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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

August 27, 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	Central City: David Quiroa, Worcester (7:03pm)
Treasurer: Andrew Coles, Auburn	Southeast: Mary Bulso, Blackstone
Asst. Treasurer: Howard Drobner, Boylston	Southwest: William Trifone, Dudley
Clerk: Timothy H. Wheeler, Berlin	
Staff:	Not In Attendance:
Janet A. Pierce, Executive Director (7:19pm)	Asst. Clerk, Barur Rajeshkumar, West Boylston
Sujatha Krishnan, Dep. Dir., Transportation	Northeast: Julianne Hirsh, Northborough
Trish Settles, Dep. Dir., RCCP	West: Jared Grigg, Spencer
Stephanie Toupin, Dep. Dir., Administration	
Sherrie Haber, Executive Assistant	

Call to Order:

Chair Schur called the 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 July 30, 2026, Executive Committee Meeting. Made by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Mr. Wheeler. Roll Call vote. **Motion Unanimously Approved with an abstention from Mr. Lies & Ms. Bulso.**

Motion: to accept the executive session minutes of the July 30, 2026, Executive Committee Meeting. Made by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Mr. Wheeler. Roll Call vote. **Motion Unanimously Approved with an abstention from Mr. Lies & Ms. Bulso.**

Mr. Quiroa joins the meeting.

Motion: to release the executive session minutes of the July 30, 2026, Executive Committee Meeting. Made by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Mr. Wheeler. Roll Call vote. **Motion Unanimously Approved with an abstention from Mr. Lies, Mr. Quiroa & Ms. Bulso.**

Public Comment:

None.

Committee Briefings:

- **Transportation** – Mr. Hassinger stated that they have not met.

- **Legislative Affairs** – Mr. Trifone stated that they have not met.
- **Physical Development** – Mr. Wheeler stated that they have not met.
- **Personnel** – Mr. Drobner stated that they met to discuss the review of the Executive Director and the EEO/AA Policy.
 - **Motion:** to accept the EEO/AA Policy. Made by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Mr. Drobner. Mr. Drobner stated that there are both Federal and State requirements. The policy has been reviewed by the attorney to ensure it covers both. Mr. Schur stated that he was at the last meeting and is satisfied that this covers the Commission. Roll call vote. **Motion approved unanimously.**
 - Without objection, Chair Schur will hold the Review of the Executive Director for later in the meeting.
- **Bylaw Review** – without objection, Chair Schur will hold the Bylaw discussion for later in the meeting.
- **Finance (Stephanie Toupin)**
 - Ms. Toupin presented Warrant 27-02 for the payment of bills as required by Section 7, Chapter 40B, for the month of August, totaling \$175,178.20. This is to finalize FY26.
 - **Motion:** to approve Warrant 27-02 for the month of August in the amount of \$175,178.20. Made by Mr. Hassinger, seconded by Dr. Coles. Roll call vote. **Motion approved unanimously.**
 - Ms. Toupin presented the Cash Report for July 2026
 - Beginning Balance: \$2,471,300.54. Ending Balance: \$2,833,537.51
 - Mission Square Funds: Beginning and Ending Balance of \$1,298,178.10
 - Mr. Drobner stated that in Personnel Committee they talked about cash flow. The Commission is fortunate to have a positive cash flow as it would help weather economic downturns.

Ms. Pierce joins the meeting.

Executive Director's Report:

- **Regional Collaboration and Community Planning (Trish Settles)**
 - Ms. Settles gave a demonstration on Monday.com, the tool used to track the over 150 projects of RCCP. The Dashboard shows active RCCP projects separated into topic areas. It includes the project, director, where charges go, timeline, budget, status, location and client. There is a maps tab to see what is going on in an area or region. There is a Gantt chart to see timeline and duration. At the team level you can see the pipeline and staff go through it at team meetings. They can also update action steps and comments. This allows them to track ideas as well as to watch for grants. It is expensive. CMRPC currently has 15 sears that

can edit the tool while all can view. In response to questions, Ms. Settles stated that the system costs \$5-6K. It is an internal tool and all the categories are included and up to speed. The teams keep it updated at their meetings every couple of weeks. Ms. Pierce added that updates are also based on deliverables. Ms. Settles asked what the committee would like to see for updates. There were suggestions to use it to highlight specific areas (region, DLTA, etc) rather than the full list. Mr. Schur asked Ms. Settles choose a region for the next meeting.

- **Transportation (Sujatha Krishnan)**

- At the quarterly meeting on September 10th, we will celebrate the 50 year anniversary of the CMMPO. There are 3 great panelists – Barry Lorion, Amy Shei and John Weaver. Staff have done a good job with registration with 90 currently registered.
- Vernon Connected is ending Phase 1 and the Phase 2 RFP is out. They have received 27 requests. Interviews will be done by the next meeting.
- Safe Streets for All will have a draft release in November. There is interest to continue and implement it.
- Community Voices is homegrown advertisement to improve safety such as online videos and murals. It has just kicked off and they are looking at a corridor of 3-4 communities in rural areas with villages. It is funded through MassDOT and Travelers Insurance.
- Started working on the long range transportation plan and starting with socioeconomic projections.

