



MINUTES

Thursday – May 21, 2015

- 1. Call to Order** - Chairman Byers called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.
- 2. Roll Call** –Secretary Ramsdell called the roll and declared a quorum present. The following Commissioners and Staff were in attendance:

Commissioners

Amesbury	Robert Lavoie
Haverhill	April Derboghosian
Lawrence	Theresa Park
Methuen	Kevin Hagerty
Newbury	John Weis
Newburyport	Ed Ramsdell
North Andover	Richard Byers, Chairman
Rowley	Robert Snow
Salisbury	Lou Masiello
West Newbury	Brian Murphey

Staff

Dennis DiZoglio, Executive Director
Anthony Komornick, Transportation Program Manager
Joe Cosgrove, Environmental Program Manager
Mike Parquette, Comprehensive Planning Program Manager
Todd Fontanella, Sr. Transportation Planner
Jen Dunlap, Finance Administrator
Nancy Lavallee, Office Administrator

3. Adoption of April Meeting Minutes

The April minutes were reviewed and recommended for adoption.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Snow and second by Commissioner Weis to authorize the April Minutes. The April Minutes were unanimously approved.

4. Warrant for April

Treasurer Robert Snow reported that the April warrant was reviewed favorably and recommended the Commission's authorization for adoption.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Hagerty. The April warrant was unanimously approved.

5. Chairman's Report

Chairman Richard Byers reported on the following activities since the last meeting.

- The MVPC annual report is completed and there is a copy in your packet. This year's focus is on economic development that was the theme for our 2014 Regional Planning day event. We will not be generating the 800+ copies we have in the past and mailing them to our stakeholders. We will email a link to the report to our email list serve. The cost saving on printing and postage should help to address some of the strain we have had on the use of our reserves to balance our budget.
- As you may know MVPC does have a Facebook page and we have been using it to keep folks in the region abreast of our activities and issues facing the region. If you are a user of Facebook please consider friending us and if you have anything you would like to post please let Betsy Goodrich_know.
- In respect for your time and with no major issues pending before us I am recommending that we begin our summer meeting hiatus in June. So there will not be another meeting until September unless there are any concerns from Commissioners.

6. Personnel Committee

The executive Director has notified the personnel committee that he has hired a person to fill the vacant Economic Development Coordinator position. We received 38 resumes. The applicants had a wide range of experience levels and skill sets. Fifteen of the applicants did not have the minimum qualifications and nine applicants had just the minimum qualifications. Fortunately for MVPC we had 24 that exceeded our qualification requirements. Because we had a large field to choose from we decided to interview those individuals with the most experience. We selected 6 individuals to interview. After the interview process and background checks Exwcutive Director DiZoglio decided on Heidi Murphy a municipal planner that has over 15 years of experience in municipal community and economic development and supporting educational obtainment.

Her resume and cover letter is attached for your review. As you can see from her resume she has a wealth of experience. Not only did she interview well but she produced and provided a copy of a well developed portfolio, which included a detailed description of her skill set, a 40R PowerPoint presentation she developed in association with a successful designation of a 40 R district in North Reading, brochures that she had developed, an economic action plan and written reference. She was certainly well prepared and thorough in her presentation.

According to MVPC personnel policies the Executive Director shall be responsible for the hiring, training, supervising and discharging of all employees. The Personnel Committee shall confirm Executive Director personnel appointments and make a recommendation to the full Commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The personnel committee recommends confirming the Executive Director's hiring.

7. Director's Report

Executive Director Dennis DiZoglio reported on the following MVPC activities since the last meeting.

Meetings with Community Leaders

- On April 28th I attended the WIB quarterly meeting as well as the planning committee meetings on April 21st and May 19th. At the May 19th meeting I introduced the CEDS workforce development objective, which was well received and it was decided to forward it on to the full Board for consideration.
- On April 21st Staff and I met with MassDOT officials regarding Title VI compliance.
- On April 24th I attended the monthly MARPA meeting
- On April 27th Staff and I met with MassDevelopment and EOHED officials regarding the TA connector, an effort to coordinate technical assistance from the state and the RPAs.
- On April 30th I attended the Asset Management Advisory Council meeting n Boston.
- On May 5th I meet with Noah Koretz, the new Transformative Development Fellow assigned by MassDevelopment to assist Haverhill on the revitalization of Merrimack Street in Downtown as a gateway community. I offered office space to MassDevelopment to forge a partnership with this effort.

