

Minutes of the Thursday, July 25, 2016 Meeting of the
Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
held at 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 and Chair, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Representing MPO Chair Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer
George Archible	Belchertown Board of Selectmen
Marcus J. Boyle	Chair, Board of Selectmen, Town of Hatfield
Richard A. Cohen	Mayor, Town of Agawam
Walter Gunn	Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Mary MacInnes	Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA)
Doug Slaughter	Town of Amherst Selectboard

Guests and PVPC Staff Present:

Tim Brennan	Executive Director, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Rick Sullivan	President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts
Sean Beachy, AIA	Architect, Wendel Architects
Gary Britt	MassBike
John Burke	Manager of Capital Projects, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA)
Matt Chase	Senior Project Manager, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., (VHB)
Stephanie Ciccarello	Town of Amherst Sustainability Coordinator
Mark Cressotti	Vice-Chair of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) and City Engineer, City of Westfield
Christopher Curtis	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Environment and Land Use Section
Jim Czach	Chairman, Joint Transportation Committee & Town Engineer, Town of West Springfield
JT Gaucher	Town of Ludlow, Department of Public Works
Wayne Feiden	Director, Planning and Sustainability for City of Northampton
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District One Office (Lenox)
Laura Hanson	MassDOT District Two Office (Northampton)
Jeff Hoynoski	MassDOT District Two Office (Northampton)
Connor Knightly	Springfield Department of Public Works
Yem Lip	City Engineer, City of Holyoke
Marcus Marrero	Director of Planning and Economic Development, City of Holyoke
Richard Masse	MassDOT District Two Office (Northampton)
Andrew McCaul	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Jeff McCollough	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1 (Lenox)
Jeffrey Neece	Superintendent, Public Works Department, City of Chicopee
Bryan Pounds	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP), MassDOT
Dana Roscoe	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Gary Roux	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Esra Small	Sustainability Manager, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Louise Sullivan	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Support Staff
Marvin Ward	MassBike - Easthampton
Brandon Wilcox	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Steve Williams	Director, Department of Public Works, Town of Belchertown

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

Steve Woelfel, Director of Strategic Planning at the Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), representing Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), called the July 25, 2016 meeting of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at 10:01 a.m. and he welcomed and thanked all those in attendance. Following introductions, Mr. Woelfel moved to take up the minutes of the previous MPO meeting held on June 22, 2016.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO Held on June 22, 2016

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Pioneer Valley MPO meeting which was held on June 22, 2016.

MOVED BY RICHARD COHEN, MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF AGAWAM, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC), TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 22, 2016 PIONEER VALLEY MPO MEETING AS PRESENTED. THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

3. Review, Discussion and MPO Endorsement of Proposed Amendments to the Current Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Which is Presently out for Public Review

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe to review the proposed amendments to the Pioneer Valley region's current, FFY 2016 Pioneer Valley Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Roscoe called the MPO members attention to the relevant handout entitled *2016 - 2019 Pioneer Valley Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Proposed Amendments – June 2016* and he explained that this document reflects a cost increase to the Longmeadow Converse Street Reconstruction Project (606445) from \$2,742,048 to \$4,490,876 as well as a cost increase to the Springfield Roosevelt Avenue and Island Pond Intersection Improvements Project (605385) from \$2,297,372 to \$2,903,151. Mr. Roscoe indicated that amendments to the region's current FFY 2016 TIP had been released for a required 30-day Public Review and the amended version of the current year TIP is being presented to the MPO members for their endorsement inclusive of the aforementioned project cost increases to the 2016 TIP.

At this point, Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to endorse the proposed amendments to the Pioneer Valley region's current, FFY 2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as recommended by staff.

MOVED BY SELECTMAN MARCUS BOYLE OF THE TOWN OF HATFIELD, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC), TO ENDORSE THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S CURRENT, FFY2016-2019 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP), FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF A REQUIRED 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD, OUTLINED BY PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC) STAFF

Mr. Woelfel asked if there were any questions or discussion on the subject motion.

