

Minutes of the Tuesday, November 23, 2021 Virtual Zoom Meeting of the
Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
held by the
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104-3419

MPO Members Present:

Steve Woelfel	Director of Strategic Planning, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Representing MPO Chair James Tesler, Acting Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer
James Barry	Selectboard, Town of Belchertown
Jim Czach	Chairman, Joint Transportation Committee
Roger Fuller	Selectboard Member, Town of Chesterfield
Joshua Garcia	Mayor, City of Holyoke
Walter Gunn	Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Nicole LaChapelle	Mayor, City of Easthampton
David Narkewicz	Mayor, City of Northampton
William Reichelt	Mayor, Town of West Springfield
Kimberly H. Robinson	Executive Director, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Paula Simmons	MassDOT District Two Office Representing Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division Administrator Jonathan Gulliver
Rick Sullivan	President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts

Guests and PVPC Staff Present:

Daryl Amaral	MassDOT District 2 Office, Acting State Aid Engineer
Mark Cressotti	City Engineer, City of Westfield
Peter Frieri	MassDOT, District 1 Office
Patty Gambarini	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), Environment and Land Use Section
Mark Gold	Selectboard, Town of Longmeadow
Van Kacoyannakis	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB)
Derek Krevat	Transportation Planner, MassDOT
Chris Klem	MassDOT Liaison
Andrew McCaul	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Mark Moore	Sr. Project Development Engineer, MassDOT Highway Division
Kimberly H. Robinson	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Executive Director
Dana Roscoe	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Gary Roux	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Sandra Sheehan	Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA)
Louise Sullivan	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Support Staff

Note: Because this meeting was held via Zoom, not all those present are included as some participants were only identified by a phone number and no name was available

1. Chairman's Call to Order, Welcome and Opening Remarks

Steve Woelfel, Director of Strategic Planning, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), Representing Jamey Tesler, Acting Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer, called the November 23, 2021 meeting of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at 10:01 a.m. Mr. Woelfel then asked for a roll call from the MPO members present as follows: Paula Simmons, MassDOT District Two, Representing Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division Administrator Jonathan Gulliver; Rick Sullivan, President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts; William Reichelt, Mayor of West Springfield; David Narkewicz, Mayor of Northampton; Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor of Easthampton; Roger Fuller, Selectboard Member, Town of Chesterfield; James Barry, Belchertown Selectboard Member; Joshua Garcia, Mayor of Holyoke; Walter Gunn, Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission; and Sandra Sheehan, Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA). PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe confirmed that this roll call constitutes a quorum.

Following the roll call, Mr. Woelfel moved to take up the minutes of the previous MPO meeting held on October 26, 2021.

2. MPO Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO Held Remotely on October 26, 2021

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Pioneer Valley MPO meeting which was held on October 26, 2021.

MOVED BY DAVID NARKEWICZ, MAYOR, CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, SECONDED BY RICHARD SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 26, 2021 PIONEER VALLEY MPO MEETING AS PRESENTED.

Mr. Woelfel requested a roll call and each of the MPO members in attendance responded affirmatively with the exception of two abstentions: Walter Gunn and Mayor Joshua Garcia

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE MPO MEMBERS PRESENT.

3. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Release Proposed FFY 2022 Transit Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments for the Required 21 day review period

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Andy McCaul explained that since the last MPO meeting, the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) applied for a 5339 Low No Grant to purchase eight low or no emissions, battery powered buses to replace eight diesel powered buses: four 40 ft. electric buses for \$4,400,000 and four 35 ft. electric buses along with additional funding for workforce technical development and programming. Mr. McCaul asked the MPO members to release the FFY 2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Program with the addition of this proposed amendment for the purchase as explained and as funded by the 5339 Low No Grant for a required 21-day public review period.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN, PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION, SECONDED BY DAVID NARKEWICZ, MAYOR, CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF THE PROPOSED FFY 2022 TRANSIT TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENTS FOR THE REQUIRED 21 DAY REVIEW PERIOD

Mr. Woelfel requested a roll call and each of the MPO members in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE MPO MEMBERS PRESENT.

4. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Release Proposed Changes to the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) for the Required 21 Day Review Period

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Andy McCaul explained that at the October MPO meeting, it was determined that there were some changes that needed to be made to the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC). Mr. McCaul then proceeded to delineate those changes: add MEPA information and an expected advertisement date to the cover page; update the Congestion Management Process (CMP) definitions; update definitions for targeted development sites; remove a .5 point, Comprehensive Economic Development point and increase Priority Development Area points from .5 to one point; remove Health Impact Assessment and replace it with Sensitive Receptors; and update definitions to include the Regional Safety Compass and bicycle and pedestrian amenities.

Mr. McCaul asked the MPO members to release these proposed changes to the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) for the required 21 day review period.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN, PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION, SECONDED BY RICHARD SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF THE PROPOSED CHANGES AS PRESENTED TO THE TRANSPORTATION EVALUATION CRITERIA (TEC) FOR THE REQUIRED 21 DAY REVIEW PERIOD

Mr. Woelfel requested a roll call and each of the MPO members in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE MPO MEMBERS PRESENT.

5. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval of Changes that the FHWA is Requesting for the MOU Governing the MPO Member and Alternate Seats on the MPO

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Andy reported that each year a list of every TIP project awarded that fiscal year has to be posted to the PVPC website. He explained that there hasn't been a defined guidance regarding this requirement until now upon the request from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Mr. McCaul stated that the FHWA has requested that following proposed text be added to Section VI(B) of the Pioneer Valley MPO's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):

The MPO, in cooperation with the State and public transportation operators, shall be responsible for the development of financial plans that support the long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs, and development of the annual listing of obligated (awarded) projects in accordance with CFR 450.314(a) provisions. This cooperation shall include the sharing of data included in the Regional Transit Authority's Transit Asset Management (TAM) plans and Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP).

Mr. McCaul asked the MPO members to approve of these changes that the FHWA is requesting to be made to the MOU governing the MPO.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN, PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION, SECONDED BY RICHARD SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, TO APPROVE THE CHANGES TO THE MPO'S MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) AS REQUESTED BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA)

Mr. Woelfel requested a roll call and each of the MPO members in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE MPO MEMBERS PRESENT.

6. Update by PVPC Staff on the Status of Open Member and Alternate Seats on the MPO

PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe indicated the five Tiers of MPO membership by naming each Tier, listing the municipalities in the Tier and commenting on its membership as shown in the table below.

Tier	Municipalities	Membership
1	Chicopee, Holyoke and Springfield	New member is Joshua Garcia, Mayor of Holyoke
2	Agawam, Southwick, Westfield, & West Springfield	New alternate member is the Mayor of Agawam
3	Amherst, Easthampton, Hadley, & Northampton	Alternate member Mayor from Easthampton becomes member
4	Belchertown, Brimfield, East Longmeadow, Granby, Hampden, Holland, Longmeadow, Ludlow, Monson, Palmer, Pelham, Wales, Ware, and Wilbraham	New member is James Barry, Selectman from Belchertown and new alternate member is Mark Gold from Longmeadow
5	Blandford, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Granville, Hatfield, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Plainfield, Russell, Southampton, Tolland, Westhampton, Williamsburg and Worthington	A new alternate member is needed and recruitment will begin in January 2022

7. Updates from MassDOT District One and District Two Officials on Relevant Transportation Issues and Projects of Interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

Mr. Woelfel called on Daryl Amaral of the MassDOT District Two office in Northampton to present District Two's updates on relevant transportation issues and projects. Mr. Amaral reported on the following TIP projects:

Proj. ID	Municipality	Project	Report delivered by Daryl Amaral of MassDOT District Two Office
606450	Holyoke	Traffic Signals - 15 Intersections	75% design under review; advertisement (Ad) date: Sept. 17, 2022
608374	West Springfield	Memorial Ave. Reconstruction	PS&E due Feb. 3, 2022 and Ad date is June 4, 2022
608577	Easthampton	Union St. to High St., Rt. 147	PS&E received and currently under review, Ad date is March 12, 2022
605126	Ware	Bridge Replacement over Ware River	100% review completed on October 20th; Ad date is August 13, 2022
608473	South Hadley	Resurfacing Route 116	PS&E due Nov. 28, 2022 and Ad date is June 8, 2022
609515	Northampton	SRTS -Safe Routes to School - Bridge St.	PS&E under review and ad date is July 23, 2022
608719	Amherst	Norwottuck Rail Trail Resurfacing	design public hearing was held on November 18 th ; ad date is Aug. 6, 2022

Mr. Woelfel then called on Peter Frieri of the MassDOT District One office in Lenox to present District One's updates on relevant transportation projects within its jurisdiction. Mr. Frieri reported that District One currently has three TIP projects programmed in FFY 2022 – 2026:

Project ID	Municipality	Project	Report delivered by Peter Frieri of MassDOT District One Office
606797	Cummington	Retaining Wall Replacement on Route 9	Currently evaluating design options and working on 25% design submittal
609287	Worthington	Phase 2 of Route 143 Reconstruction	Anticipating 100% design submittal in November 2021
612031	Worthington	Resurfacing of Route 112 from roundabout to the Huntington Town line	Approved in March 2021 and preliminary design work is upcoming

Mr. Woelfel thanked Mr. Frieri and Mr. Amaral for their updates and he then moved on to the next agenda item.

8. Updates from Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) Administrator Sandra Sheehan on Relevant Transit Issues and Projects of Interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

PVTA Administrator Sandra Sheehan reported that PVTA ridership has improved significantly with the latest figures showing ridership in September 2021 exceeded September 2020 ridership by 83%. Ms. Sheehan reported that the PVTA is working with PVPC staff to plan routes and make temporary service adjustments in order to continue to provide safe and reliable services. She added that on November 1st, adjustments were made to the Northampton base route and adjustments will be made to the Springfield base route on December 12th. Ms. Sheehan further reported that the PVTA has taken delivery of six new electric buses plus eight new electric buses from New Flyer. She reported that steps are being taken in order to accommodate charging these buses, and the PVTA's fleet of electric buses will be increasing next year by eight buses.

9. Other Business

Mr. Woelfel announced that the next virtual MPO meeting is scheduled for December 28, 2021. There being no other business, Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOVED BY RICHARD SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN, PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION, TO ADJOURN THIS NOVEMBER 23, 2021 MEETING OF THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S MPO.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, NOVEMBER 23RD THE MPO MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:45 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly H. Robinson, Executive Director
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at the November 23, 2021 MPO Meeting

1. *Pioneer Valley Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting Notice and Agenda: November 23, 2021*
2. *Minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting: October 26, 2021*
3. *PVTA Awarded a 5339 Low No Grant*
4. *Proposed Update TEC October 2021 (JTC)*