- **Human Resources (Stephanie Toupin)**

- The intern group is finishing this week. They gave presentations on Tuesday with topics and experiences at CMRPC.
- Open positions
 - Resiliency Associate / Principal Planner – getting ready for 2nd interviews.
 - Public Health Training Manager – 3 candidates
 - Fall interns – 4 interviews today

- **Administration (Janet Pierce)**

- There are no updates on the lease so the executive session can be passed over.
- Two auditing firms have been interviewed. All were in agreement on the top candidate. Currently waiting on a signed contract.
- In the Personnel meeting goals were identified and will be incorporated into the agency goals as it takes a team. The information will be shared at staff meeting on Wednesday. Ms. Pierce is looking forward to meeting, achieving and exceeding the goals.

- Wednesday Ms. Haber will take headshots of all staff that can be incorporated into the website and project proposals. It is greatly appreciated.
- Ms. Pierce asked the Committee for thoughts on quarterly and annual meeting topics and speakers noting that a survey has been sent in the past. She also asked if the time should change. She noted that over the past 2-3 years there has been about 1/3 turnover in delegates and alternates. Suggestions and comments including:
 - Most Delegates and Alternates have other jobs and may not be able to come to day meetings
 - Many people are more flexible for remote meetings.
 - Rather than dinner consider drinks / snacks.
 - Consider hybrid meetings
 - To get more people involved consider a tour of a project.
 - Mr. Schur stated that Executive Committee should consider ideas to raise attendance. Ms. Pierce is interested to see how attendance is for the upcoming quarterly meeting and Mr. Schur will send an email after the meeting if there is trouble with no-shows

Committee Briefings Continued:

- **Personnel** – Mr. Drobner stated that the committee met to discuss and approve the recommendation of the Executive Director's review. Mr. Schur stated that there were eleven responses, although one was received late and one did not have grades. Ratings were as follows:
 - Financial Stewardship 4.78
 - Leadership, Crisis Management and Transparency 4.78
 - Governance, Policy Modernization and Administration 4.89
 - Programmatic Delivery and Community Outreach 4.89
 - Staff Leadership, Empowerment and Culture 5.0
 - Overall Performance 4.87

Goal topics include:

- Succession and organizational planning
- Service expansion and marketing
- Interagency collaboration
- Governance and compliance
- Pension resolution

Motion: to approve the review and goals of the Executive Director. Made by Mr. Hassinger and seconded by Ms. Bulso.

Discussion: Mr. Drobner explained that in the Personnel meeting he asked for fiscal information for the towns. Mr. Trifone stated that information is kept by the

Department of Revenue. Ms. Pierce added that DLS has 40 years of history including overrides and underrides. CMRPC should consider adding links to this information on the website. Ms. Pierce stated that some towns have professional staff including planners and economic development staff who prefer consultants. She added that CMRPC still offers them all their services and with staff changes we may be able to get a foot in the door. She thanked the committee for the wonderful review and is humbled by their words. All of the staff have contributed to the success.

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

- **SWCEDO** – Ms. Pierce stated they have not met.
- **Bylaw Review** – Mr. Trifone thanked those involved by name including members Andrew Coles, Bob Hassinger, Scott People and Jared Grigg and staff including Janet Pierce, Stephanie Toupin and Sherrie Haber. The committee carefully looked at MGL, Procurement law, Open Meeting Law and more.

Motion: to recommend the draft CMRPC Bylaws to the full Commission for vote. Made by Mr. Hassinger and seconded by Dr. Coles

Discussion: Mr. Schur appreciates that they are shorter and asked for clarification on the parts that require 2/3 vote. Ms. Haber clarified that the bylaws state that a bylaw change or removal of an executive committee member requires 2/3 of the attendees at a meeting. Massachusetts General Law requires 2/3 of the Commission for regional plans (such as Imagine 2050). Ms. Pierce will discuss the MGL requirement at the MARPA meeting as a change would require legislative review. Mr. Schur thanked everyone for their work on the Bylaws.

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

Ms. Pierce also thanked the various committees for reviewing their charges. Mr. Schur stated that the Bylaws will be voted on at the September meeting.

Sub-Regional Briefings:

- Chair Schur asked if there were any updates
 - Mr. Hassinger stated that Grafton has a bylaw to not allow data centers and has asked to create a study. Flock cameras were pulled down and they will leave Grafton. The planning board may become appointed. Mr. Hassinger asked if it is known how many in the state are appointed rather than elected. Ms. Pierce stated that the majority are elected.
 - Mr. Schur shared that the Town Administrator in Sturbridge has an article in the Telegram about the state taking control from local communities that was well written. Ms. Pierce also saw the article and shared it with staff.

New Business:

- Ms. Settles will send an invitation to sessions on MILUS (only 3 people per town are allowed)

Adjournment: Having completed all business Chair Schur adjourned the meeting at 8:53pm.

Respectfully submitted by Sherrie Haber, CMRPC.

Documents:

- Minutes from July 30, 2026
- Minutes from July 30, 2026 executive session
- Warrant August 27-02
- Cash Report July 2026
- Executive Director's Review and Goals
- Bylaw Draft
- EEO/AA Policy