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

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

4. Presentation by PVTA Staff on the Proposed Construction of a New Transit Vehicle Maintenance Facility on Cottage Street in Springfield

Mary MacInnes, Administrator of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA), began the discussion of this agenda item by saying that the PVTA's new Fixed-Route Bus Operating and Maintenance (O&M) Facility, located at 649-665 Cottage Street in Springfield, is being referred to in the transit industry as a light and heavy-duty maintenance facility because it will provide full body work and engine repairs and rebuilding for the PVTA's entire fleet of buses and paratransit vehicles. Ms. MacInnes stressed that such a facility is extraordinarily important since the fleet of PVTA and paratransit

vehicles must be kept in a state of good repair. Ms. MacInnes underscored the importance of the PVTA being prepared for the future and being able to respond to the upcoming openings of Union Station and the MGM casino in Springfield. Ms. MacInnes added that the region's anticipated passenger rail service will generate a heightened need for more transit service which the PVTA cannot provide if relying on its current O&M facility. Ms. MacInnes emphasized that funding for the PVTA's new Fixed-Route Bus Operating and Maintenance (O&M) Facility is critically important since the Transit Authority's current O&M Facility at 2840 Main Street in Springfield barely meets PVTA's current capacity needs and will constrict the PVTA's ability to handle bus ridership growth and service expansion needs

Ms. MacInnes reported that the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) has agreed to provide funding for required pre-construction activities and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) will provide funding to construct the PVTA's Fixed-Route Bus Operating and Maintenance (O&M) Facility over the next two years. Ms. MacInnes noted that both the federal and state governments have committed funds to the construction of PVTA's new O&M facility, and, today, she is requesting the Pioneer Valley MPO members to flex an additional \$15.9 million in FFY 2020 funds which, as of the last MPO meeting in June, were unassigned. Ms. MacInnes stressed that by allowing this additional funding to flow to the PVTA's new O&M Facility, it will surely benefit the municipalities of East Longmeadow, Agawam, Wilbraham, Longmeadow, South Hadley, Springfield, West Springfield, Holyoke, Chicopee, Westfield, Amherst and Ludlow. At this point, Ms. MacInnes turned the presentation over to John Burke, who is the PVTA Manager of Capital Projects as well as Sean Beachy, an Architect with Wendel Architects, who is serving as the PVTA's architect for the Transit Vehicle Operating and Maintenance Facility construction project.

Mr. Burke noted that four words describe the current PVTA bus maintenance facility at 2808 Main Street in Springfield; namely, *grossly undersized* and *functionally obsolete*. Mr. Burke stated that the PVTA's 2808 Main Street facility is an old trolley barn, built nearly 100 years ago that is not designed to house electric buses or 60-foot articulated buses and, moreover, is functionally obsolete in terms of vehicle storage and repairs. Mr. Burke underscored that based on the current zoning ordinance for parking requirements and setback limitations, the PVTA's current 4-acre site at 2808 Main Street is roughly one-third the size required to house the number of buses needed to safely support the PVTA's current operations. He further noted that although the current O&M facility supports the storage and maintenance of 110 buses, it was designed to handle no more than 50 buses. Mr. Burke explained that among other constraints, tires for PVTA buses have to be stored in the basement of its functionally obsolete O&M facility and then brought up to the garage area on an elevator. Mr. Burke indicated that an analysis performed by First Transit revealed that \$350,000 is being lost each year in labor and operating costs due to workarounds which have to be performed each day and result in lost productivity. At this point, Mr. Burke called on Sean Beachy to continue the PVTA's O&M Facility presentation.

