



MINUTES

Thursday – November 16, 2017

- 1. **Call to Order** –Vice Chairman Snow called the meeting to order at 7:00pm
- 2. **Roll Call** –In Secretary Ramsdell’s absence, MVPC’s Office Administrator Nancy Lavallee called the roll and declared a quorum present. The following Commissioners and Staff were in attendance:

Commissioners

Amesbury	Robert Lavoie
Boxford	Jim Barnes, Treasurer
Georgetown	John Cashell
Groveland	Robert Arakelian
Haverhill	April Der Boghosian
Newbury	John Weis
North Andover	Richard Byers
Rowley	Robert Snow, Vice Chair
Salisbury	Lou Masiello
West Newbury	Brian Murphey

Staff

- Karen Conard, Executive Director
- Joe Cosgrove, Environmental Program Manager
- Tony Komornick, Transportation Program Manager
- Mike Parquette, Economic Development Program Manager
- Jen Dunlap, Finance Administrator
- Nancy Lavallee, Office Administrator
- Betsy Goodrich, Sr. Transportation Planner
- Jim Terlizzi, Sr. Transportation Engineer

3. Adoption of October Meeting Minutes

The October minutes were reviewed and recommended for adoption.

***Vote:* There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Murphey to approve the October meeting minutes. The October minutes were unanimously approved.**

4. Adoption of the October Warrant

Treasurer Jim Barnes reported that the October warrant was reviewed favorably and recommended the Commission’s authorization for adoption.

***Vote:* There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Murphey. The October warrant was unanimously approved.**

5. Chairperson's Report

Chairwoman Theresa Park's absence Vice Chairman Snow reported on the following activities since the last meeting in October.

- This evening, our featured speakers are Tony Komornick, Transportation Program Manager, and Betsy Goodrich, Senior Transportation Planner. Topics will include Complete Streets and Performance Measures as being redefined by the federal and state regulatory authorities.
- The Personnel Committee, consisted of Chairwoman Park, Vice Chair Snow and Kevin Hagerty, met on November 9th at noon to discuss performance evaluations and recommended salary adjustments and increases. The Committee's report will follow the comments from our Executive Director.

6. Executive Director

Executive Director Karen Conard reported on the following activities since the last meeting in September.

Meetings with Community Leaders

- October MARPA meeting topics included 2018 DLTA programming, MA Global Warming Solutions regulations update for the reduction of Greenhouse Gases, FY18 Planning Assistance Grants offered by the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs and Zoning Reform
- Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Annual Board Meeting, at which I was elected to serve as Clerk/Secretary (as outgoing Clerk/Secretary Ann Ormond had resigned)
- Internal bi-weekly meetings to support the Regional Housing Plan (Conard, Parquette, Vincent and Whitten)
- Monthly all-staff meeting and Program Managers meeting
- Round 2 of Community Housing Workshops (goals and strategies conversation) in Andover, Groveland, Merrimac, West Newbury and North Andover, with remaining workshops taking place within the next few weeks in Haverhill, Boxford, Amesbury, Salisbury and Rowley
- Issued an Invitation for Bid (IFB) in collaboration with the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments for cleanup services of the Merrimack River and adjacent riverbank
- Attended announcements of MassWorks grants in Lawrence and Methuen, and learned about the MassWorks grant for North Andover in the paper
- Hosted the monthly DPW Directors Meeting, with topics including an Illicit Discharge Detection Model Project (Microbial Source Tracker Tool) presentation by Geosyntec and sidewalk inventory/conditions analysis conversation as it related to grant opportunities and the Regional Transportation Plan
- Hosted the monthly MPO meeting, where several amendments were discussed and approved (most notably the increase from \$79 million to over \$110 million for the replacement of the I-495 Bridge over the Merrimack River in Haverhill)
- Attended the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce's Public Safety Breakfast, with Police Chiefs from the region and guest speaker Essex County District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett
- Attended the dedication of Harbor Place, with featured speaker Cardinal Sean O'Malley and former State Representative Brian Dempsey
- Hosted the kickoff meeting for the Lawrence Textile Innovation Center feasibility study effort with our partner Salem State University
- Assisted Greater Lawrence Technical School with data to support 2 separate grant submissions for their athletic complex improvement program
- Attended the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce's Women in Business Luncheon, with featured speaker Congresswoman Niki Tsongas
- Attended TDI Partnership meeting with Haverhill team
- Met with the Personnel Committee to discuss performance evaluations and recommended salary adjustments/increases

- Met with the new Executive Director of the Valley Works Career Center in Lawrence to discuss mutual interests and specifically the Textile Innovation Center feasibility study
- Met with the Haverhill Planning Board to update them on the process involved with the Housing Production Plan and our Regional Plan
- Hosted the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative session “Roles and Responsibilities for Planning and Zoning Boards Part 1”
- Hosted the first meeting of all 15 Mayors, Town Managers, Town Administrators along with DPW Directors and others from our Stormwater Management Collaborative with a presentation by Horsley Witten on Stormwater Management fundamentals and best practices

