

Minutes of the Tuesday, February 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:

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| Steve Woelfel | Deputy Director, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Representing MPO Chair Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer |
| Roger Fuller | Selectboard Member, Town of Chesterfield |
| Walter Gunn | Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) |
| Nicole LaChapelle | Mayor, City of Easthampton |
| Richard Masse | MassDOT District Two Office Representing Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division Administrator Jonathan Gulliver |
| Alex Morse | Mayor, City of Holyoke |
| David Narkewicz | Mayor, City of Northampton and Chair of the PVTA Advisory Board |
| William Reichelt | Mayor, Town of West Springfield |
| Sandra Sheehan | Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) |
| Rick Sullivan | President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts |

Guests and PVPC Staff Present:

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| Daryl Amaral | MassDOT District 2 Office, Acting State Aid Engineer |
| Patrick Beaudry | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Manager, Public Affairs |
| Peter Frieri | MassDOT, District 1 Office |
| Derek Krevat | Regional Planning Coordinator, MassDOT Planning |
| Andrew McCaul | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section |
| Dounia Niouf | International Professional Exchange Fellow (Morocco) |
| Andrew Reovan | PVPC Liaison with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) |
| Dana Roscoe | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section |
| Gary Roux | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section |
| 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, Deputy Director, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), Representing MPO Chair Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer, called the February 23, 2021 meeting of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at 10:03 a.m. Mr. Woelfel then asked for a roll call from the MPO members present as follows: Richard Masse, MassDOT District Two, Representing Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division Administrator Jonathan Gulliver; Roger Fuller, Chesterfield Selectboard; Walter Gunn, Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission; Rick Sullivan, President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts; Alex Morse, Mayor of Holyoke; David Narkewicz, Mayor of Northampton; William Reichelt, Mayor of West Springfield, Sandra Sheehan, Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA); and Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor of Easthampton. 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 December 22, 2020.

2. MPO Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO Held Remotely on December 22, 2020

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Pioneer Valley MPO meeting which was held on December 22, 2020.

MOVED BY RICK SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN, PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 22, 2020 PIONEER VALLEY MPO MEETING AS PRESENTED.

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.

3. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Release Amendments to the 2021 Pioneer Valley Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Required 21-day Public Review Period

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe to discuss the 2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Roscoe stated that currently, there are not any proposed 2021 TIP amendments. He explained that all of the TIP projects that are programmed in the 2021 element, which include Hadley (605032), Westfield (607773), Amherst (608084) and Springfield (608782), are all advancing according to schedule.

4. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Endorse Safety Targets for the Pioneer Valley Region

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux to discuss the required Safety Targets for the Pioneer Valley Region. PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux stated that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act that Safety Performance Measure targets be developed annually no later than February of this year. Mr. Roux explained that rather than have the Pioneer Valley MPO adopt its own Safety Measures, it makes more sense to adopt the state Performance Measure targets because then MassDOT will provide all necessary data and do all the required reporting.

Mr. Roux reported that the five annual safety targets required by State Departments of Transportation and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are as follows:

- Total number of fatalities
- Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
- Total number of serious injuries
- Rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT
- Total number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries

Mr. Roux then displayed a series of charts that compared statewide trends with Pioneer Valley region trends. He reported that the Pioneer Valley region is following state trends for the 5 safety performance measures which indicated that the Pioneer Valley region is benefiting from regionally programmed safety improvement projects and statewide programs that improve safety. Mr. Roux demonstrated in a bar graph illustrating *Total Fatalities* in

Five Year Averages, that Massachusetts fatalities have decreased; and that the 2021 target is not to exceed 339 fatalities. Mr. Roux reported that total serious injuries as shown in the graph entitled *Total Serious Injuries – 5 Year Averages* have also decreased for both the Pioneer Valley and statewide. He added that the 2021 target for serious injuries is not to exceed 2,580. Mr. Roux's last bar graph, entitled *Total Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries – 5 Year Averages*, illustrated a downward trend both statewide and in the Pioneer Valley and indicated a 2021 target of 506 for the number of motorized fatalities and serious injuries.

Mr. Roux reviewed the State Safety Targets for the Pioneer Valley Region as follows:

- Reduce the Total Number of Fatalities to 339 or less statewide
- Reduce the Rate of Fatalities to 0.55/100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or less
- Reduce the Total Number of Serious Injuries to 2580 or less statewide
- Reduce the Rate of Serious Injuries to 4.23/100 million VMT or less statewide
- Do not exceed the current average of 506 for the Total Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries statewide

Mr. Roux asked for the endorsement of these Safety Targets for the Pioneer Valley Region. Mr. Woelfel then called for a motion to endorse the proposed State Safety Targets for the Pioneer Valley Region.

MOVED BY RICHARD MASSE, MASSDOT DISTRICT ONE OFFICE, SECONDED BY DAVID NARKEWICZ, MAYOR OF NORTHAMPTON, TO APPROVE THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE REQUIRED SAFETY TARGETS FOR THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION AS RECOMMENDED BY PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC) STAFF.

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. MassDOT Anticipated Regional Targets for FFY 2026 as Presented to MARPA on January 26, 2021

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe to discuss the anticipated regional targets for FFY 2026. Mr. Roscoe reported that regional targets for FFY 2023, FFY 2024, and FFY 2025 are unchanged, and the new regional target proposed for FFY 2026 is \$26,431,927. Mr. Roscoe stated that annual programming will continue as it has in the past with the annual Pioneer Valley MPO target of \$25 - \$26 million.

