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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
June 25, 2026 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting

Attending Officers	**Attending Sub-Regional Delegates**
Chair: 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 Drobner, Boylston	Northeast: Julianne Hirsh, Northborough
Clerk: Timothy H. Wheeler, Berlin	Southeast: Mary Bulso, Blackstone
Staff:	**Not In Attendance:**
Janet A. Pierce, Executive Director	West: Jared Grigg, Spencer
Sujatha Krishnan, Dep. Dir., Transportation	Asst. Clerk, Barur Rajeshkumar, West Boylston
Trish Settles, Dep. Dir., RCCP	
Stephanie Toupin, Dep. Dir., Administration	
Dara Griswold, Finance Manager	
Sherrie Haber, Executive Assistant	

Call to Order:

Chair Schur called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with a roll call to establish a quorum.

Approval of Minutes-

Motion: to accept the minutes of the May 28, 2026, Executive Committee Meeting. Made by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Mr. Quiroa. Roll Call vote. **Motion Unanimously Approved.**

Public Comment:

None.

Executive Director's Report:

- **Administration (Janet Pierce)**
  - The annual meeting hosted 135 guests. There were 160 RSVPs and we guaranteed for that number expecting that we would have some people not be able to attend and some attend who did not RSVP. Next year we could consider guaranteeing less or consider pay to attend. Mr. Senesi and Ms. Haber did very well. There were lots of compliments on the meal and venue. It was a great event. Ms. Pierce asked for thoughts. Mr. Wheeler suggested we make it clear that the Commission takes a hit if they no-show. Mr. Drobner suggested that their LPA hours could be reduced. Ms.

Bulso asked if breakfast meetings are better. Ms. Pierce replied that it would bring a different audience leaning towards businesses. Mr. Hassinger would not be able to attend morning meetings. Ms. Pierce would be concerned about quorum with a meeting during the day. Mr. Drobner suggested sending the dollar figure out so people understand the hit. Chair Schur suggested sending an email that if someone has RSVP'd yes and cannot make it that they contact us. Mr. Hassinger suggested we ask them to confirm.

- On the warrant there is a payment to Grassi that needed to be billed this year, but the check will not be released until we have all the paperwork. Chair Schur asked what happens if a bill comes in from the year before. Ms. Pierce said that we would reopen the books but it can be too late.
- The RFP for an auditor has been released. Hopefully we will have quite a few firms interested and will conduct interviews.
- The Mercantile office lease expires in May 2028 but there are 2 1-year renewals. It is something we will need to consider soon. Regarding Mr. Hassinger's question about the landlord Ms. Pierce replied that it is under the management of Eastport. Mr. Wheeler asked if we are content with the amount of space and if not is there an opportunity to stay in the building. Ms. Pierce stated that there is another space on the floor and it is approximately $100K additional. It could be absorbed by the indirect rate. Staff is currently cleaning to free up space. It would be good to have everyone under one roof. Chair Schur asked if there is an up cost to moving and what it is. Ms. Pierce stated that the other space would fit all staff with conference space. Chair Schur asked what the occupancy is. Ms. Pierce will ask for a summary of what the space is going for. Ms. Hirsh stated that we owe it to Worcester to stay in the city. Ms. Pierce stated that it is convenient transit for staff and central to the area. The transportation office doesn't have the same access to transit.

- **Human Resources (Stephanie Toupin)**
  - Hiring
    - We have 3 interns starting on June 2nd – Hadas B, Evan K and Katie W.
    - Leah Withers became full time on June 11th as an assistant planner
    - Faria Urmy will replace Tina Deater as principle planner
  - Salary increases start July 1st so we are going over these amounts. All reviews have been completed.
- **Transportation (Sujatha Krishnan)**
    - Both the Unified Work Program and the TIP have been approved.
    - The Housing & Transportation, Vernon Connected and Safe Streets studies are all going as planned and scheduled.

  - Requested MassDOT unspent funds from previous years. MassDOT understands we are strategic with the use of the money.
  - Collaborative work on the home share program - $600K for the next three years. It will help manage a program to match elders with renters. We will emulate a successful program in Vermont.
  - Rich Rydant will be at the next Executive Committee meeting as Ms. Krishnan will be in India.
- Questions/Comments: Chair Schur mentioned that regarding housing, the state put out statistics on what towns are growing and their available housing stock.

- **Regional Collaboration and Community Planning (Trish Settles)**
  - Successes & Close-Outs
    - Northbridge TDR
    - Warren ZBL update
    - Mendon & Millbury SRR update
    - Boylston Hillside Master Plan
    - Charlton Animal Control study
    - Mendon ADA Plan
    - Oxford HMP HHPD, Spencer HMP, Millbury HMP
    - Aquatic Invasives study in the Quaboag River
    - Rutland GCTA and Rutland HR Study
    - Happy Factor
    - Palmer Slum & Blight Study
    - CRHSAC FFY2023
    - MAP Mass Gis LUZI
    - Blackstone LFPC
  - Trish will share a link – A Home for Everyone: Progress toward 222,000.
  - Pipeline overview highlights:
    - Community Development and other Resiliency Planning are the two largest groups by budget - $8.2M
    - Comprehensive Planning has the highest CMRPC dollar share relative to total budget.
    - Hazard Mitigation Plans and Economic Development are nearly 100% CMRPC-funded.
    - Green Communities / Green Energy has the lowest CMRPC dollar proportion.
  - Ongoing:
    - MILUS is still going on
    - Rural Policy meetings are wrapping up and the report will be coming out

- Oakham Battery storage decision will likely get appealed. There is $125K to help towns navigate.
- Looking at having a Town Managers / Administrators meeting
- Grant opportunities are in the newsletter
- Dominique is finishing Imagine 2050

- Discussion: Chair Schur asked if Oakham site is 45 acres. Ms. Pierce said yes, it is an old auto savage.

