



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

**CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
 January 4, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
 In-Person/Hybrid Meeting

<b>Attending Officers</b>	<b>Attending Sub-Regional Delegates</b>
Chairperson: Howard N. Drobner, Boylston	North: Otto Lies, Holden
Vice Chair: Robert Hassinger, Grafton	Northeast: Julianne Hirsh, Northborough
Treasurer: Daniel Schur, Westborough	Southeast: Walter Baker, Sutton
Asst. Treas.: C. Richard Williams, Rutland	Southwest: Andrew Coles, Auburn
Clerk: Timothy H. Wheeler, Berlin	Central City: David Quiroa, Worcester
<b>Staff:</b>	
Janet A. Pierce, Executive Director	<b>Not In Attendance:</b>
Trish Settles, Dep. Dir., RCCP	Asst. Clerk: Barur Rajeshkumar, West Boylston
Sujatha Krishnan, Dep. Dir., Transportation	West: Jeffrey Howland, New Braintree
Anthony Senesi, Communications Coordinator	

**1. Call to Order:**

Chairperson Drobner called the January 4, 2024, Executive Committee meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. with a roll call to establish a quorum.

**2. Approval of Minutes-**

Mr. Williams made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 30, 2023, Executive Committee Meeting, seconded by Ms. Hirsh. **Motion Approved with one abstention.**

**3. Public Comment:**

Mr. Hassinger requested that if Executive Committee agendas are modified, the revisions be clear. Ms. Pierce agreed.

**4. January 2024 Quarterly Meeting Logistics:**

- Mr. Drobner said that the Quarterly Meeting on January 11, 2024, will be held as a hybrid meeting, with in-person participation at the Unum Building, 1 Mercantile Street. Mr. Drobner said that with the assistance of CMRPC staff, the technological capabilities work correctly for the hybrid meeting to occur. Mr. Drobner described the parking logistics at the Unum Building. Mr. Drobner asked how many people are registered for



1 Mercantile Street – Suite 520  
Worcester, MA 01608  
P: 508.756.7717 F: 508.792.6818  
[www.cmrpc.org](http://www.cmrpc.org)

---

the Quarterly Meeting. Mr. Senesi stated that 32 people are registered, and 3 commissioners stated that they plan to attend in person.

## **5. Executive Director's Report:**

### **I. Staffing and Administration:**

- Ms. Pierce gave an update on the hiring of the new Human Resource position. Ms. Pierce stated that 18 candidates applied, 5 candidates were brought in for a first-round interview, 3 candidates were then selected for a second-round interview, and an offer was made to a candidate who has accepted the position. Ms. Pierce stated that almost all Human Resource candidates had experience with payroll. Ms. Pierce stated that the new Human Resource Manager has experience writing policy manuals, recommending salary scales, writing job descriptions, and conducting surveys. Ms. Pierce said that the new Human Resource Manager currently works at Old Sturbridge Village and will begin her position at CMRPC in late January 2024.
- Ms. Pierce said that Matthew Deiulis' last day was Friday, December 29, 2023. Ms. Pierce said that Mr. Deiulis has moved further away from the region, which made it challenging to continue working on a hybrid work schedule. Ms. Pierce said that Mr. Senesi will fill in for some of Mr. Deiulis' responsibilities in the interim. Ms. Pierce said that Mr. Deiulis' replacement will be in an Executive Assistant level position.
- Ms. Pierce said that she is working to close the Fiscal Year and is waiting to hear back from the auditor. Ms. Pierce said that the auditor will be presenting to the Executive Committee before the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. Ms. Pierce said that she anticipates the last Fiscal Year's indirect rate to be around 94-95%. Ms. Pierce said that currently, she estimates that the indirect rate currently is 70%.
- Ms. Pierce announced that CMRPC received \$480,000 from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Safe Streets for All Grant.
- Ms. Pierce said that CMRPC has received \$442,000 for Calendar Year 2024 for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) funds, and of that total amount, \$177,000 is DLTA Augmentation funds to be spent exclusively for Federal grants.
- Mr. Wheeler asked how much CMRPC has left for 2023 DLTA Augmentation funds. Ms. Pierce said that she anticipates the funds to be fully spent by the deadline on June 30, 2024. Mr. Wheeler said that he believes there is an opportunity to see if additional staff could be hired to assist with the DLTA Augmentation funds for Federal grants.



## **II. Transportation:**

Deputy Director Sujatha Krishnan provided the Transportation report.

- Ms. Krishnan began by correcting a number provided by Ms. Pierce. Ms. Krishnan said that CMRPC did receive \$480,000 for a Safe Streets for All grant, and MassDOT agreed to match 20% of the federal grant, for a total grant amount of \$600,000.
- Ms. Krishnan said that Transportation staff are building up a queue for proposals for Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects. Ms. Krishnan said that staff are directly contacting communities to determine projects that may have viability.
- Ms. Krishnan said that Transportation staff have been utilizing internal drone services to assist with grant proposals.
- Ms. Pierce added that CMRPC staff are creating lists of potential projects from across the region, for when the legislative delegation asks for projects that may be earmarked.

## **III. Regional Collaboration and Community Planning (RCCP):**

Deputy Director Trish Settles provided the RCCP report.

- Ms. Settles began her report by describing the status of the DLTA funding for Calendar Year 2023 and the call for proposals for Calendar Year 2024. Ms. Settles said that staff have identified numerous project proposals for DLTA for Calendar Year 2024.
- Ms. Settles said that RCCP is working on developing \$1.8 million of projects, including economic development plans and a Federal grant to hire a regional building inspector.
- Ms. Settles said that RCCP staff have submitted another \$1.9 million in projects including MassTrails grants, One Stop for Growth projects, and master plans.

## **6. Approval of Warrant for Payment of Bills and Review of Financial Statements:**

### **a. Recommendation of FY25 Assessment Schedule**

Executive Director, Janet Pierce presented the proposed FY25 Assessment Schedule which presents a 2 ½% increase in assessments from FY24.

- Mr. Williams made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed FY25 Assessment Schedule to the full CMRPC Commission, seconded by Ms. Hirsh. **Motion approved.**



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

Executive Director Janet Pierce presented Warrant #24-06 for the payment of bills as required by Section 7, Chapter 40B, for the month of December 2023 totaling \$72,407.54.

- Mr. Williams made a motion to approve Warrant #24-06 for the month of December 2023 in the amount of \$72,407.54, seconded by Mr. Hirsh. **Motion approved.**

The report of cash and the cash flow chart was not presented to committee members at the time of the meeting. Ms. Pierce stated that the cash flow has not changed significantly since last month.

## 7. Committee and Sub-Regional Briefings:

- a. Transportation** – Mr. Hassinger recalled at the previous Transportation Committee meeting, the Committee voted to recommend the endorsement of the proposed #2 Amendment for the FY24 to FY28 TIP program.
- b. Legislative Affairs** – Ms. Settles said that the Legislative Affairs Committee is meeting next week to discuss the operation procedure and roles for the Legislative Affairs Committee. Mr. Drobner appointed Jen Dymont Warren from the Town of West Boylston and Jared Grigg from the Town of Spencer to the Legislative Affairs Committee.
- c. Physical Development Committee**- Mr. Wheeler said that the Physical Development Committee is meeting on January 18, 2024, to determine the first round of DLTA projects. Mr. Wheeler said that a call for proposals has been advertised to the region for DLTA projects.
- d. Rural Caucus**– Ms. Settles reported that the Caucus will meet again in the Spring of 2024.
- e. Southern Worcester County Economic Development Organization** – Ms. Pierce reported that the Southern Worcester County Economic Development Strategy was submitted by CMRPC staff to the EDA. Ms. Pierce said that CMRPC is awaiting to hear back from the EDA regarding the CEDS approval.
- f. Sub-regional**–
  - Chairperson Drobner asked each subregion for their updates; they were as follows:
    - i. North:** No news to report.
    - ii. Northeast:** Mr. Drobner said that the Town of Boylston is implementing ClearGov for budgeting purposes and public transparency. Mr. Wheeler said that the Town of Berlin is meeting



1 Mercantile Street – Suite 520  
Worcester, MA 01608  
P: 508.756.7717 F: 508.792.6818  
[www.cmrpc.org](http://www.cmrpc.org)

---

with representatives of Solomon Pond Mall for redevelopment opportunities. Mr. Wheeler said that the Planning Board is looking to proactively work with the mall representatives to brainstorm to transform the property for future use. Ms. Hirsh said that the Town of Northborough hired Tim McInerney as the Town Administrator. Mr. Schur said that the Town of Westborough has identified MBTA Zoning areas, that will have little impact on the Town. Mr. Schur said that the Town has a new Town Planner and anticipates the hiring of an Assistant Town Planner.

- iii. West: No news to report.
- iv. Southwest: No news to report.
- v. Central: Mr. Quiroa has been out of work for the past month and said he does not have any updates.

**8. New Business:**

- None.

**9. Adjournment:** Upon a motion by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Hassinger to adjourn at 8:37 p.m. **The vote by roll call was unanimous. Motion approved.**

Respectfully submitted by Anthony Senesi, CMRPC.