6. Review of Draft List of Projects Currently under Consideration for Inclusion in the 2022-2026 TIP

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe once again asking him to provide a review of the draft list of TIP projects currently under consideration for inclusion in the FFY 2022-2026 TIP. Mr. Roscoe replied that there are 31 TIP projects that are eligible with discretionary STP programming; 17 components that are eligible for CMAQ programming; and nine that have bicycle/pedestrian components. Mr. Roscoe reported that there are a total of 40 TIP projects that total \$309 million. Mr. Roscoe then delineated the TIP projects for FFY 2022, FFY 2023, FFY 2025 and FFY 2026 as follows:

- For FFY 2022:
 - the remainder of the Hadley Project (605032)
 - the Holyoke Traffic Signal Upgrades at 15 Intersections Project (606450)
 - the West Springfield Memorial Avenue Project (608374)
 - the Easthampton Improvements on Route 141 Project (608577)

- For FFY 2023:
 - the Granby Improvements on Route 202 Project (606895)
 - the remainder of the West Springfield Memorial Avenue Project (608374)
 - the Wales Improvements on Monson Road Project (608163)

- For FFY 2024:
 - the Worthington Phase 2 Route 143 Reconstruction Project (609287)
 - the Springfield Reconstruction of the “X” Project (608717)
 - the third year of the West Springfield Memorial Avenue Project (608374)

- For FFY 2025:
 - the Northampton Downtown Corridor Project (609286)
 - the Longmeadow Resurfacing and Improvements to Route 5 Project (608881)

Mr. Roscoe added that with the availability of another \$26 million, the JTC members will be meeting in the coming month to propose what a FFY 2026 element might look like.

Mr. Roscoe continued saying that today we’ve reviewed the TIP projects and on March 10th, the JTC members will meet to identify the preferred list of TIP projects. He then delineated the remaining significant FFY 2022-2026 TIP dates as follows:

- February 23 – MPO reviews project list and provides feedback
- March 10 – JTC Reviews MPO comments and identifies a preferred list of projects
- March 23– MPO Reviews JTC recommendation of preferred list of projects and provides feedback
- April 14 – JTC makes recommendation to MPO for their review and release of the Draft 2022-2026 TIP
- April 27 – MPO reviews JTC recommended draft 2022-2026 TIP; releases TIP for 21 day public review period
- April 28 through May 18 – TIP is out for public review and comment
- May 12 – JTC reviews and comments on draft TIP currently out for public review – TIP Public Hearing
- May 25 – MPO meets and reviews TIP comments before making final TIP endorsement

Mr. Woelfel asked if there were any questions or further discussion needed regarding the subject motion. There being none, Mr. Woelfel moved on to the next agenda item.

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 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 the Worthington Phase 2 Route 143 Reconstruction Project (609287), currently programmed in FFY 2024, will achieve its 100% design in April and its cost is aligned with the TIP.

Mr. Woelfel then 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:

- the Chicopee Traffic Signal Improvements and Ramp Resurfacing (606599) Project at the I-91 Interchange received its Notice to Proceed (NTP) on February 12th
- the Granby-South Hadley Resurfacing and related work on Route 202 Project (607474) was awarded on December 9th and received its NTP on December 21st.

- the Northampton Bridge Replacement (606552) Project was awarded on February 1st and received its NTP on February 8th
- the Northampton Intersection Improvements on King, North and Summer Streets (607502) Project was awarded on January 12th and was issued its NTP on February 9th with a pre-construction meeting scheduled for February 24th
- The Westfield Route 20, Phase 2 (607773) Project received its PS&E on January 25th and has a March 20th advertisement date
- The Springfield Intersection of Cottage, Industry and Robbins has an advertisement date of March 27th

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's ridership has been impacted by COVID-19; and as a result, ridership levels are at 40 percent. The contributors to that percentage are ridership in the Springfield area at 60% of what it was pre-COVID-19; ridership in Northampton at 38% and ridership in UMass Amherst at 10% of previous levels. Ms. Sheehan further reported that a no mask/no service policy was implemented on February 1st. She added that information regarding bus routes available for transport to vaccination sites can be found on the PVTA's website.

Ms. Sheehan indicated that work is continuing on service improvements in Agawam, Hadley, Palmer and Ware. She added that there is now funding for a bus route between Amherst and Worcester and a micro-transit pilot project in Northampton. Ms. Sheehan announced that the PVTA has begun a mobile payment application which now accounts for 12% of PVTA's total paying riders. She added that an equity analysis is being done to determine if the PVTA should provide reduced fares for minors or students, and the PVTA continues to work with MassDOT on the Complete Streets Project.

9. Other Business

Mr. Woelfel asked if there was any other business. There being none, Mr. Woelfel stated that the next MPO meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2021

There being no other business, Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOVED WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC), SECONDED BY DAVID NARKEWICZ, MAYOR OF NORTHAMPTON, TO ADJOURN THIS FEBRUARY 23, 2021 MEETING OF THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S MPO.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THIS FEBRUARY 23RD MPO MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:32 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly H. Robinson, Executive Director
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission