

**Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Committee Zoom Meeting
September 27, 2022 – 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

MPO Members Present:

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| James Barry | Belchertown – Selectboard member |
| Joshua A. Garcia | Mayor, City of Holyoke |
| Walter Gunn | Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission |
| Nicole LaChapelle | Mayor, City of Easthampton |
| Mark Moore | MassDOT, District One |
| Sandra Sheehan | Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) Administrator |
| Simmons, Paula | MassDOT, District Two, representing Jonathan Gulliver MassDOT Highway Division Administrator |
| Doug Slaughter | President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts |
| Rick Sullivan | |
| Stephen Woelfel | Director of Strategic Planning, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) representing MPO Chair Jamey Tesler, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and CEO |

Guests and PVPC Staff Present:

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| Daryl Amarald | MassDOT District 2 Planner |
| William Dwyer | Hadley, JTC Chair |
| Peter Frieri | District Two |
| Alexis Hosea-Abbott | MassBike |
| Shatoyia Jones | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Admin Assistant |
| Kacoyannakis, Van | Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) |
| Klem, Christopher | MassDOT, Office of Transportation Planning |
| Derek Kravat | MassDOT, representing Jamie Tesler, Secretary and CEO of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDot) |
| Peter Kuusisto | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transit Planner |
| Andrew McCaul | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) –Senior Transportation Planner |
| Jeffrey McCollough | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)—Senior Transportation Planner |
| Andrew Reovan | Federal Highway Administration |
| Dana Roscoe | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)—Transportation Manager |
| Gary Roux | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)—Transportation Manager |
| Andrew Wang | MassDOT Planning |

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1. Chairman’s Call to Order: Welcome and Opening Remarks

Stephen Woelfel called the September 27, 2022 Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Dana Roscoe stated that there was a quorum and initiated the roll call. The following MPO members responded that they were present: Stephen Woelfel, Paula Simmons, Rick Sullivan, Doug Slaughter, Jim Barry, Mayor Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor Joshua A. Garcia and Walter Gunn.

2. MPO Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO held Remotely on August 23, 2022

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the August 23, 2022 Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting minutes.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN; SECONDED BY RICK SULLIVAN.

Upon no further questions, comments or adjustments, the August 23, 2022 MPO minutes were approved.

Mr. Roscoe initiated roll call. MPO members in attendance were in concurrence.

3. Presentation – Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) –2022 Transit Asset Management Plan (TAM)

Peter Kuusisto reported that the TAM Plan has been approved by the PVTA Advisory Board in August just in time for its deadline of October 1, 2022 set by the FTA. Mr. Kuusisto continued to give an overview of the TAM Plan purpose, which is to improve operational repairs, as well as improve ridership relationship, reliability, on-time performance, and environmental stewardship as a result. He noted that the TAM plan was developed using the FTA template tool and aligns with PVTA’s goals and plans with consideration for the entire PVTA inventory and strategies for asset replacement and management, as well as the PVTA Agency Safety Plan to manage safety risks.

Mr. Kuusisto added that the TAM plan also aligns with the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), all of which assists with strategic decision-making for capital improvements.

Mr. Kuusisto gave an overview of PVTA equipment, vehicle and facilities assets and concluded his presentation with a statement that the PVTA remains in a state of good repair and thanked the PVTA admin and contracted service providers, operators and staff who contributed to the plan success.

4. Pioneer Valley MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) –2022 Update—Currently Out for 45-Day Public Review and Comment

Jeffrey McCollough reminded the MPO that a virtual engagement component will be added to the PPP to facilitate the increase of community engagement with the work being done regarding transportation improvement. Mr. McCollough stated that the PPP is currently out for review and invited the MPO to reach out to organizations in their community who have expressed transportation concerns that aren’t being met and to report back to himself or Andrew McCaul with any updates.

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5. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) –Public Outreach Update

Gary Roux reported that the Easthampton farmer’s market was added to the outreach schedule, as well as a tentative Holyoke location. Mr. Roux stated that Mr. Roscoe and Mrs. Al-Jammal attended the Amherst Farmer’s market and reported positive update on the results of a “word cloud”, one of the community engagement strategies, in which farmer’s market attendees were asked to give one word of what they thought when they hear the word transportation, as well as any thoughts associated with the current transit system.

Mr. Roux proceeded to share the word cloud results with the MPO members and noted that the results of the 6-question attendee survey will be shared soon. He concluded his presentation with a note that these methods of outreach and community engagement will continue throughout the other farmer’s market scheduled dates.

6. Pioneer Valley Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) –Review Current Criteria for Compliance with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

Mr. McCaul reminded the MPO of what the current TEC looks like and stated that every 3 years it is reviewed and assessed, but because of the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), a fourth year was added to the assessment to revise the requirements and stated that the goal is to make sure that the criteria conform to any new requirements. Mr. McCaul proceeded to show a line chart and table of the TEC Summary Review of the TEC criterion and asked the MPO to review and consider any new revisions to be made for criterion effectiveness.

QUESTION: ARE THE CRITERION REALLY EFFECTIVE IF THE POINTS ARE BEING APPLIED TO EVERY PROJECT?

Mr. McCaul also noted for consideration that perhaps some of the potential duplicates aren’t duplicates but may need to be renamed or more clearly defined. He concluded his report by stating that the TEC Summary and Chart had been sent out to the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) and that any final TEC comments and revisions are to be made by October 7.

Mr. McCaul proceeded to recommend that the MPO bring any potential recommendations at the October meeting with the goal to have an MPO action on the TEC in October with a release for public review to have the TEC updated and ready to be applied for the next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) cycle.

Walter Gunn asked if the file that Mr. McCaul shared while presenting had been sent to the MPO. Mr. McCaul stated that it was sent in the meeting invite, but it didn’t automatically send to the MPO as well and that the presented document(s) will be resent following the conclusion of this meeting.

7. Review of the Current Project Programmed in the FFY 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. McCaul stated that the 2023 TIP is not active until October 1 and shared the STIP Investments Report to remind the MPO which rehabilitation and safe roads projects will be active for FFY2023. He also noted that some project costs are going up and that the MPO should prepare for adjustments that may need to be made.

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8. Updates from MassDOT District One and District Two Officials on relevant transportation issues and projects of interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

Daryl Amarald from District 2 reported that the following recently active projects:

- ***Project 605126 Ware Bridge Replacement on Route 32 Palmer-Ware River:*** advertised on September 10, bid opening date: October 18
- ***FFY23 Project 606895 Granby Improvements on Route 202 School Street and Five Corners:*** at 100% design submitted on August 19, currently under review; comments due October 3, September 9 ad date
- ***FFY23 Project 608073 Westfield River Levee Multi-Use Path Construction from Ellsworth Street,*** at 100% design, September 9, 2023 ad date
- ***FFY24 Wales Reconstruction and Improvements on Monson Rd from Monson Town Line to Redhill Road:*** at 75% design and 100% submission due February 25, 2023 with March 2, 2024 ad date
- ***FFY24 Project 608717 Springfield Reconstruction at the X on Sumner Avenue at Dickinson Street and Belmont Avenue:*** 75% design, 100% design submission due October 14 with January 6, 2024 ad date

Mr. Roscoe asked when the MPO can have an updated costs estimate on the projects to see the impact it would have on 2023 programming. Mr. Amarald stated he would get back to him with that information.

Peter Frieri from District 1 reported the following recently active projects:

- ***FFY23 Retaining Wall on Route 9 in Cummington:*** awaiting a revised 75% design due mid-December 2022
- ***FFY24 Phase 2 of Reconstruction of Route 143 in Worthington Program:*** final design due from CHA in October 2022
- ***FFY24 Replacement of 2 Municipal Bridges in Williamsburg at Bridge Street and South Main Street over the Mill River:*** scheduled for public hearing after 25% design is approved
- ***This Fall: Mountain Street Reconstruction Project in Williamsburg: with a narrower cross-section:*** revised 25% design anticipated
- ***This Fall: Reconstruction of North Road and Damon Pond in Chesterfield:*** anticipated 75% design

Mr. Roscoe requested an updated costs estimate on the District 2 projects to see the impact it would have on 2023 programming or an anticipated date when those estimates would be available.

9. Updates from PVTA Administrator Sandra Sheehan on Relevant Transit-Related Issues and Projects of Interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

Sandra Sheehan reported a higher ridership status from June and July and stated that August has increased 2% for August 2022 and has been the highest month this calendar year for the Springfield base roots.

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Ms. Sheehan also reported that a board meeting will be held this month to request the expansion of service hours on weekdays and all-day Saturdays for an additional 6-months due to a positive report from the first 6-month service trial run before asking the board to make it permanent.

She concluded her presentation with an anticipated financial statement review and audit, as well as a public hearing to get feedback from the public regarding service adjustments that had been in place over the last 6 – months caused by labor shortages due to the retiring labor force.

10. Other Business

Mr. Roscoe stated that the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) has voted in a new Chairperson, Bill Dwyer.

Mr. Woelfel stated that hybrid meetings are in effect with a high number of registrations and encouraged MPO members to be sure to register in advance to secure their seats for in-person meetings.

Andrew Reovan updated the MPO that their highway conducts certifications reviews of each MPO and Pioneer Valley is up for recertification in 2023 with the last recertification date in August, but they are looking to schedule recertification dates in the Spring. He stated that he would be reaching out in October to start discussing scheduling.

11. Adjournment

Upon no further questions or comments, Mr. Woelfel asked for a motion to adjourn the September 27, 2022 Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting (MPO).

MOTIONED BY WALTER GUNN; SECONDED BY RICK SULLIVAN.

All MPO members in attendance were in concurrence.

Mr. Woelfel adjourned the September 27, 2022 Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Zoom meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Additional Documents Included

- [Proposed Amendment to the PVMPO Public Participation Plan \(PPP\) | PVPC](#)
- [PVTA TAM PLAN 2022](#)
- [TEC ANALYSIS – SEPTEMBER 2022](#)
- [MPO PRESENTATION –SEPTEMBER 27, 2022](#)

Prepared by Shatoyia Jones, PVPC Administrative Assistant—10.01.2022