Mr. Beachy reported that the PVTA's new 18-acre site located at 649-665 Cottage Street in Springfield was purchased in 2013 through a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) State of Good Repair Grant at which time City Point Partners was hired by the PVTA to oversee the design and construction of its new Fixed-Route Bus Operating and Maintenance (O&M) Facility. Mr. Beachy explained that the PVTA will continue to lease the existing maintenance facility at 2808 Main Street and use it for bus storage. Mr. Beachy stated that PVTA's new, 280,000-square-foot, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified facility will provide bus maintenance and storage for the PVTA's Fleet of 151 fixed-route buses including 40-foot and 60-foot articulated buses plus room to allow for future expansion. Mr. Beachy noted that the square-foot cost of PVTA's new O&M facility is estimated to be significantly lower than other bus maintenance facilities constructed in Massachusetts and he added that this new facility will house approximately 300 transit operations and maintenance employees. At this point, Mr. Beachy displayed and explained a proposed site plan for the PVTA's proposed facility on Cottage Street underscoring that the site plan is built around safety and security. Mr. Beachy emphasized that employee parking will be located behind the building and the front of the building will be attractively landscaped.

Ms. MacInnes explained that when the draft MassDOT Capital Investment Plan (CIP) was unveiled earlier this year, the PVTA's new Fixed-Route Bus Operating and Maintenance (O&M) Facility was not included in it. Ms. MacInnes reported that after the draft CIP document had been distributed, the MassDOT Board of Directors directed MassDOT staff to work with the PVTA to find funding for the project. Ms. MacInnes explained that MassDOT found it difficult to fully fund

the facility's \$71.6 million projected cost and that MassDOT officials suggested \$62 million as a doable amount but then the last year of the 3-year project proved troublesome and MassDOT could only allocate \$55.7 million to the PVTA Facility thus resulting in a short fall of \$15.9 million.

Mr. Beachy stated that full funding of PVTA's Cottage Street O&M Facility at \$71.6 million is still the preferred alternative because it will accommodate long-term transit service needs and expansions; continue long-term ridership growth; accommodate the taller electric buses as well as the longer articulated buses; provide for improved operational efficiency, provide local construction jobs and provide for a LEED certified building and energy efficient operations. However, Mr. Beachy underscored that if the project is funded at \$55.7 million now and the additional \$15.9 million in funding is secured in 5 years with an annual escalation rate of 3%, the added cost will be \$4.8 million dollars. Mr. Beachy reported that in 10 years with a 3% escalation rate, the additional cost would increase to \$8 million. Moreover, Mr. Beachy stated a smaller O&M facility will disrupt operations and further inflate long term costs.

Mr. Woelfel asked if MPO members had any questions or comments regarding the PVTA's funding report. Mayor Richard Cohen of Agawam commented that he couldn't support additional funds for this PVTA project until he has confirmation that none of Agawam's programmed projects in the region's TIP would be adversely affected by being moved, increased, postponed or damaged. Mr. Brennan asked Ms. MacInnes to clarify the total funding amount that she's seeking and whether there are any federal transit dollars involved or is it totally state dollars. Ms. MacInnes replied that \$55.7 million is state money and \$3.9 million was received in federal funds to do pre construction work. Mr. Brennan asked Ms. MacInnes if there is any prospect of receiving additional federal money and Ms. MacInnes responded that it was uncertain because applying for funding doesn't guarantee that it will be received and she reiterated her formal request is for \$15.9 million in federal funding flexed by the MPO through the Pioneer Valley 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to support the full construction of the PVTA's new Fixed-Route Bus Operating and Maintenance (O&M) Facility on Cottage Street in Springfield.

Mr. Woelfel thanked Mr. Beachy, Mr. Burke and Ms. MacInnes for their informative presentation, and he suggested that the dialogue regarding additional funds for PVTA's new O&M Facility continue in concert with the Pioneer Valley MPO staff. He then moved to take up the next agenda item.