- On May 8th I attended the semi-annual meeting of the MVEDC. Secretary Jay Ash was the guest speaker.
- On May 12th we held our quarterly regional planners meeting. We discussed the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the potential to work together to use of the Merrimack River as the natural resource to promote economic development, recreation and tourism.
- On May 15th I attended the Harbor Place leasing announcement as well as the Transformative Development partnership with MassDevelopment and Mass Technology Collaborative. Our offer to house the Fellow was acknowledged.
- On May 20th I represented MVPC at the MPO meeting

Regional Planning Day (RPD)

- As you know we usually hold our annual RPD event in June. Unfortunately we have not had any confirmation from the new administration as to their participation. As you may recall we had hoped to do the event to launch the administration's Community Compacts initiative. Because of this delay we have decided not to hold our RPD this June. We are currently exploring the idea of a RPD in September in partnership with the area chambers and the Greater Haverhill Foundation to promote the Merrimack River initiative discussed at the regional planners meeting. Tentative title for the event "Rising with the Tides"

Merrimack Valley Mayors & Managers Coalition (MVMMC)

- At the May 6th DPW meeting we continued to focused on the new EPA stormwater draft regulations and our regional stormwater collaborative effort. We had as a guest speaker Tim Chorey, Mass Department of Fish and Game, Stream Continuity Specialist. Tim discussed the permitting guidelines for constructing culverts.
- Ameresco, the region's ESCO provider has completed projects in Merrimac, North Andover and Lawrence. Salisbury is under construction. Methuen and Haverhill are adjusting their programs to deal with the net school spending issues. Methuen has expanded their program to include retrofitting their streetlights. Lawrence is considering a second phase and the Greater Lawrence Technical High School has started an IGA.
- Electric aggregation is moving forward with Newburyport, Haverhill and Methuen.

Legion Condo

- Unfortunately I have to report that the building suffered another break in this month. The alarm did its job in that nothing was taken and the perpetrator was arrested however not before he broke a window at RAM Engineering and our window to gain access. In our victim statement we are requesting restitution and hope to be reimbursed for our costs. The pre trial hearing is scheduled for June 9th.

Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System

- MVPC, along with 6 other RPAs received a letter from the Retirement systems stating that after 42 years of being members of the State retirement system MVPC is now required to contribute to the system. A meeting was held with the State retirement Board and MARPA. Corrective legislation has been drafted and I met with Representative Dempsey seeking his help. Representative Dempsey office is recommending that we engage the administration in this discussion. I had a good discussion with Eric Rebello, ANF budget Director, who will take it up with in-house Counsel.

8. Contracts

- We request Commission approval to enter into a contract with the Town of Groveland in the amount of \$2,750 in order to provide planning assistance and technical support to assist the Town in the development of a "Permitting Guidebook" which outlines Groveland's development permitting process. In 2009/2010 MVPC assisted the Town of Georgetown with a similar undertaking.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Snow to authorize the above-mentioned contract. The contract was unanimously approved.

9. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee, Bob Lavoie and Kevin Hagerty, reviewed the roster of MVPC Commissioners and recommends for election the following:

Chairman: Richard Byers of North Andover
Vice Chairman: Robert Lavoie of Amesbury
Secretary: Ed Ramsdell of Newburyport
Treasurer: Robert Snow of Rowley

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Hagerty. The nominations were unanimously approved.

10. Comprehensive Planning Update

Valley Support Team

Methuen: Dennis and Mike Parquette are members of the Methuen Downtown Redevelopment committee and we can offer MVPC's expertise in economic development and transportation planning to assist in their efforts. Methuen has decided to pursue a 40R District application and Mike met with their city planner to discuss this effort and how MVPC can assist in their efforts. The city has met with DHCD regarding the proposed 40R district application. Methuen may also be able to utilize other programs aimed for "Gateway Cities" such as: Cultural District, Housing Development Incentive Program, 43D for Housing, Tax Increment Financing, and Compact Neighborhood Districts

Merrimac: Mike has had discussions with and sent a proposal to the Town of Merrimac to update their Housing Production Plan that MVPC completed in 2009. We will be undertaking this effort this summer.

Groveland: Mike has met with Groveland officials (Assessor, Fire Chief, Planning Board members, and a Select Board member) to discuss permitting issues. Mike has sent a proposal to Groveland to develop a Permitting Guide and we ask the Commission to approve entering into a contract this evening.

DEPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH/MAPC GRANT - Worked with Betsy Goodrich and Todd Fontanella, Sr. to prepare a grant application for funds to incorporate "health initiatives" into a current project or study. We were successful in receiving \$8,000 to prepare a public health planning template for integrating healthy housing principles into Housing Production Plans. Todd and Mike had a conference call this week with MAPC to update them on the status of our work and to seek advice. This contract must be completed by June 30th.

