

# Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting

Wednesday, February 14, 2018

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

60 Congress Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Large Conference Room

Springfield, Massachusetts 01104

## Present were:

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Mike Bolduc	MassDOT District 2	Jennifer Lee	Stavros/PVRCC
Randy Brown	Southwick DPW	Mike McManus	City of Holyoke
Dan Call	Westfield Columbia Rail Trail	Dawn Nims	Agawam Engineering
Matt Chase	VHB	Jim Reidy	South Hadley
Jim Czach	West Springfield DPW	Doug Roberts	Granville DPW
Nick Dines	Town of Williamsburg	Steve Savaria	Fuss & O'Neill, Inc
Wayne Feiden	Northampton Planning	Gabe Sherman	MassDOT – OTP
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1	Jason Skeels	Amherst
Matthew Gamelli	City of Westfield	Matt Sokop	Springfield
Jeff Hoynoski	MassDOT District 2	Marvin Ward	MassBike Easthampton
Betsy Johnson	Walk/Bike Springfield	Steve Williams	Belchertown
Nick Lapointe	Fuss & O'Neill, Inc.		
<b>PVPC Staff</b>			
Rana Al-Jammal	Senior Transportation Planner	Jeff McCollough	Sr. Transportation Planner
David Elvin	Principal Planner	Dana Roscoe	Principal Planner
Amir Kouzehkanani	Principal Transportation Planner	Gary Roux	Principal Planner
Andy McCaul	Senior Transportation Planner	Louise Sullivan	Admin Support

## 1. Introductory Remarks

Jim Czach opened the JTC meeting at 10:23 a.m. and he asked everyone to introduce themselves.

## 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Czach asked for a motion to approve the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) minutes of the January 10, 2018.

MOVED BY RANDY BROWN OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHWICK, SECONDED BY MATT SOKOP OF THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, TO APPROVE THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 10, 2018. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES ON BOTH MEASURES.

Mr. Czach then moved to take up agenda item 3.

### 3. 2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Project Update

Senior Transportation Planner Andy McCaul announced that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and PVPC staff members want to ensure that all locally funded TIP projects are moving forward but there are three TIP projects that MassDOT has deemed high risk, namely:

- *Westfield – Route 20 Access Improvements on Court Street and Western Avenue, from Llewellyn Drive Easterly to Lloyds Hill Road (Phase 1) (Project 603449)*
  - Mr. McCaul reported that this project has significant right of way (ROW) issues and utility work needs to be done. There is also a potential two million dollar cost increase. The City of Westfield is looking at other sources of funding for the project and PVPC staff will continue to monitor it.
- *Holyoke – Resurfacing and Related Work on Heritage Street, Front Street and Dwight Street From Maple Street to the 1st Level Canal (Project 607256)*
  - Mr. McCaul explained that this project needs right of way (ROW) work done and part of this project is considered ineligible for federal aid. PVPC staff has been in contact with Holyoke officials and MassDOT in an attempt to find funding.
- *Holland – Resurfacing and Related Work on Brimfield Road, From the Brimfield/Holland T. L. To Wales Road (Project 604962) )*
  - Mr. McCaul reported that right of way (ROW) work needs to be completed for this project. Mr. McCaul added that PVPC staff will continue to be in contact with Holland officials and will be monitoring this project’s progress.

Principal Planner Dana Roscoe interjected that there is a \$25 million dollar target and \$10 million dollars is under discussion. Mr. Roscoe stated that if any of these three high-risk TIP projects fall out of the FFY 2018 TIP and are moved into the FFY 2019 TIP, we would be buying them twice because we would be losing our ability to spend the money in FFY 2018 and then spending the money again in FFY 2019 for these projects. Regarding the *Holyoke – Resurfacing and Related Work on Heritage Street, Front Street and Dwight Street Project*, Mr. Roscoe suggested eliminating the non-participating costs and going forward with the eligible costs. Moving the project forward would reduce the amount of right-of way that has to be taken. Mr. Roscoe indicated that for the *Westfield – Route 20 Access Improvements on Court Street and Western Avenue Project*, a source of funding needs to be identified because of the \$2 million dollar cost overruns. He added that the *Holland – Resurfacing and Related Work on Brimfield Road Project* also has cost overruns. Mr. Roscoe explained that there is a million and one-half available in funding but that isn’t adequate to address the cost overruns in both Westfield and Holland. Mr. Roscoe added that we have a little over six months to resolve these issues.

