



Monthly Meeting

JOIN US FOR SOME HOLIDAY CHEER

Date: Thursday, December 19

Time: *6 pm – Social Hour*

7pm - 7:15 pm – Meeting

7:15 pm - Dinner

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of November Meeting Minutes
4. Warrant for November
5. Chairman's Comments
6. Director's Report
7. Contracts
8. Local and Regional Issues
9. Other
10. Adjourn

MERRIMACK VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

ROLLCALL FOR THE MONTH OF December 19, 2019

TAKEN BY: Kathleen Bradley Colwell *KSC*

Quorum
16

COMMISSION COMMITTEE MEETING

AMESBURY

Robert Laplante

C[]

Vacant

A[]

ANDOVER

Lisa Schwarz

C[]

John J. McDonnell

A[]

BOXFORD

Jim Barnes, Treasurer

C[]

Joe Hill

A[]

GEORGETOWN

John Cashell

C[]

Vacant

A[]

GROVELAND

Rebecca Oldham

C[]

Robert Arakelian

A[]

HAVERHILL

April Der Boghosian

C[]

William Pillsbury

A[]

LAWRENCE

Vilma Martinez-Dominguez

C[]

Vacant

A[]

MERRIMAC

John Thomas

C[]

Vacant

A[]

METHUEN

Kathleen Bradley Colwell
Secretary

C[]

William Buckley

A[]

NEWBURY

Martha Taylor

C[]

Peter Paicos

A[]

NEWBURYPORT

Rick Taintor

C[]

Bonnie Sontag

A[]

NORTH ANDOVER

Rick Byers

C[]

Jean Enright

A[]

ROWLEY

Robert Snow, Chairman

C[]

Joe Perry

A[]

SALISBURY

Lou Masiello

C[]

Jerry Klima

A[]

WEST NEWBURY

Brian Murphey

C[]

Vacant

A[]

REPRESENTATIVE-AT-LARGE

Brad Buschur

C[]

Heather McMann

A[]

Staff

Nancy Kovalice

Jen Klunlop

Jen. Hughes

Lony Komornick

Betsy Goodrick

Jane Luzzi

Mary Kay Benixate

Nate Robertson

Jessie Whittier

Mikoyia Minor

Guests

- Karen Conrad

- Mike Parquette

MINUTES

Thursday – November 21, 2019

1. **Call to Order** – Chairperson Park called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call** – In place of the vacant Secretary position, MVPC’s Nancy Lavallee called the roll and declared a quorum present. The following Commissioners and Staff were in attendance:

Commissioners

| | |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| Amesbury | Robert Laplante |
| Boxford | Jim Barnes, Treasurer |
| Georgetown | John Cashell |
| Groveland | Rebecca Oldham |
| Haverhill | April Der Boghosian |
| Lawrence | Theresa Park, Chairperson |
| Methuen | Kathleen Colwell |
| Newburyport | Rick Taintor |
| North Andover | Rick Byers |
| Rowley | Robert Snow, Vice Chairman |
| Salisbury | Lou Masiello |
| West Newbury | Brian Murphey |
| Rep-At-Large | Brad Buschur |

Staff

Karen Conard, Executive Director
Tony Komornick, Transportation Program Manager
Jen Dunlap, Finance Administrator
Nancy Lavallee, Office Administrator
Mikayla Minor, GIS Technician
Jerrard Whitten, GIS-IT Program Manager
Betsy Goodrich, Senior Transportation Planner
Nate Robertson, Community & Economic Development Planner
Jen Hughes, Environmental Program Manager

3. **Adoption of October Meeting Minutes**

In place of the vacant Secretary position, MVPC’s Nancy Lavallee reported that Chairperson Park reviewed the October minutes and recommended the Commission’s authorization for adoption.

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

4. **Warrant for October**

Treasurer Jim Barnes reported that he reviewed the October Warrant and recommended the Commission’s authorization for adoption.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Snow and seconded by Commissioner Murphey to approve the October Warrant. The October warrant was unanimously approved.