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

Ms. Griswold presented Warrant 26-12 for the payment of bills as required by Section 7, Chapter 40B, for the month of June, totaling $262,180.19.

- **Motion:** to approve Warrant 26-12 for the month of June in the amount of $262,180.19. Made by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Ms. Bulso
- Ms. Bulso asked about the Northbridge charge. Ms. Griswold explained it is for DPH grants. Ms. Settles added that it covers several towns in the Blackstone Valley and supports health agents. Ms. Bulso asked if their town's assessment is separate and Ms. Settles replied yes. Ms. Pierce stated that she can get more information on how the payments are different.
- Ms. Krishan stated that the Stantec payment was not ready in time for the warrant and asked if it could be added. Ms. Griswold stated that it is approximately $75,000 but it has been listed on prior approved warrants. Ms. Bulso suggested approving an amount not to exceed. Mr. Hassinger asked why it wasn't on the warrant. Ms. Krishnan stated that the initial amount was lower with projections. An additional amount was approved but the contract amendment didn't come in time. Ms. Pierce clarified that the MassDOT portion has been included in prior warrants but had not been paid yet and Ms. Griswold confirmed. Chair Schur stated that the Committee does not need to re-approve since it has been approved in the past.
- Roll call vote. **Motion approved unanimously**.

FY27 Executive Committee Meeting Dates:

- Ms. Haber stated that two of the regular meeting dates land on holidays for FY27. It is recommended that the November meeting move to November 19th and the December meeting move to the 17th.
- **Motion:** to approve the FY27 meeting dates as presented. Made by Mr. Trifone, seconded by Mr. Drobner.
- Chair Schur asked Ms. Haber to send the meting dates to the Executive Committee members and to add to the bottom of the agendas. Mr. Hassinger asked Ms. Haber to notify T-Committee.

- Roll call vote. **Motion approved unanimously**.

FY27 Committee Membership

- Chair Schur asked Executive Committee members to notify Ms. Haber if they would like to continue on their current committees. He added that committees should reorganize and appoint a chair.
- Mr. Hassinger suggested that the Commission Chair could appoint the chairs of the committees. Ms. Haber stated that in the current version of the bylaws the committees appoint their chair.

Committee and Sub-Regional Briefings:

- **Transportation –** Mr. Hassinger stated that the committee voted to recommend changes to the TIP. They heard a presentation on Vernon Connected and there were lots of great ideas.
- **Legislative Affairs –** no update
- **Physical Development –** Mr. Wheeler stated that the committee met last night to review the charge and name of the committee and that Ms. Haber created a draft on how they might modify the charge. The committee might better serve the Commission by broadening the scope beyond DLTA. Mr. Hassinger added that they considered adding non-commission members as non-voting members.
- **Personnel –** Mr. Drobner stated they are waiting for attorney review on updates for EEO/AA then the committee can meet to bring forth to the Executive Committee. Ms. Toupin added that she is off for part of July but will look to meet at the end of the month.
- **SWCEDO –** Ms. Pierce stated that they had their annual meeting. There was a presentation by John Weaver regarding data centers and he gave an interesting perspective.
- **Bylaw Review –** Mr. Trifone stated that the Bylaws have had legal review and the committee will meet to discuss changes. He hopes to have them to the Executive Committee for the July meeting.
- **Sub-regional–** Chair Schur asked if there were any updates
    - Mr. Trifone stated that Dudley's Master Plan Open House will be June 27th from 3-5pm
    - Mr. Hassinger stated that Grafton's denial to land court was finally decided. Land court told the planning board to approve and they voted 4-1 to approve regarding dead end roads. Mr. Hassinger also said that they started talking about data centers and that the new town planner is doing pretty well.

- Ms. Bulso asked if Economic Development meetings are recorded and Ms. Pierce replied no. Ms. Bulso stated that Lauren Taylor has been promoted and that they are sharing a town planner with Dudley named Bruce Webb.

New Business:

- Ms. Pierce announced that Mr. Grigg is not in attendance due to the birth of his third child and Chair Schur congratulated him on behalf of the Committee.
- Ms. Pierce stated that she is interested in a one year extension of her contract that expires on August 1st. Ms. Bulso stated that it should be put on the next agenda. Ms. Pierce added that her review will need to be completed.
- Chair Schur asked if there are any new committees that should be added and asked members to think about it. Ms. Pierce added that any standing committee would require a vote of the Commission.

Adjournment: Having completed all business Chair Schur adjourned the meeting at 8:39pm**.**

Respectfully submitted by Sherrie Haber, CMRPC.

Documents:

- Minutes from May 28, 2026
- Warrant June 26-12