Matt Sokop asked if there was a “Plan B.” Mr. Czach responded that if there is no resolution for these three TIP projects by April or May, a “Plan B” will have to be developed. Mr. Czach urged the JTC members to move their TIP projects along as quickly as possible so they would be ready to move into a TIP project opening if a TIP project falls off the FFY 2018 TIP or FFY 2019 TIP.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. McCaul for his presentation and he asked Mr. McCaul to present agenda item 4.

**4. 2019-2023 TIP Development Schedule**

Mr. McCaul announced that next week, February 20th, is when all the updated costs, design statuses, and TIP Project Technical Evaluation Criteria (TEC) scores will be known. Also, on February 20th, after the TEC sheets have been reviewed, an updated zebra form will be created.

Mr. McCaul called the JTC members’ attention to the document entitled *2019 - 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development Schedule*. Mr. McCaul pointed to February 14th on the Development Schedule and said that the JTC members are right on schedule since there will be a discussion of the TIP development schedule at today’s JTC meeting. Mr. McCaul reported that yesterday, February 13th, he and Mr. Roscoe traveled to MassDOT District 2 in Boston where a teleconference was held with all the MassDOT division officials. Mr. McCaul then briefly reviewed the TIP Development Schedule:

<b>DATE</b>	<b>ACTION:</b>
February 14	JTC Discussion of TIP development schedule and finalize details for TIP Sub-Committee meeting
February 20	TIP sub-committee meeting scheduled to review updated TEC forms
February 27	Zebra sheets are introduced to the MPO; MPO members Review and then provide feedback
March 14 –	JTC Reviews Project Universe and Begins to Develop TIP Scenarios
March 27	MPO Reviews TIP scenarios
Late March	MassDOT Project Review Committee (PRC) meeting
April 11	JTC reviews TIP scenarios and makes recommendation to MPO for their review and release of the Draft FFY 2019-2023 TIP
April 24	MPO reviews JTC recommended draft FFY 2019-2023 TIP and then releases TIP for 21 day public review period
April 27 – May 18	TIP is out for public review and comment
May 9	JTC reviews and comments on Draft TIP currently out for Public Review — TIP Public Hearing
May 22	MPO meets and reviews TIP comments before making its final approval of the TIP

Mr. McCaul reported that that when he and Mr. Roscoe met with the MassDOT Division heads, they gave their opinions on the earliest dates that TIP projects can be funded. Mr. McCaul called the JTC members’ attention to the spreadsheet with various rows highlighted in color entitled *Draft 2019-2023 Project Universe (February 2018)*. Mr. McCaul emphasized that if your community’s TIP project appears on white or light gray background, it means that MassDOT doesn’t have any issues concerning funding your project.

Mr. McCaul began his review of the FFY 2019-2023 Project Universe with the first project on the list, #1, the Agawam, SID #600513 project. He reported that TIP comments received yesterday from MassDOT indicate that the MassDOT officials are comfortable with this project for inclusion in the FFY 2019 TIP along the Agawam SID #604203 project.