5. Chairperson's Comments

Chairperson Park reported that MVPC's new website, mvpc.org, will be available on Tuesday, November 26 and encouraged all to visit the site.

Ms. Park thanked Methuen Commissioner Kathleen Colwell for offering to serve as Secretary, which will be effective immediately with the Commission's authorization.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Laplante and seconded by Commissioner Oldham. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Park noted that Bob Snow has agreed to be Chairman of the Executive Director Search Committee. Members of the committee include Lisa Schwarz, Kathleen Colwell, Martha Taylor, Lou Masiello and John Cashell. The staff will be represented by Jen Dunlap and Tony Komornick. She added that this effort will require a full commitment of those involved for the interview dates once they are established throughout December and possibly into early January. Resumes for the position are due November 22.

6. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Karen Conard reported on activities since the last meeting in October (see attached detailed report), highlighting the following:

Ms. Conard reported that MVPC hosted the Merrimack River Summit with the MA Smart Growth Alliance and the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG). She thanked Chairperson Park and Commissioners Buschur, Colwell and Taylor for attending, along with Newburyport Mayor Holaday and Haverhill Chief of Staff Allison Heartquist.

MVPC also hosted a joint meeting of the DPW Directors/Stormwater Collaborative, Planners and Economic Development staff and Mayors, Town Managers and Town Administrators in the form of a Technology Forum held at Merrimac Town Hall.

Ms. Conard reported that she met with Northern Essex Community College President Lane Glenn to transition the Merrimack River District Commission Chairman role to him during the search for her replacement.

Ms. Conard presented the Rural Policy Plan for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, an effort funded by DLTA from all 13 Regional Planning Agencies. She suggested that the Commission invite a member of the Rural Policy Advisory Commission to give a presentation on the plan at a future Commission meeting.

Ms. Conard noted several upcoming events that may interest be of interest to the commissioners.

Ms. Conard asked MVPC's Tony Komornick to address MVPC's Executive Committee (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary) advising that they are also members of the MVPC Adjudicatory Board (along with MassDOT District 4 Highway Director or his/her designee). He brought the Executive Committee up to date on a request from the City of Amesbury for the discontinuance of a small section of County Road Easement located on the parcel found at 340 Main Street. The Adjudicatory Board will be notified on a meeting that is hoped to take place in mid-December.

7. Contracts

The following contract was presented for authorization by the Commission.

- **Merrimac** - \$3,500: FY2020 Parcel Update – No matching funds required.

8. Personnel Committee

a. Staff Evaluations- Annual Review

Chairperson Park reported that the Personnel Committee (Theresa Park, Robert Snow, Robert Laplante) met for their annual meeting on November 21. At this meeting, Executive Director Karen Conard and Finance Administrator Jen Dunlap reviewed staff job descriptions, salary scales and personnel evaluations for all staff with the Committee. The Executive Director also made recommendations for performance-based salary increases ranging between 2% and 3% along with five (5) one-time salary adjustments totaling \$13,000. The Finance Administrator explained that the increases to salary would use the full 3.5% included in the budget by the Finance Committee and approved by the Commission for annual increases. Ms. Park requested the Commission's authorization for the recommended salary increases and adjustments as presented become effective on January 1, 2020.

Vote: There was a motion to adopt salary increase recommendations made by the Personnel Committee by Commissioner Byers and seconded by Commissioner Barnes. The motion was unanimously approved.

b. Updated MVPC Personnel Policy / Employee Handbook – Adoption

The Executive Director and Finance Administrator introduced the DRAFT update of the MVPC Personnel Policies / Employee Handbook prepared in consultation with Human Resource Attorneys at Bowditch and Dewey. The existing MVPC Policy and Procedures Manual has been reviewed and revised as needed on an annual basis as part of the Personnel Committee meeting; however, this document has not been updated to this extent since its origination. The purpose of the update is to ensure compliance with all federal and state policies regarding personnel in order to more fully protect MVPC and its workers. In this update MVPC's core policies pertaining to how its employees function at MVPC remain largely unchanged, but it was necessary to add language and additional standardized policies to be more compliant with state and federal requirements. The Finance Administrator summarized the changes as: the addition of language regarding classification of employees as Exempt / Non-Exempt, the reductions of the mandatory minimum meal break to the state minimum of ½ hour and a change in our core hours to be worked for flexible time purposes to 10:00 am to 2:30 pm from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. In addition, numerous standard policy language was added, such as "Work Place Violence Prevention," "Drug and Alcohol Use" and "COBRA." The Finance Administrator explained that many of these added policies were in practice already, but unwritten. The Finance Administrator ended by saying the HR Attorney concluded we now had a compliant document.

Vote: There was a motion to adopt the updated MVPC Personnel Policies/Employee Handbook by Commissioner Snow and seconded by Commissioner Byers. The motion was unanimously approved.

9. Sidewalk Inventory Analysis Presentation

MVPC's Betsy Goodrich reported that in early 2018, MVPC was awarded a grant from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) to conduct sidewalk condition surveys in seven Merrimack Valley communities – Amesbury, Andover, Georgetown, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover and Salisbury. The survey was done to improve pedestrian transportation one sidewalk at a time. In June 2018, MVPC hired four college interns to conduct this study, along with Mike Parquette and Dan Ovalle who helped finish the project. Armed with iPads and using a GIS-based app, the interns recorded data on the locations and condition of sidewalks in all seven communities. In addition, the existence, condition and basic compliance information for ADA ramps were also recorded. Ms. Goodrich presented the data using GIS mapping. She noted that the interns did a remarkable job during the heat of the summer.

10. CEDS Year One Update

MVPC's Nate Robertson updated the commissioners on CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) activities for the past year. He also presented the We Are MV website (wearemv.com) and explained that We Are MV was developed as a regional marketing and economic development initiative that features properties, projects, success stories, and business opportunities in the Valley.

11. Local and Regional Issues - None


12. Other

Chairperson Park reported that the Commission will meet Thursday, December 19 at Joseph's Trattoria in Ward Hill for a Holiday meeting beginning at 6 p.m. with a social hour and buffet meal followed by a brief meeting. She added not to forget to wear ugly holiday sweaters.

13. Adjourn

There was a motion by Commissioner Laplante and second by Commissioner Snow to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 pm.

I hereby certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission meeting held on November 21, 2019.



Kathleen Bradley Colwell
Secretary



MERRIMACK VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 2019
MONTHLY WARRANT # 5
 December 19, 2019

| Check # | Amount | Vendor | Description |
|---------|--------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 16632 | \$ 4,434.01 | BANK OF AMERICA PAYMENTS | CREDIT CARD CHARGES-NOV'19 |
| 16633 | \$ 163.31 | BANK OF AMERICA-BANK FEES | SERVICE CHARGES-NOV'19 |
| 16634 | \$ 233.63 | BATTLE GROUNDS COFFEE | MVMCM/LEGISLATORS EVENT CATERER |
| 16635 | \$ 440.00 | BOWDITCH & DEWEY, LLP | FINAL PAYMENT FULLY UPDATED PERSONNEL POLICIES |
| 16636 | \$ 93.70 | ESSEX COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT. | DIRECT(AMESBURY)-ADJUDICATORY BRD MEETING PAPERS SERVED |
| 16637 | \$ 499.63 | COMCAST | PHONE/INTERNET CHARGES-NOV'19 |
| 16638 | \$ 437.20 | COSTAR REALTY INFO. INC. | DIRECT(DLTA)-REAL ESTATE DATA CHARGES-NOV'19 |
| 16639 | \$ 11,010.28 | CREDERE ASSOCIATES, LLC | DIRECT(EPA)-BROWNFIELDS CONSULTANT |
| 16640 | \$ 102.49 | CRYSTAL ROCK LLC | WATER/COOLER RENTAL-NOV'19 |
| 16641 | \$ 432.63 | JENIFER D. DUNLAP | EXPENSE REIMB.-NOV'19 |
| 16642 | \$ 532.21 | E.S.R.I. INC. | DIRECT(BOX.STORM/DMF)-2 ADDTL FIELD WORKER LICENSES |
| 16643 | \$ 250.00 | ESSEX NAT.HERITAGE COMM.INC. | AREA PHOTOS |
| 16644 | \$ 624.11 | ESSEX MARINA | DIRECT(NWF)-WINTERIZE BOAT |
| 16645 | \$ 33.46 | FEDERAL EXPRESS | EXPRESS POSTAGE |
| 16646 | \$ 245.00 | GRANTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS | MO.ACCTG.SFTWR.MAINT./LIC-NOV'19 |
| 16647 | \$ 365.00 | GREATER HAVERHILL CHAMBER OF | ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES |
| 16648 | \$ 102.08 | JENNIFER HUGHES | DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-NOV'19 |
| 16649 | \$ 189.87 | JENIFER D. DUNLAP - PETTY CASH | PETTY CASH REIMBURSEMENT-NOV'19 |
| 16650 | \$ 512.50 | KIA MOTORS FINANCE | MVPC LEASED VEHICLE PMT.-NOV.&DEC'19 |
| 16651 | \$ 23.78 | ANTHONY KOMORNICK | DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-NOV'19 |
| 16652 | \$ 460.00 | ELLEN KUHL | CLEANING - NOV'19 |
| 16653 | \$ 13,972.50 | MAINTSTAR, INC. | DIRECT(CMMS COMMUNITIES)-ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SUPPORT |
| 16654 | \$ 311.10 | MERR.VALLEY ECON. D.C. | RENT UNIT G-FEB'20 |
| 16655 | \$ 411.00 | M.V.CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES |
| 16656 | \$ 25.23 | MIKAYLA MINOR | DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-NOV'19 |
| 16657 | \$ 3,348.96 | MVPC REGIONAL RES.C. | RENT UNITS A-H,F - FEB'20 |
| 16658 | \$ 453.15 | NATIONAL GRID (GAS CHARGES) | GAS CHARGES-NOV'19 |
| 16659 | \$ 333.37 | NATIONAL GRID | ELECTRICITY-NOV'19 |
| 16660 | \$ 1,377.50 | NATIONAL BUSINESS FURNITURE | FIXED ASSET INVESTMENT-GIS MEETING SPACE FURNITURE |
| 16661 | \$ 141.75 | NORTH OF BOSTON MEDIA GROUP | DIRECT(DLTA)-HIGHWAY MAINT.BID NOTICE |
| 16662 | \$ 149.63 | PETER PHIPPEN | DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-NOV'19 |
| 16663 | \$ 39.50 | PROFESSIONAL DRAFTING INC. | DIRECT(NEWBURY)-LAMINATION PARCEL MAPS |
| 16664 | \$ 112.52 | NATHANIEL ROBERTSON | DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-NOV'19 |
| 16665 | \$ 1,112.95 | STAPLES CREDIT PLAN | OFFICE SUPPLIES |
| 16666 | \$ 226.28 | JAMES TERLIZZI | DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-NOV'19 |
| 16667 | \$ 1,500.00 | TIM SIMMONS | DIRECT(NWF)-SANDY #2 CONSULTANT-ECOLOGIST |
| 16668 | \$ 159.96 | VERIZON WIRELESS | IPAD DATA FEES (4)- NOV'19 |
| 16669 | \$ 747.61 | VERIZON CONNECT NWF,INC. | DIRECT(NBPT)-FLEET MONITORING CHARGES&EQUIP. |