Coming Attractions

- 11/17 – Monthly MARPA Meeting
- 11/20–Haverhill Housing Workshop #2
- 11/27 – Meeting with Bread and Roses Housing to discuss opportunities
- 11/27 – Boxford Housing Workshop #2 (rescheduled due to October storm)
- 11/28 – Andover Housing Workshop #2 Part 2
- 11/28 – Amesbury Housing Workshop #2
- 11/29 – Salisbury Housing Workshop #2
- 11/30 – CEDS Meeting with all 15 Mayors/Managers/Administrators with featured speaker
MA Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack
- 12/5 – Lawrence Partnership Annual Meeting honoring David Tibbetts
- 12/5 – MARPA meeting with State Representative Steven Kulik re: Zoning Reform
- 12/6 – Monthly DPW Directors/Stormwater Management Collaborative meeting here at MVPC
- 12/6 – Quarterly Planners’ Luncheon
- 12/6 – Lawrence Planning Board re: Housing Production Plan
- 12/7 – CEDS Priority Development Areas Task Force Meeting
- 12/13 – Rowley Housing Workshop #2

Merrimack Valley Mayors & Managers Coalition (MVMMC)

- November 15 meeting = session on Stormwater Management
- November 30 meeting = Joint meeting (CEDS Committee) with Secretary Pollack
- December’s meeting will be about the branding and marketing effort

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. MARPA has appointed Janet Pierce, the Executive Director of CMRPC, to represent them on the committee required in the 2016 budget to resolve this issue.

UPDATE:

We met with Nick Favorito (State Retirement Board) and A&F Undersecretary Jennifer Sullivan on November 8th to reiterate our position regarding our inability to pay and continued to educate them on our uniqueness and fiscal challenges. A&F plans to draft a recommendation to the Legislature and send to all affected RPAs for review and comment sometime in mid-December. The December 15 MARPA meeting will be when the group decides on a final recommendation back to A&F, with a follow up meeting of A&F and the State Retirement Board on December 18th or 19th.

7. Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee met for their annual meeting on November 9. The minutes are as follows.

Meeting called to order 12:05 pm

Members Present: Commissioners: Theresa Park, Kevin Hagerty and Bob Snow.

Staff Present: Executive Director Karen Conard and Finance Administrator Jen Dunlap

Motion made by Commissioner Hagerty, seconded by Commissioner Snow to accept the minutes from November 9, 2016 personnel committee meeting, unanimously approved.

The Committee reviewed the Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook and there are no recommended changes.

The Committee reviewed the job descriptions and there are no recommended changes.

The Committee reviewed the job descriptions and there was one recommended change from Executive Director Conard. Motion made by Commissioner Hagerty, seconded by Commissioner Snow to add the job description of Senior Economic Development Planner for Angela Vincent who is currently Economic Development Planner.

The Executive Director reviewed staff evaluations with the Committee. The Commission had authorized up to 3.5% for salary adjustments in FY 2017 Budget. After discussion with the Executive Director and listening to her recommendations the Committee recommended a series of salary adjustments based on the staff evaluations:

- 10 – Very Good 3.0%
- 3 – Good 2.0%
- 1 – Satisfactory 1.0%
- 5 employees were recommended for a one-time salary adjustment - \$13,000 in total.

The Committee reviewed the Executive Director's performance for the past year. The Executive Director expressed to the Committee that she would like to forego any increase in pay as it is her first year and instead focus on increases for her staff. The Committee respected her willingness to forego any raise but they felt she was doing a commendable job for which she should be compensated and 2% seemed like an acceptable reflection of that. The Committee recommended a 2% increase for the Executive Director.

It was also pointed out that all the recommended raises would increase the annual salary account by 3.5%. A motion was made by Commissioner Hagerty and seconded by Commissioner Snow to approve the recommended salary adjustments, unanimously approved.

The Committee reviewed the Salary Scales and changes were made to update the chart for the past two years' performance increases.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:45pm

Vote: There was a motion to adopt recommendations by the Personnel Committee by Commissioner Cashell and second by Commissioner Byers. The motion was unanimously approved.

8. Contracts

The following Contracts and Proposals request the authorization of the Commission.

- Boxford - \$2,800 Boxford Parcel Mapping and MIMAP Contract – covers the update of their parcel maps and operation of MIMAP through FY18. No match required.
- Contract Amendment #1 with Credere Associates LLC providing an additional \$125,000 for Brownfields Assessment Program tasks. With the amendment, the revised obligation total under the contract is not to exceed \$220,000.
- Contract Amendment #1 with Weston & Sampson Engineers Inc. providing an additional \$100,000 for Brownfields Assessment Program tasks. With the amendment, the revised obligation total under the contract is not to exceed \$150,000.