Mr. McCaul indicated that Project #10 on the Project Universe list, in Amherst, SID #608084, has been deemed at high risk project and MassDOT recommended that it be moved into the FFY 2020 TIP. The Belchertown SID #608412 project was given the green light for FFY 2019. Mr. McCaul continued on with his review as follows:

Position on List	Community	Project #	Comments
#17	Chicopee	604434	Recommended
#19	Cummington	606797	Recommended for eligibility in future years
#20	Easthampton	608577	Recommended for 2021
#23	Granby	606895	Recommended for 2022
#26	Hadley	605032	This project was originally proposed to be funded over two years (AC). It is an advanced design project and its cost is over \$25 million dollars which can't be accommodated in a single year unless MassDOT can supply funding. It is being seen going forward as an AC project and inclusion in the FFY 2021 TIP would be its earliest.
#31	Holland	604962	Recommended for FFY 2018 as long as its keeps moving
#33	Holyoke	660615	Recommended for FFY 2022
#35	Holyoke	607256	Recommended for FFY 2018 as long as its keeps moving
#36	Holyoke	604209	Being pushed back a year due to significant cost increase
#43	Northampton	607502	Recommended for FFY 2021
#46	Northampton	608236	High Risk but District feels it can be accomplished in FFY 2019
#54	Southampton	604738	Recommended for FFY 2018
#61	Springfield	608411	Recommended for FFY 2018
#63	Springfield	608718	High Risk -- proposed to move from FFY 2020 to FFY 2021 and if one were to advance, SID # 608718 would be the more likely to advance
#64	Springfield	608782	High Risk -- recommended to move from FFY 2020 to FFY 2021
#68	Ware	607987	High Risk -- recommended to move from FFY 2019 to FFY 2020
#71	West Springfield	608374	Recommended for FFY 2022
#72	Westfield	603449	Recommended for FFY 2018 as long as its keeps moving
#75	Westfield	607773	Recommended for FFY 2022
#81	Worthington	606912	At the 75% design stage and almost at the 100% design stage

Mr. McCaul stated that all the TEC scores will be available at the next JTC meeting in March along with funding information. Mr. McCaul underscored that those JTC members with high risk TIP projects should talk with MassDOT and their designer in order to move their projects forward. Mr. McCaul indicated that PRC is due on March 15 and pre-PRC is due on March 9th. He added that if members are submitting to the PRC, they should request a TEC form and then fill it out.

Mr. Roscoe explained that at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 20th, there will be a sign-in sheet on a first come, first serve basis and every project in the universal project list will be addressed. Mr. Roscoe indicated that the hope is to review all of the municipal projects by 11:00 or 11:30 a.m. and for those individuals that didn't attend the meeting; all of their projects will be reviewed with District One, District Two and MassDOT officials either present or on the phone.

Mr. Czach then moved to take up the next agenda item.

#### **5. FFY 2019 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Development**

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux explained that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the summary of all the proposed transportation tasks scheduled over the next fiscal year, and the UPWP will follow the same development schedule as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Roux stated that this year, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) will need to be updated and be endorsed by the MPO members no later than July 2019. Mr. Roux indicated that there will be public outreach this fall which will result in a draft RTP to be released in the spring of 2019. He added that the updating, which will begin in October, will take a significant amount of planning resources and staff time so there will be less time for specific requests from communities. However, Mr. Roux underscored that PVPC staff members are happy to meet with JTC members who have requests for a project to be included in the UPWP, especially one concerning congestion, safety, bike/pedestrian or complete streets. Mr. Roux emphasized a request needs a signature from a chief elected official.

Mr. Roux stated that a draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) will be sent to MassDOT for review and then presented to the JTC members at their April meeting for their recommendation to the MPO. Then the UPWP will be brought before the MPO members at their April meeting in order to obtain their approval to release the UPWP for a 21-day required public review. Mr. Roux added that hopefully the UPWP will be endorsed by the MPO members in May. Mr. Roux advised the JTC members to let him know, preferably in March, if they have a safety or a congestion improvement study that they would like to see advanced. In the meanwhile, Mr. Roux said that he will continue to keep the JTC members updated on proposed UPWP projects.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. Roux for his update and he moved to take up agenda item 6.

