poor driving conditions
- Ms. Pierce stated that In person meetings involve finding venues and having funding available. She clarified that when discussing winter meetings that meant November and January.
- Mr. Hassinger stated that during Covid it was left up to the Executive Director and it was not a vote of the committee. Management should not be nailed down to be required to have specific meetings specific ways
- Ms. Pierce stated that it is a challenge to find venues in Worcester or the immediate surrounding towns with adequate and free parking.
- Mr. Hassinger suggested a motion that it be left to the discretion of the Executive Director. Chair Schur determined that a motion was not necessary and that it is current practice so it should continue.

Committee and Sub-Regional Briefings:

- **Transportation –** did not meet
- **Legislative Affairs –** Mr. Trifone stated they are having trouble deciding on topics for a forum in December. They meet again on the 30th. Mr. Grigg said they are considering water & sewer or crumbling foundations. Ms. Hirsh suggested looking into healthcare insurance costs large increases that affect the towns. Mr. Trifone is not familiar with a bill on the subject. Chair Schur suggested that it is not in the purview of the commission. Ms. Pierce suggested looking to the MMA forums for this topic.
- **Physical Development Committee-** did not meet.

- **Personnel –** Mr. Drobner stated that the committee is working on the handbook and are looking to get together soon. Ms. Toupin added that she will send a poll for October dates. Mr. Drobner said that he is hoping to have it ready before the October Executive Committee meeting.
- **SWCEDO –** Ms. Pierce stated that they met. They heard about the St. Gobain property and they will be looking for additional federal funding.
- **Sub-regional–** Chairperson Schur asked if there were any updates
  - Mr. Trifone stated that the Route 20 construction in Oxford and Charlton is completed. Mr. Grigg asked if they are implementing the rotary and removing the barriers. Ms. Pierce said that it will open on September 30th.
  - Mr. Hassinger stated that the State work on 140 is about done.
  - Mr. Grigg stated that Spencer, along with Auburn, Sturbridge and Charlton have joined the Rutland Regional Dispatch Center
  - Mr. Lies stated that in Holden a major intersection has been replaced by a rotary near the school. It has caused quarter mile traffic backups in all directions and requires two police officers to direct traffic.

New Business:

- Ms. Pierce stated that a contract and deposit have been given to Pleasant Valley Country Club for the annual meeting in June 2026. They will have golf carts available to drive attendees with mobility issues to the entrance from the parking lot.
- Mr. Schur stated that he will be filling open committee positions within the next two weeks based on survey interest.

Adjournment: Having completed all business Chairperson Schur adjourned the meeting at 8:19pm**.**

Respectfully submitted by Sherrie Haber, CMRPC.

Documents:
Minutes of August 28, 2025
Warrants 26-03
Bylaw Review Committee Recommendation
Delegate / Alternate Survey Results