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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

January 8, 2026 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Attending Officers	Attending Sub-Regional Delegates
Chair: Daniel Schur, Westborough	Southwest: William Trifone, Dudley
Vice Chair: Robert Hassinger, Grafton	North: Otto Lies, Holden
Treasurer: Andrew Coles, Auburn	Southeast: Mary Bulso, Blackstone
Asst. Treasurer: Howard Drobner, Boylston	Northeast: Julianne Hirsh, Northborough
Clerk: Timothy H. Wheeler, Berlin	
Attending Delegates & Alternates	
John Danilowicz, Auburn	Michael Baker, Northbridge
Matthew Urban, Barre	John Eul, Oxford
Edward Castonguay, Blackstone	Jeanne Scigliano, Rutland
Richard Baker, Boylston	Michelle Conlin, Shrewsbury
Michael Derosé, Douglas	Arno Bounphasaysonh, Southbridge
Les Stevens, Douglas	John Daniel, Southbridge
Richard Clark, Dudley	Shirley Shiver, Spencer
Jim Skowronek, East Brookfield	Charlie Blanchard, Sturbridge
David Robbins, Grafton	Christine Watkins, Sutton
Dave George, Holden	Marc Frieden, West Boylston
Bernard Stock, Hopedale	Caroline Regan, Westborough
Brandon Avery, North Brookfield	
Guests	
David Adams, Southbridge	Kristen Belanger, Westborough
Alexander Lyon, West Boylston	Mary Turner, Worcester
Staff	
Janet A. Pierce, Executive Director	Yahaira Graxirena
Trish Settles, Deputy Dir., RCCP	Sherrie Haber
Sujatha Krishnan, Deputy Dir., Transportation	Marc Granato
Stephanie Toupin, Deputy Dir., Administration	Nathan Lewis
Dara Griswold	Connie Mellis
Jordan Hollinger	Robert Raymond
Matt Franz	Anthony Senesi
Adam Wriggins	Will Talbot
Ryan Hurley	Connor Robichaud
Dominique DuTremble	

Call to Order:

Chair Schur called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. Quorum was established by roll call.

1. Approval of Minutes:

Motion: to accept the Quarterly Meeting Minutes from November 13, 2025.

Moved by Robert Hassinger, seconded by John Daniel

Motion Unanimously Approved by roll call vote with abstentions from Dave George.

2. FY27 Assessments:

Motion: to accept the FY27 Assessment Schedule.

Moved by Robert Hassinger, seconded by John Daniel

Ms. Pierce stated that the Executive committee and Administration have recommended a 2.5% increase (\$4,891.62) for a Total FY27 Assessment of \$200,556.52. Mr. Castonguay asked for an explanation of the assessments. Ms. Pierce stated that it is assessed for membership and is based on per capita from census data. It is the only funding that is discretionary and can be used to fund grant matches and LPA hours. As part of this assessment each community receives 12 hours of planning time. Communities receive additional hours for attending meetings.

Motion Unanimously Approved by roll call vote.

3. Adjournment: Having completed all business Chair Schur adjourned the business portion of the meeting at 7:18pm

4. Overview of CMRPC Activities by Janet Pierce, Executive Director

- Welcomed the group to the Quarterly meeting and thanked them for attending.
- Upcoming meetings:
 - March 12th Quarterly meeting at the Manor. Topic: Economic Development
 - June 11th Annual meeting at Pioneer Valley Country Club
 - January 20th 6:30pm MILUS meeting (Massachusetts Integrated Land Use Strategy) This will be an introductory meeting a brief explanation and question and answer session and discussion on the coordinated initiative to shape land use. The regional / municipal perspective is important. Please register in advance with the link that is shared in the chat.
- Regional studies:
 - Greater Worcester Climate Action Studies & Plans
 - Imagine 2050
 - Regional Transportation and Housing plans
 - Vernon Connected
 - Safe Streets and Roads for All which is part of a federal grant that was awarded will be presented tonight by Rob Raymond.

5. Presentation: Safe Streets and Roads for all by Robert Raymond

- The regional Vision Zero action plan includes 5 points:
 - Traffic deaths are preventable
 - Integrate human failing in approach
 - Prevent fatal and severe crashes
 - Systems approach
 - Saving lives is not expensive
- The safe system approach has 6 key principles
 - Death and serious injuries are unacceptable
 - Humans make mistakes
 - Humans are vulnerable
 - Responsibility is shared
 - Safety is proactive
 - Redundancy is crucial
- The safe system approach has 5 pillars
 - Safer vehicles
 - Safer speeds
 - Safer roads
 - Post crash care
 - Safer people.
- Vision Zero is being implemented across the country. MassDOT has started using this information in their planning and has started with implementing flashing lights at crosswalks. All CMRPC municipalities can apply for implementation grants.
- Beacon Street Demonstration project is in Worcester and is being done in conjunction with CMRPC, the City of Worcester and Beta Group. CMRPC will handle the public outreach side.
- There is a Vision Zero advisory committee with diverse representation. They will meet quarterly
- Questions:
 - Ms. Hirsh asked about statistics during Covid times with less cars on the road. Mr. Raymond stated that there were more fatalities in 2020/2021 as travel speeds were higher with less traffic / cars.
 - A question if autonomous vehicles are considered in this plan. Mr. Raymond stated that if they are allowed for use in Massachusetts they should be considered.
 - Ms. Scigliano asked about the statistic that smaller cars are safer when it seems it should be the opposite. Mr. Raymond replied that larger vehicles are safer for those inside the car, but as SUV's get bigger, when a pedestrian is hit it is more

likely they go under the car rather than over. This brings up the point of vulnerable versus protected users.

- Participants were divided into 5 breakout groups to discuss the 5 pillars, asking them to discuss local strategies, barriers and cross-pillar connections. They were also asked to identify interventions, partners and dependencies.
- Public outreach has begun with a survey. Please participate.
- There will be regional meetings upcoming:
 - Southeast: February 24th
 - Southwest: March 3rd
 - North and West: March 10th
 - Northeast and Central: March 17th
- It is possible the plan will be presented for adoption in the first quarter of 2027.
- Questions:
 - Ms. Hirsh asked how a municipality best works with MassDOT. Ms. Krishnan stated that the transportation department can help municipalities get in touch with the right person.
 - Ms. Bulso asked if MassDOT 3 handles Blackstone. Ms. Krishnan confirmed yes. Ms. Bulso brought up intersections that are safety concerns as well as low bridges. MassDOT could consider having GPS providers add these to maps.

Ms. Pierce reiterated that the next quarterly meeting will be on March 12th at the Manor. Invitations will be sent out soon. Please attend as there will be a vote on the budget.

The meeting ended at 8:45pm.

Documents:

Draft Minutes November 13, 2025

FY27 Assessment Schedule

Safe Streets for All presentation slides

Respectfully submitted by Sherrie Haber, CMRPC.