Note: There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Murphey. The above-mentioned contracts were unanimously approved.

9. Featured Topic – Transportation Issues

MVPC's Sr. Transportation Planner, Betsy Goodrich presented a PowerPoint presentation on Complete Streets. Ms. Goodrich explained that Complete Streets is looking at the entire Right of Way and designed to accommodate walkers, cyclists and wheelchairs and all uses including the sidewalks. Complete Streets is the key ingredient to Economic Development mobility factors to get people out and about safely. Her presentation included before and after photos of various locations to illustrate exactly what Complete Streets means to getting around safely within pedestrian friendly neighborhoods, utilizing properly designed and marked crosswalks, bus stops, bike lanes, and street signals.

Ms. Goodrich noted that funding is available to communities. Before applying for funding, each community must have an approved policy and then prepare a prioritization plan to apply for up to \$400,000 (through Chapter 90 funding). Ms. Goodrich reported that Seabrook and Lawrence applied and received funding. Georgetown and Merrimac have applied for funding and Newburyport and Haverhill have registered expressing interest in the program. Haverhill has a draft policy, when the policy is approved they will develop a prioritization plan and then apply for the funding.

MVPC can assist with developing policies in ways of working groups, review and provide ideas for prioritization. MVPC can also provide pedestrian, bicycle and sidewalk condition inventory analyses which can be helpful in developing the policy. MVPC recently submitted applications to do sidewalk inventories for seven (7) communities (Amesbury, Andover, Georgetown, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover and Salisbury).

MVPC is nearing the end of the Haverhill Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety three-year grant program with the City of Haverhill Police Department. This has been an enforcement and environment education program around pedestrian and bicycle safety focused in high crash areas. The Police Department is tracking and stopping pedestrians and cyclists. Although they may give citations, the full focus is to make offenders aware of their behavior and why they made the choices they did. This information helps on how people are using the streets and working towards making them safer, such as placement of crosswalks, pedestrian lights.

MVPC's Transportation Program Manager, Tony Komornick gave a presentation on Safety Performance Measures and Targets. A lot of work has been done by the MPOs and MassDOT to develop these new safety performance measures and targets. As an MPO we are responsible for adopting MassDOT's new Performance Targets or coming up with our own targets.

He said that the recent draft planning certification review that USDOT prepared for the Merrimack Valley MPO notes that MAP 21, the previous Federal Transportation Planning Authorization Bill, placed increased

emphasis on the need to implement Performance Management within the Federal Aid Highway and Transit programs and requires the use of performance based programs statewide. The FAST Act continues this emphasis. Tony described the statewide performance measures and those currently being used by the Merrimack Valley MPO. He reviewed the MVMPO's goals to increase safety for all modes and the objective to reduce all overall crashes for all modes. MPO targets include reducing non-interstate fatalities by 10% over 5 years, and increasing Safe Routes to School facilities in the region by 10% over 5 years.

For years, MVPC has been tracking highway safety crash information by looking at MassDOT's crash data and looking at their identification of high location crash clusters, which uses the Equivalent Property Damage Only methodology to assign a score to each crash. For example, if a crash included an injury, it would be given a score of 5. If there was a fatality involved, it would be given a score of 10 while a property damage only crash would receive a score of 1. Mr. Komornick referred to tables (2007-2011) that reflect the different crash scores over that 5-year period. This and similar tables were reviewed to identify the highest crash score locations and then determine if a study or a project at these locations had been completed or needed to be undertaken as part of the unified planning Work Program.

In the past year FHWA established performance measures that all MPO's will need to track. This is a major focus of all state DOT's. In order to establish targets for these measures, MassDOT had to look at a 5-year rolling average of the fatalities in the state along with the number of incapacitating injuries. He noted that statewide and in the Merrimack Valley fatalities and incapacitating injuries have been going down, other regions have been showing an increase. Although the state's goal is to reach zero fatalities they realize they are not near that target.

Mr. Komornick reviewed the safety targets that were adopted by MassDOT in August 2017. The Merrimack Valley MPO and the other MPOs in the state will have to take action on adopting these and/or other targets by the end February 2018. Incapacitating injuries will be a key focus. He said that town by town data for the Merrimack Valley region may become available in the near future.

10. Local and Regional Issues

There was discussion on 8 million gallons of raw sewage spill from the Greater Lawrence Sewer Department into the Merrimack River during a storm power outage October 29-30, 2017. There was a delay with internal communications due the computer servers being down and with getting the backup generators up and running, causing the spill to occur. MVPC's Joe Cosgrove noted that spills happen more often than they should and needs to be addressed.

There was discussion among the group on their communities' bylaws relative to solar energy communities.

11. Other

12. Adjourn

There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Murphey to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.

I hereby certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission meeting held on November 16, 2017

Ed Ramsdell, Secretary