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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

December 18, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Virtual Meeting

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

Call to Order:

In the absence of Chair Schur, Vice Chair Hassinger called the December 18, 2025, Executive Committee meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with a roll call to establish a quorum.

Approval of Minutes-

Motion: to accept the minutes of the November 20, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting. Made by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Trifone. Roll Call vote. **Motion Unanimously Approved.**

Public Comment:

None.

Executive Director's Report:

- **Administration (Janet Pierce)**
 - Ms. Pierce stated that Bill Grant passed away. She will forward information regarding services when she hears.
 - The Physical Development committee had a 2 hour meeting with representatives from all proposed DLTA projects. Tim did a great job keeping things on track. Since the meeting she has received rave reviews and people are very appreciative of the funds.

- Finance department is sending financials to Roland for transfer to a new auditing firm. They will be sent Friday morning. Thanks to Dara and Stephanie for their work. The unaudited direct rate is 83.88%, down slightly from last year.
- Staff holiday events included lunch at American Flatbread with bowling, tour of Salisbury Mansion and Tower Hill lights. Thanks to Sherrie for working on planning.
- Contract with the WRTA – CMRPC has a unique relationship with WRTA. They have a new admin with a strong planning background. CMRPC is doing less planning with them. The last contract runs 6 months from July to December. They would like the next contract to be pay as you go with smaller projects. The details are still being worked out. They are a great partner. Ms. Pierce is seeing this as an opportunity to serve our communities and expand transportation
- Mr. Hassinger asked for questions or discussion.
 - Ms. Hirsch stated that Blackstone has no transportation. Ms. Pierce added that they are not a member of WRTA. Ms. Krishnan stated that senior centers are a good place to start and that an assessment of needs for transit service can be done through DLTA.

Recommend the FY27 Assessment Schedule

- Ms. Griswold presented the assessment schedule.
- **Motion:** to recommend the FY27 Assessment Schedule to the full Commission which is a 2.5% increase over FY26. Made by Mr. Trifone, seconded by Mr. Wheeler. Roll call vote. **Motion approved unanimously.**

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

Ms. Griswold presented Warrant 26-06 for the payment of bills as required by Section 7, Chapter 40B, for the month of December, totaling \$132,691.81.

- **Motion:** to approve Warrant 26-0r for the month of December in the amount of \$132,691.81. Made by Ms. Bulso, seconded by Mr. Wheeler
- Mr. Wheeler asked what software we get from the University of Florida. Ms. Griswold stated that it is Highway capacity software.
- Roll call vote. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Executive Director's Report (cont.)

- **Transportation (Sujatha Krishnan)**
 - Ms. Bulso mentioned that RI Regional Transit goes to Blackstone to take people to Providence. There is a lot of outreach with seniors and veterans but a bus with stops along 146 would be helpful. Thanks to the Physical Development committee for DLTA for the study.

- Ms. Krishnan stated that the WRTA contract will be a la carte. This allows movement into the public health realm and the transit planner has contacts with Councils on Aging to strengthen public health and transportation.
- MassDOT released its version of Community One Stop. This provides a combined timeline for grant opportunities. The limit for culverts was \$500,000 and for Complete Streets was \$400,000. The cap is now \$1 million for each. Transportation has reached out to communities that may need help with grant applications. The deadline is January 9th.
- Zack Blais, environmental planner, presented at the MassGIS conference.
- MPO meeting gave updates on Safe Street and Vernon Connected.
- Housing study was a pleasant surprise. There was balanced response with feedback from both rural and suburban communities. The communities were very engaged and useful information was provided.
- **Regional Collaboration and Community Planning (Trish Settles)**
 - Currently working on hiring a Public Health Trainer and an Associate Resiliency Planner. An intern may be shifting from Transportation to RCCP. CMRPC staff has a great depth of experience and can pivot as needed so everyone is using their skillset to the fullest. Homeland security staff are utilizing their skills on the public health side.
 - RCCP is wrapping up 25 DLTA projects with final reports.
 - Matt Franz is looking at what zoning looks like across the state with other RPAs.
 - A proposal was done for Mass Housing with the city of Worcester.
 - Applications to MDAR to support food policy councils
 - EDA applications for federal grants
 - Rural policy plan is being updated.
 - New farmland guide for municipalities is being looked at.
 - Chapa meeting is coming up. Two bills will be discussed that are both pending in Senate Ways & Means. Bill 2835 Site Plan Review and Permitting Reform and Bill 2836 YIMBY (Yes in my back yard) and YIGBY (Yes in God's back yard)
 - Attended the 495 Metrowest Partnership meeting. There was a keynote from FIFA and discussion of water infrastructure
 - Ms. Bulso was interested in YIGBY as they have a closed church. Ms. Settles asked Ms. Haber to send information on the bills to the committee.
- **Staffing / Human Resources (Stephanie Toupin)**
 - Ms. Toupin stated that there have been 3 interviews for the Associate Resiliency Planner position. All have different skill sets, but relevant experience. There were 136 applications and 118 of those completed all requirements.
 - There are 18 candidates for the Public Health Regional Trainer position and the application period remains open.

- Monty Tech has an internship set up to work on the Princeton MVP 2.0 as a graphic designer.
- Ms. Toupin is beginning review of the Affirmative Action policy and has a meeting with the attorney on Monday. She is hoping to work from the existing policy.

Committee and Sub-Regional Briefings:

- **Transportation** – Mr. Hassinger stated that they reviewed updates and recommended approval to the MMPO. There was a presentation on Vernon Connected.
- **Legislative Affairs** – Mr. Trifone stated the next meeting will be January 6, 2026 at 9:30am.
- **Physical Development** - Mr. Wheeler stated that the Physical Development Committee met last night. There were 22 proposals and \$206K was approved with close to \$60K remaining for a future round. 21 communities directly benefited with all communities indirectly benefiting. There was significant participation from the communities. Thanks to Trish and the committee. The staff was well prepared.
- **Personnel** – Ms. Toupin stated that the committee has not met.
- **SWCEDO** – Ms. Pierce stated that SWCEDO has not met.
- **Bylaw Review** – Mr. Trifone stated that there is a good group on the committee, but it is a large endeavor. The committee has met twice this month and will meet again on January 7th. It will take quite a few more meetings. There are practical updates needed and changes to ensure the law is being followed.
- **Sub-regional**– Vice Chair Hassinger asked if there were any updates
 - None

New Business:

- Mr. Hassinger stated that DLTA must help show what CMRPC does and how it benefits the communities. Mr. Wheeler stated that it is shown in the replies. It kickstarts many projects. Mr. Hassinger added that it helps show legislators as well. Ms. Settles stated that CMRPC is required to do a legislative report showing it is a very important resource. Mr. Hassinger stated that the ability to unlock more money is a big thing. Ms. Settles added that there hasn't been an increase recently.

Adjournment: Having completed all business Vice Chair Hassinger asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Mr. Rajeshkumar and seconded by Mr. Wheeler. With a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted by Sherrie Haber, CMRPC.

Documents:

- Minutes from November 20, 2025

- Warrant December 2025 26-06
- Recommended FY27 Assessment Schedule