\$ 45,607.90

Warrant Paid Items:

NONE

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|---|---------------|
| TOTAL | | | |
| WARRANT | \$ 45,607.90 | **TOTAL PASS THRU TO DIRECT PROJECTS = | \$ 25K |
| | | **TOTAL PASS THRU - GREAT MARSH PARTNERS (NWF/DMF) = | \$ 2K |

APPROVED BY:

ROBERT SNOW, ACTING CHAIRMAN

Date

Monthly Commission Meeting

Chairman's Report

December 19, 2019

- Welcome everyone to our holiday celebration and very brief meeting! Our first order of business is to formally acknowledge the resignation of Chairperson Theresa Park as both Commissioner representing the City of Lawrence and Chairperson. With that said, let's welcome Vilma Martinez-Dominguez as Commissioner representing the City of Lawrence. Vilma is the Community Development Director for the City.
- As Acting Chairman, I would like to propose that the next order of business is to appoint Tony Komornick as Acting Executive Director, following the resignation of outgoing Executive Director Karen Conard.
- Tonight, we will have an abbreviated Commission meeting. In addition to the review and approval of the Warrant for the month of November, we will review and approve Contracts.
- As an update on the search process for a new Executive Director, the Search Committee (consisting of Lisa Schwarz, Kathleen Colwell, Martha Taylor, Lou Masiello, John Cashell and myself along with staff members Jen Dunlap and Tony Komornick) met on December 3rd with consultant Bernie Lynch to review the 22 resumes received. The Committee held a first round of interviews on December 11th and 12th and anticipates conducting second interviews with finalists.

MONTHLY COMMISSION MEETING
Executive Director's Report
December 19, 2019

Meetings/Activities of Note

- Met with Amesbury Mayor-Elect Kassandra Gove to assist in her transition.
- Met with the Program Managers to discuss the Regional Cluster Initiative proposed by the Business Recovery Steering Committee.
- Spoke with State Senator Diana DiZoglio relative to developing a scope of work in support of the \$100,000 grant anticipated from EOEEA for a pilot flagging program in Newburyport.
- Hosted the Quarterly Planners' Luncheon Meeting, with presentations on the City of Lowell's Bike/Pedestrian Plan, MVPC's MVP Story Map and Methuen's Riverfront Master Plan.
- Held the monthly all-staff meeting and Program Managers meeting.
- Held the Semi-Annual Joint Meeting of the State Legislative Delegation with Mayors, Town Managers and Town Administrators at the Haverhill iHub at Harbor Place. Guest speakers included Lynn Mayor Tom McGee and Bedford Town Manager Sarah Stanton on the Commuter Rail Communities Coalition.
- Attended the December MARPA meeting – topics included Partnership for Growth, the new statewide economic development plan, CHAPA's Municipal Engagement Initiative and the 2020 U.S. Census.

Contracts & Proposals

December 19, 2019

The following Contract requires the authorization of the Commission.

- **MassDEP - \$50,000**

Merrimack River District Commission – Creation and support of the Merrimack River District Commission to be housed at MVPC. The majority of the funding will support a scope of work that will establish a consistent, unified, and dependable framework for decisions and funding priorities within the Merrimack River Basin, which will be composed of two central pieces:

- A unified vision and statement of regional goals
- A strategy for a centralized hub of data to support communication, education, funding priorities, research, regulatory compliance, and consensus-building

- **EEA - \$100,000 – Newburyport**

Conduct work to establish a pilot flagging program in Newburyport on the Merrimack River

- **MVPC & UNH (University of New Hampshire) - \$35,953**

1. Marsh Erosion and Feasibility Study (Joppa Flatts in Newburyport)
2. Marsh Slope and Migration Study (Great Marsh, Essex MA)

- **Newburyport - \$3,026.85 (No match required)**

GPS Tracking: Covers the operation of GPS tracking services for the City's private contractors for a period of six (6) months.