5. Review, Discussion and MPO Endorsement of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for Fiscal Year 2017 Currently out for 30-day Public Review

Mr. Woelfel next called on PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux to present an overview of the draft version of the Pioneer Valley's proposed FFY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) document. Mr. Roux indicated that the action needed by the MPO members is their endorsement of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) encompassing Federal Fiscal Year 2017 which begins on October 1st. Mr. Roux explained that the UPWP document had been released for the required 30-day public review period and that a summary sheet outlining comments PVPC had received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) was included in today's MPO meeting packet. Mr. Roux announced that all of the comments on the summary sheet have been successfully addressed and that all additional information requested of the PVPC staff has been provided. At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Roux then requested that the MPO members endorse the region's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for Federal Fiscal Year 2017 with the changes and additions recommended by the PVPC staff.

Mr. Woelfel then called for a motion to address this agenda item.

MOVED BY SELECTMAN MARCUS BOYLE OF THE TOWN OF HATFIELD, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN GEORGE ARCHIBLE OF THE TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN, TO ENDORSE THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S RECOMMENDED FFY FFY2017 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) SUBJECT TO THE CHANGES AND ADDITIONS TO THE UPWP THAT WERE REQUESTED DURING THE REQUIRED 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD. THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE MPO MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Woelfel moved to take up the next agenda item.

6. Review, Discussion and MPO Endorsement of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Fiscal Year 2017-2021 Currently out for 30-day Public Review

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe to present an update on the draft version of the Pioneer Valley region's proposed FFY 2017 – 2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that was released for its required 30-day public review. Mr. Roscoe stated that the FFY 2017 -02021 TIP is made up of two major components: the highway component, which is the larger of the two and the transit component. Mr. Roscoe indicated that there were no comments received on the draft TIP's transit component that had been released for the required 30-day public review. With respect to the draft TIP's highway components, Mr. Roscoe reported that at the MPO meeting held on June 22nd, there was an in-depth discussion regarding cost increases for projects programmed in FFY 2017 that, in turn, required a transportation project to be moved out of FFY 2017. Mr. Roscoe stated that the MPO's discussion had focused on two projects: the Palmer Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 67 Project (608253) that had been moved from FFY 2017 into FFY 2018 and the Pioneer Valley Regional Bicycle Share Project that remained programmed in FFY 2017. Mr. Roscoe added that following the conclusions of the required 30-day public review, the recommendation is that the Palmer Resurfacing Project remain in FFY 2018 of the region's new TIP and the Bike Share Project continues to be programmed in FFY 2017.

Mr. Roscoe announced that not all of the region's FFY 2017 target dollars have been programmed as of yet with \$1.6 million remaining to be programmed in FFY 2017. Mr. Roscoe stated that the TIP's FFY 2018 program year does include the Palmer Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 67 Project and, overall, FFY 2018 is programmed to within \$900,000 of the Pioneer Valley's regional target. Mr. Roscoe further reported that FFY 2019 of the TIP is programmed to within \$250,000 of the regional target. Mr. Roscoe noted that all future projects are subject to a yearly inflation factor and, more specifically, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires that an inflation factor of 4% be imposed on projects in the second, third and fourth year of the TIP which, in turn, inflates current project cost estimates.

Mr. Roscoe announced that with respect to FFY 2020 of the TIP, there's been a change from what had been proposed earlier. Mr. Roscoe explained that the draft FFY 2017-2021 TIP document that was presented at the previous MPO meeting did not include any projects at zero percent design yet and the number of projects for our region which are at the zero percent design stage totals over \$200 million. Mr. Roscoe reported that it was difficult for staff to determine which projects at zero percent design stage were better than others since some zero percent design projects are moving forward while others are in a holding pattern. Mr. Roscoe explained that at the last Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) meeting, the JTC members discussed whether to leave \$20 million of FFY 2020 funds unprogrammed and allow the \$200 million of project needs to compete for the \$20 million or, alternatively, to try and program the \$20 million of FFY 2020 transportation funds. Mr. Roscoe stated that at the last JTC meeting, the JTC Chairperson, Jim Czach of West Springfield, had passionately presented a project entitled the West Springfield Memorial Avenue Reconstruction and Complete Streets Project (608374) which could benefit Springfield, Agawam, and West Springfield including the Big E Exposition grounds and facilities. Mr. Roscoe reported that as a result of this discussion, the JTC agreed to recommend that the MPO commit \$15 million of FFY 2020 dollars to this West Springfield Memorial Avenue project. Mr. Roscoe then called on Mr. Czach to speak about the project and its merits.

Mr. Czach reported that at the last meeting, the JTC members had focused on programming the TIP to ensure that funds wouldn't be lost by first considering proposed transportation improvement projects that were at 25% design stage or more. Mr. Czach noted, however, that in FFY 2020 and 2021, there were very few transportation projects programmed in the TIP that had reached the 25% design stage and so JTC members agreed to consider the West Springfield Memorial Avenue Reconstruction and Complete Streets Project (608374) which is identified as a regionally significant Complete Streets project. Mr. Czach noted that the Commonwealth is advocating Complete Streets Projects and, in response, the Town of West Springfield has recently adopted a local Complete Streets Program. Mr. Czach indicated that the Memorial Avenue project will complement the Memorial Avenue Bridge Replacement Project (605374) in West Springfield as well as the Morgan-Sullivan Bridge Replacement Project (605384) in Agawam. Mr. Czach added that this Memorial Avenue project can also link with the MGM Springfield Casino and Six Flags in Agawam as well as spur economic development along the Memorial Avenue corridor.

Steve Williams of Belchertown asked what other transportation projects were discussed at the last JTC meeting. Mr. Czach replied that MassDOT District Two had identified several projects and he called on Jeff Hoynoski of the MassDOT District Two office to explain them. Mr. Hoynoski reported that the District Two projects included were the River Road project in Agawam that would connect two previously completed projects; the Southampton Reconstruction of Glendale Road Project (604738); the Reconstruction of Route 32 Project (601504) in Palmer and the Goshen Route 9 Resurfacing Project (608126).

Peter Frieri reported that MassDOT District One office has two municipal projects that are presently under review by MassDOT: the Reconstruction and Related Work Project (606912) in Worthington which is a \$13 - \$15 million project that had a public hearing back in April; and a Route 9 Retaining Wall Project on Route 143 (606797) in Cummington. Mr. Woelfel asked Administrator Mary MacInnes for comments on the FFY 2017-2021 TIP, and she replied the replacement of buses at 12 buses per year would be the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's top priority.

At this point, Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to endorse the region's proposed FFY 2017-2021 TIP recognizing that there are various funding possibilities to pursue and several excellent priority projects that will likely be competing for funds as has been demonstrated at today's MPO meeting.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC), SECONDED BY SELECTMAN DOUG SLAUGHTER OF THE TOWN OF AMHERST, TO ENDORSE THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017-2021 WITHOUT CONSIDERING ANY OF THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE OUT YEARS OF THE SUBJECT TIP AT THIS TIME

Mr. Woelfel reiterated that there are many excellent priority projects which will likely compete for funds in the TIP's out years but he emphasized that the region is not going to lose funding as there is always an opportunity for more discussion and to amend the current version of the Pioneer Valley's FFY 2017-2021 TIP. With that in mind, Mr. Woelfel asked the MPO members if they had any amendments to the TIP that they would like to propose at this time.

MOVED BY DOUG SLAUGHTER OF THE TOWN OF AMHERST, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC) TO APPROVE \$15.9 MILLION IN FUNDING FOR THE PIONEER VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY (PVTA) IN FFY 2020.

Mr. Czach commented that in relation to West Springfield's Memorial Avenue project and the regional TIP as a whole, funding \$15.9 million for the PVTA will take funds away from highway projects and the West Springfield Memorial Avenue project is valuable. Mr. Woelfel stated that he would call for a regular vote to resolve this question but he first wanted to ascertain how much money was currently unprogrammed in the TIP for FFY 2020 and FFY 2021. In response, Mr. Roscoe reported that the unprogrammed funds in the FFY 2017-2021 TIP includes \$15.89 million in FFY 2020 and \$7.7 million in FFY 2021.

Mr. Woelfel then called for a vote on the amendment to approve \$15.9 million in funding for the PVTA in FFY which resulted in four "No" votes and two abstentions and the motion to approve the \$15.9 million in funding for the PVTA was not approved. Mr. Woelfel underscored that as long as the FFY 2017-2021 TIP can be amended, there is a need to continue to discuss the transportation projects over the coming months because the available funding is not going to leave the Pioneer Valley region. Mr. Woelfel then called for a motion to endorse the region's proposed FFY 2017 – 2021 TIP document.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC), SECONDED BY SELECTMAN DOUG SLAUGHTER OF THE TOWN OF AMHERST, TO ENDORSE THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017-2021 WITHOUT CONSIDERING ANY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS OFFERED FOR THE TIP'S OUT YEARS AND WITH THE INTENT TO FURTHER DISCUSS PROPOSED PROJECTS FOR FUTURE FUNDING. THERE BEING NO FURTHER QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE MPO MEMBERS PRESENT.

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

7. Review, Discussion and MPO Endorsement of Both the Annual 3C Certification Document and the Air Quality Self Certification Document

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe to discuss the region's Annual 3C Certification Document along with the Air Quality Self Certification Document. Mr. Roscoe stated that a vote by the Pioneer Valley's MPO members is being sought today in order to certify that our region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is meeting all of the relevant federal transportation guidelines and regulations including Title VI, which collectively govern the appropriate expenditure of federal transportation funds. Mr. Woelfel then called for a motion to endorse the annual 3C Certification Document of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization's transportation planning process and the Air Quality Self Certification document.

MOVED BY SELECTMAN MARCUS BOYLE OF HATFIELD, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN GEORGE ARCHIBLE OF THE TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN, TO ENDORSE THE ANNUAL CERTIFICATION OF THE 3C TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION ALONG WITH THE AIR QUALITY SELF.CERTIFICATION DOCUMENT. THERE BEING NO FURTHER QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, THE MOTION WAS THEN UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

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

8. Review, Discussion and MPO Consideration of a PVPC Proposal to Expand the Voting Membership of the Pioneer Valley MPO to Include the Western Mass Economic Development Council as a Voting Member

Mr. Brennan stated that a number of years ago, having a representative of the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council (EDC) participating as an ex officio member of the Pioneer Valley MPO was recommended and this was agreed to by all parties with the caveat that this arrangement would proceed on an experimental basis with the representative not having the ability to cast an MPO vote.

Mr. Brennan stated when this proposal was considered in the past, the question asked was whether there was more than one Economic Development Council entity. Mr. Brennan explained that after a discussion, it was agreed that it should be a representative of a regional body that encompassed the entire region which in fact, the EDC of Western Massachusetts actually does. Mr. Brennan asked the MPO members to review the *Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Comprehensive, Continuing, Cooperative Transportation Planning and Process and the Metropolitan Planning Organization* included in their meeting packet and to consider the recommended revision outlined on page 2 to include the President and CEO of the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council (EDC) as an established voting member of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Mr. Brennan indicated that a vote on this proposal will be taken at the next MPO meeting after it has been advertised for a typical 30-day public review.

Mr. Woelfel noted that MassDOT is in favor of a diversified MPO membership and this is an opportunity to determine if there are might be other members who should be considered for a voting membership of the Pioneer Valley MPO. Mr. Woelfel concluded his remarks by stating that this item should come up for a vote at the next MPO meeting.

9. Staff Update on the Update to the Statewide Rail Plan Which is Targeted for Completion in Early 2017

Mr. Brennan noted that the Statewide Rail Plan update is currently underway. Mr. Brennan reported that he attended a public meeting to discuss efforts to update the Massachusetts State Rail Plan on June 14th in Worcester. Mr. Brennan stated that a draft version of the new State Rail Plan would be available in late fall or early winter with the final version scheduled to be in place in 2017. Mr. Brennan reported that when he attended the June 14th meeting, he underscored that there were three very significant, region-wide projects that needed to be included in the Massachusetts State Rail Plan, but in the case of the Pioneer Valley the 3 standout projects of high merit for inclusion in the new statewide rail plan need to encompass:

1. **Expand the level of passenger rail service on the Knowledge Corridor between Springfield and Greenfield.**

Mr. Brennan said he hoped this would be a short term item since Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer, had made a commitment at an earlier MPO meeting on February 3, 2015 to initiate a pilot passenger rail service on the Knowledge Corridor. At that February meeting she stated that

MassDOT was working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which would clarify the operating costs, capital costs and the parameters of the proposed Knowledge Corridor pilot program.

2. **A Freight Upgrade to the 32-mile Massachusetts portion of the New England Central Railroad (NECR) line that runs between Vermont and Connecticut via Palmer Massachusetts so that it meets the modern freight weight load carry standard of 286,000 lbs.** Mr. Brennan stated that Connecticut has upgraded to the weight load carry standard of 286,000 lb. and Vermont is in the process of doing the same. Mr. Brennan underscored that the Massachusetts portion of the NECR needs to be upgraded to the weight load carry standard and happily MassDOT has committed some of the funding needed to enable this in its recently approved Capital Investment Plan (CIP).
3. **Advancement of the recommendations laid out by MassDOT's Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative (NNEIRI), a study that was recently completed and released and which recommends:**
 - A passenger rail connection between Boston, Worcester, Springfield, Hartford and New Haven as well as a way for Boston and New Haven to connect with Montreal by rail
 - 8 round trips a day between Boston and New Haven via Springfield including a stop in Palmer
 - One daily round-trip between New Haven and Montreal via Springfield
 - One daily round-trip between Boston and Montreal via Springfield

Mr. Brennan reported that the cost of the inland route between Boston and New Haven is projected to be about \$600 million and if the route is extended to Montreal, the cost escalates to \$1.2 billion. Mr. Brennan suggested this might be a worthy discussion topic for discussion at a future Pioneer Valley MPO meeting.

10. Report from Jim Czach, the Chairman of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC), on Important Transportation Issues and Projects Discussed Since the Last MPO Meeting Was Held on March 23, 2016

Mr. Woelfel called on Jim Czach to report on issues and projects discussed at the last meeting of the Pioneer Valley region's Joint Transportation Committee (JTC). Because the last meeting of the JTC was discussed in an earlier agenda item, Mr. Czach reported that at the next JTC meeting, he will discuss with the JTC members an initiative that Mr. Brennan has been advocating which has been successfully implemented in the Colorado Springs region. Mr. Czach explained that for the past ten years, the residents of Colorado Springs have had a 1% tax in addition to the sales tax that is dedicated to transportation improvement projects in that region. Mr. Czach explained that this is an additional source of revenue that allocates 55% to capital projects, 35% to maintenance and 10% to transit. Mr. Czach stated that after ten years, the residents of Colorado Springs voted again for the 1% tax with an 80% voter approval rating.

Mr. Woelfel thanked Mr. Czach for his report on JTC activities and initiatives and he then moved on to the next agenda item.

11. 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 MassDOT District One's updates on relevant transportation issues and projects. Mr. Frieri reported that the Municipal Bridge Replacement Project at Ireland Street in Chesterfield which is programmed for FFY 2017 will be at the 25% design stage later this summer; the Resurfacing Project on Route 9 in Goshen achieved the 100% design stage in March and is moving towards its PS&E submittal; and the Route 143 Project in Worthington's public hearing is being rescheduled but will occur before winter.

Mr. Woelfel next called on Jeff Hoynoski of the MassDOT District Two office in Northampton to present District Two's updates on relevant transportation issues and projects. Mr. Hoynoski reported that the Belchertown Warren Bridge Demolition Project's PS&E has been completed and the project will be advertised on September 17th; the Brimfield - Sturbridge Route 20 Project was advertised on May 28th with the bid opening scheduled for tomorrow; July 26th; the Longmeadow-Springfield Resurfacing Project was advertised on July 16th and has a bid opening scheduled for August 30th; the Columbia North Project was advertised in June and has a bid opening on August 23rd; and the Ludlow-Chicopee Bridge Project has a bid opening scheduled for September 7th. Mr. Woelfel thanked Mr. Frieri and Mr. Hoynoski for their District One and District Two project updates and he then moved to take up the next agenda item.

12. Updates from Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) Administrator Mary MacInnes on Relevant Public Transit Issues and Projects of Interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

Mr. Woelfel called for a report and update from Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) Administrator Mary MacInnes. Ms. MacInnes reported that there has been much progress on the new Westfield PVTA Transit Pavilion and Forish Construction is the general contractor for this project. She added that the foundation has been poured and a 2017 spring opening is anticipated. Ms. MacInnes reported the roof has been replaced on the Northampton Garage and skylights have been installed. Ms. MacInnes also reported that contractors at Union Station will be installing the electric solar bus charger in Union Station and solar LED signs have been erected at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, the Holyoke Library, the Eastfield Mall and at Mill and Locust Streets in Springfield. Ms. MacInnes underscored that over the weekend the Massachusetts House of Representatives and the Senate over-rode Governor Charlie Baker's veto which has resulted in level funding this year for the Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) instead of a 2% cut. Mr. Woelfel thanked Ms. MacInnes for her report and he then moved to take up the final agenda item.

13. Other Business

Mr. Woelfel asked if there was any further business for the MPO members to address. Mr. Wilcox of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) reported that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have posted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on June 27, 2016 regarding enhanced MPO coordination. Mr. Wilcox explained that the proposed rulemaking will affect how MPOs are shaped and formed and where there are two or more MPOs, the boundaries will have to be realigned with the current urbanized boundary. He added that the 60-day commentary period ends as of August 26, 2016 and the MPO members are encouraged to examine the document and provide comments.

Mr. Roscoe stated that this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking impacts hundreds of MPOs across the country which includes the Pioneer Valley MPO which extends into Franklin County and down into Hartford County. Mr. Roscoe underscored that the MPO staff intends to comment on the notice.

Mr. Brennan reported that MassDOT has completed its Capital Investment Plan (CIP) and the CIP was approved in final form in June. Mr. Brennan added changes have been made to the CIP from the earlier version and overall our region did very well and MassDOT's comments were appreciated.

There being no further business for the MPO members to conduct, Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to adjourn the July 25, 2016 MPO meeting.

MOVED BY RICHARD COHEN, MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF AGAWAM, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC), TO ADJOURN THE JULY 25, 2016 MEETING OF THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S MPO. THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THE MPO MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:20 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy W. Brennan, Executive Director
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at the July 25, 2016 MPO Meeting

1. Pioneer Valley Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting Notice and Agenda: July 25, 2016
2. Minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting: Wednesday, June 22, 2016
3. MassDOT Comment Letter RE: 2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
4. 2017- 2021 TIP Comments Received During Public Review
5. PVTA Cottage Street Bus O&M Facility Project Letter to Stephanie Pollack, Chair, Pioneer Valley MPO
6. Pioneer Valley Regional Bike Share (PVBS011) Request Letter from Mayor David J. Narkewicz
7. Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Comprehensive, Continuing, Cooperative Transportation Planning and Programming Process and MPO
8. 2016- 2019 Pioneer Valley Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Proposed Amendments – June 2016
9. Pioneer Valley MPO Transportation Improvement Program (FY2016 -2019)
10. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project List (FY2017)
11. 2017- 2021 Pioneer Valley Region MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
12. Summary of Comments on the Draft Pioneer Valley Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)