MVED - MVED is making a loan in the amount of \$115,000 to Janitech, Inc., a janitorial services business headquartered in Methuen with a satellite office in Nashua, NH. Janitech provides nightly service to 125 customers with over 8.5 million square feet of commercial space. The client base varies from corporate headquarters, high tech manufacturers, medical facilities, R&D facilities, and educational institutions. Operations include janitorial services, cleaning, floor stripping and refinishing, carpet cleaning, flood response, window cleaning, and window restoration. Janitech employs 234 people. This loan is subordinate debt to the primary lender, United Growth Capital. They are providing \$650,000. This financing will provide a restructuring of debt that will increase cash flow and increase profitability, thus allowing the company to grow.

MERRIMACK VALLEY MEANS BUSINESS/EDA GRANT - We submitted a grant application to EDA to obtain funds for updating and marketing the MVMB website which has been a goal of the Mayor's/Manager's Coalition. We received a call from EDA requesting more information - specifically expanding on a section of the application discussing recent business closings in the region. Mike conducted the research; updated and improved the information previously developed, provided source documentation, and submitted the information to EDA. We should hear soon whether the grant application is successful.

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDDS) - The Commission approved a new five-year CEDDS Report in 2013, containing an updated list of goals, objectives, and action plan for the region. On June 1st, MVPC will submit a CEDDS update document (located in your packet) to the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The update highlights initiatives from the past year to support the Commission-approved CEDDS, such as our industry cluster analysis, Valley Support Team, continued regional Brownfields assistance, reviving our Merrimack Valley Means Business marketing effort, and new Census data from the latest American Community Survey. Mr. Parquette requested the Commission's authorization to submit the CEDDS update to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Note: There was a motion by Commissioner Hagerty and second by Commissioner Murphey. The motion was unanimously authorized to submit the CEDDS to EDA.

EDA PLANNING GRANT (2015 Federal Assistance for a Partnership Planning Program Investment) - We just received from EDA our formal invitation to submit our annual planning grant application. This year's grant application will be the third year of a three-year grant award. The grant is due by June 15.

DEVELOPMENT SPREADSHEET - Last month Tony provided you all with a spreadsheet identifying larger scale residential and commercial/industrial or mixed use developments recently completed or proposed. The spreadsheet identified projects by community, location, type, lot size, status, completion year, total # of housing units, and if commercial - total square footage. We identified 4,150 housing units proposed or recently built, and over 2 million square feet of non-residential development proposed - some of it new construction, some renovation of existing mill space. I want to remind you all to help us keep the list updated on a regular basis by identifying new projects in your communities.

MVMCM WIRELESS COMMUNICATION RFP - An RFP was developed to hire a wireless communications developer to work on behalf of our region's communities locating sites where new towers may be constructed in order to improve communication coverage. Two firms were interviewed and a decision will be made shortly.

MEETINGS - On April 27, Dennis, Joe Cosgrove and Mike Parquette met with officials from MassDevelopment and DHCD to discuss the proposed "Technical Assistance Connector." Somewhat similar to MVPC's Valley Support Team, the Connector will enable cities and towns to stimulate effective, long term economic development and improved planning through expanded local capacity and tactical intervention. RPA's will be one of the primary partners along with DHCD, EOHED, and MassDevelopment.

On May 12 we held a Planning Directors meeting and discussed regional planning with a focus on the Merrimack River; discussed population/employment projections and our recently developed "development projects" list; discussed the proposed Technical Assistance Connector; and discussed the hazard mitigation plan.

On May 27th MVPC will host another APA webinar titled: Urban Design, Sustainability, and the Environment."

11. Environmental Program Update

MVPC's Environmental Program Manager, Joe Cosgrove, report on activities since the last meeting.

Merrimack Valley Stormwater Collaborative:

- Finalizing www.merrimackvalleystormwater.org website tool providing stormwater management public education resources and management templates.
- May 6th meeting included presentation by Tim Chorey, new Stream Continuity Specialist with the Mass. Dept. of Fish & Game and statewide initiative in surveying community needs regarding culvert replacements.

Massachusetts Bays Program:

- MassBay's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan draft is on the MassBay website at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/mbp/publications/massbays-public-review-draft-ccmp-4-15-15.pdf>. Public comment on the plan draft is through May 29th.
- Sandy Funding subgrants have been executed with the Woods Hole Study Group and Massachusetts Audubon Society

Brownfields Program:

- Assessment program outreach includes potential applications/inquiries from City of Methuen-George's Bakery site, Groundwork Lawrence (North Canal site) and the City of Newburyport waterfront parcel.
- RLF Program has received drawdown invoice from Salisbury (in process) and is following up with inquiry from potential petroleum cleanup involving Habitat for Humanity property in Lawrence

Open Space & Recreation Plan:

- Boxford Draft Open Space & Recreation Plan received 5/20/2015 for review.

Tennessee Gas Pipeline:

- Preparing GIS mapping and resource impact analysis of proposed Kinder-Morgan lateral lines in Andover and Methuen.