#### **6. Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) – Current Activities**

Mr. Czach introduced Krystal Oldread, Manager of Operations and Planning for the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA). Ms. Oldread explained that in 2015, the state promised a 3% increase in funding for the PVTA which never materialized and the PVTA has been level funded ever since. This year, once again, the PVTA is level funded and preparing for a \$3.1 million dollar reduction in their budget for the coming fiscal year FY 2019 which will result in service cuts that will impact almost every PVTA route. Ms. Oldread stated that the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) increased fares last year and announced service reductions this year. The PVTA must reduce its service revenue hours by 16% which will impact 90% of its bus routes as well as dial-a-ride and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) population.

Ms. Oldread announced that 9 formal public outreach hearings have been scheduled along with station outreach meetings. People can attend a public event, comment online or by email, leave a phone message or call. She

underscored that the PVTA recognizes its budgetary constraints but has to meet its Environmental Justice requirements. The last day for comments is March 14th and on April 11th, the PVTA Advisory Board will vote on the changes which were precipitated by the release of Governor Charlie Baker's state budget in mid-January. Ms. Oldread announced that changes in the north will occur May 12-13 and changes in the south will be implemented on June 24th. Fare increases will occur on or before July 1st and changes to paratransit will be made per contract with the paratransit provider on July 1st.

Ms. Oldread reported that the PVTA Advisory Board researched seven different scenarios and discussed various funding options. They selected the options that would least impact the number of passenger trips but still close the \$3.1 million dollar deficit. At their January 24th meeting, the PVTA Advisory Board announced proposed service changes that are system wide. These changes include reducing evening service after 6:00 PM on most routes; reducing service on non-academic weekdays in the UMass-Amherst area; eliminating service on non-academic Sundays in the UMass-Amherst area; restructuring low-performing routes in Easthampton, Ware, Palmer, and Holyoke; eliminating poor-performing routes; reducing service on all routes that operate on Saturdays to match the level of service operated on that route on Sundays; and reducing service on routes that operate on holidays to match existing Sunday levels of service.

Ms. Oldread stated that the PVTA has not had a fare increase in almost a decade. The last fare increase was in 2008. Ms. Oldread explained that the proposed fare increase would raise bus fares by 25% from \$1.25 to \$1.60 and the PVTA will charge a \$5.00 premium fare for the Americans with Disability (ADA) population and for senior van trips that travel outside of the federally required ¾ mile distance from a bus route. Ms. Oldread indicated that detailed information on the proposed service changes and the proposed fare increases are available at [www.pvta.com](http://www.pvta.com).

There was a short discussion of the PVTA service changes and Dan Call said he would speak to Representative John Velis and Senator Donald Humason, Jr. about the PVTA bus service changes.

## **7. Other Business**

Senior Transportation Planner Jeff McCollough announced that the 2018 Baystate Bike Week will be held from May 12th to May 20th. He reported that there are 25 individuals who have signed up to participate in this year's event and he urged the JTC members to email him if they wish to participate.

Mr. Czach announced that the City of Springfield has taken advantage of the Municipal Modernization Act for Communities and he asked if any communities have made speed limit changes. Matt Sokop related that Springfield has established city-wide 25 miles per hour in sensitive areas and 25 miles per hour in specific safety zones on a case by case basis. Mr. Roux interjected that if Springfield's speed limit is not posted, the speed limit is 25 miles per hour in thickly settled areas.

There being no other business, Mr. Czach announced that the next JTC meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2018.

## **8. Adjourn**

Mr. Czach called for a motion to adjourn today's JTC meeting at 11:24 a.m.

MOVED BY JIM REIDY OF THE TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY, SECONDED BY MIKE MCMANUS OF THE CITY OF HOLYOKE, TO ADJOURN THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING AT 11:24 A.M. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

**Relevant Documents Distributed at this January 10, 2018 JTC Meeting:**

- Joint Transportation Committee February 14, 2018 Meeting Agenda
- Minutes of the January 10, 2018 Joint Transportation Committee Meeting
- *Draft 2019-2023 Project Universe (February 2018)*
- *2018 Pioneer Valley Region Transportation Improvement Program*