Grants Availability:

- CZM Coastal Community Resilience...June 12th deadline
- CZM Green Infrastructure...June 12th deadline
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program...August 3rd (preliminary) and Nov. 23rd (final deadline)
- Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution Grant Program...June 2nd deadline MassDEP

12. Transportation Report Update

MVPC's Transportation Program Manager, Tony Komornick, reported on the following transportation activities.

Merrimack Valley MPO

The MVMPO met and approved an **amendment to the region's FFYs 2015 – FFY 2018 TIP** that would allow the Newbury Council on Aging to acquire a minibus later this year. Two Public Hearings on this amendment were held at the MVPC Offices on May 6th.

FFY 2016-2019 TIP

Mary Kay Beninati is developing the **Draft FFYs 2016-2019 TIP** for the MVMPO and at yesterday's meeting MVMPO members discussed possible project programming options that would make use of almost \$6 million in target funding that is available in FFYs 2017 and 2019 (see attachment).

UPWP

Tony has prepared Version 1 of the MVMPO's **Draft FFY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program** (see attached summary). Discussion at the MVMPO Meeting on this topic focused on the selection of the traffic/corridor studies to be included in the document.

Regional Transportation Plan

Tony, Betsy and Todd are now preparing the various draft sections of the document. Betsy and Todd have also been active in making presentations about the RTP to a wide range of organizations and groups throughout the region (see attached list). The Universe of Projects being considered for inclusion in the RTP was presented at yesterday's MVMPO Meeting (attachment)

Other

Tony and Betsy attended the May 7th **MVRTA Advisory Board Meeting** and reported on the status of Transportation Planning process in the region.

Tony has been working with the City of Lawrence and its consultant in developing a **TIGER Grant proposal** for the reconstruction of MA-114 in Lawrence and the northern section of North Andover.

Tony also attended the Kick-Off meeting for **Lawrence's Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Study**. Work on this grant will begin in earnest later this year and one of the focus areas will be how the cleanup of parcels in the downtown area could facilitate the reuse of the M&L Branch as a bicycle/pedestrian trail and linear park.

Todd participated in a Travel Training (ADA) session in Framingham sponsored by MassDOT and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

Todd attended a meeting on the status of the **Whittier Bridge Replacement / I-95 Widening Project**, which was held at Salisbury Town Hall on May 12th.

Tony and Betsy met with Mayor Fiorentini, City Engineer John Pettis and Andrew Herlihy of the Community Development Office to discuss the parameters to be considered in developing a **Complete Streets Ordinance/Resolution for Haverhill**.

Tony met with Mayor Fiorentini and Haverhill Engineer John Pettis **to identify the City's top priority roadway and bridge projects** for inclusion in the upcoming Regional Transportation Plan.

Betsy and MVPC hosted the May 14th meeting of the **Haverhill Bicycle Committee**, which will play a key role in developing the City's Complete Streets Ordinance/Resolution.

Todd and Tony met with MassDOT staff on April 21 to review progress on the **MVMPO's Title VI** activities.

Tony attended the May 14th meetings of the **Haverhill Traffic and Safety Committee** as well as the **Newburyport Traffic and Safety Committee**.

Jim Terlizzi and Danny Ovalle completed collecting information on the location and condition of all sidewalks in the City as part of MVPC's contract to update **Haverhill's Asset Management Program**.

GIS staff, Jim, and Danny are working cooperatively in applying the computer application that MVPC developed to streamline collection of **road surface condition information** for federal aid roadways in the region. Road surface condition data has been collected for all or part of Haverhill, Groveland, Boxford, Salisbury, Amesbury, Newburyport, North Andover, Merrimac and Rowley.

Danny completed preparation of the **2014 Community Traffic Count Reports**.

Jim and Danny collected peak period vehicle turning movement counts that will be used in evaluating traffic conditions as part of our **Broadway (Route 28) / Haverhill Street (Route 110) Intersection Traffic Study**.

Todd attended the May 14th meeting of the **Merrimack Valley Regional Coordinating Council**.

Upcoming Meetings

- DPW Directors Meeting (June 3rd);
- RTP Listening Session at Salisbury Town Hall (June 4th);
- MVRTA Advisory Board Meeting (June 4th);
- Transportation Program Managers Meeting (June 9th);
- 25% Design Hearing for Salisbury Rail Trail (June 9th);
- Older Drivers' Safety Summit @ UMass Boston (June 16th);
- MVMPO Meeting (Late June - TBD)

13. Local and Regional Issues - None

14. Other - None

15. Adjourn

There was a motion and a second to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

I hereby certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission meeting held on May 21, 2015.

Ed Ramsdell, Secretary