

Minutes of the Tuesday, September 22, 2020 Virtual 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	Deputy Director, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Representing MPO Chair Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer
Jim Czach*	Chairman, Joint Transportation Committee& Town Engineer, West Springfield
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
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)

*denotes non-voting member

Guests and PVPC Staff Present:

Christopher Bouchard	Engineer, Town of Agawam
Mark Cressotti	City Engineer, City of Westfield
Derek Krevat	Regional Planning Coordinator, MassDOT Planning
Andrew McCaul	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
John Martin	Selectman, Town of Southampton
Jeff McCollough	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
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
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, Executive 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 September 22, 2020 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: Richard Masse, MassDOT District Two, Representing Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division Administrator Jonathan Gulliver; David Narkewicz, Mayor of Northampton and PVTA Advisory Board Chair; Roger Fuller, Chesterfield Selectboard; Walter Gunn, Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission; William Reichelt, Mayor of West Springfield; and Sandra Sheehan, Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA). PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe confirmed that

this roll call constitutes a quorum. Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor of Easthampton joined the meeting after the roll call was taken.

Following the roll call, Mr. Woelfel moved to take up the minutes of the previous MPO meeting held on May 26, 2020.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO Held on May 26, 2020.

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Pioneer Valley MPO meeting which was held on May 26, 2020.

MOVED BY DAVID NARKEWICZ, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, SECONDED BY ROGER FULLER, SELECTBOARD MEMBER, TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 26, 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 Proposed 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 release of the proposed amendments to the 2021 Pioneer Valley Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Roscoe stated that 2021 TIP has not yet been approved by the Federal Highway Administration and Sandra Sheehan, Administrator of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) would like to speak about the delay.

Ms. Sheehan emphasized the need for approval of the 2021 TIP. She stated that the apportionment of 5307 funds cannot be obligated until the 2021 TIP is approved. Ms. Sheehan explained that a portion of the 5307 funds, called reflex capital funds, are used for preventive maintenance and ADA service. She added that because of the effect of COVID-19 on PVTA's cash flow and because the grant funding cannot be approved until the 2021 TIP is approved, the PVTA is requesting approval of the 2021 TIP as soon as possible.

Mr. Woelfel remarked that there will be approval of the 2021 TIP by October 1st, and Mr. Roscoe stated that this agenda item will appear on the agenda for the MPO's October meeting.

4. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Endorse the new State Targets for PM3 Air Quality Standards for the Springfield Urbanized Area

Mr. Woelfel explained that there will not be a vote on the State Targets for PM3 Air Quality Standards at this meeting but that this agenda item will appear on the agenda for approval at the next MPO meeting scheduled for October 27th. Mr. Woelfel then called on Derek Krevat, Regional Planning Coordinator for MassDOT Planning, to present a preview of the PM3 Air Quality Standards for Springfield's urbanized area. Mr. Krevat stated that the MPO is required to adopt federal performance measures that are set by MassDOT. There are three categories: PM1 - safety measures, PM2 - pavement conditions and bridge performance, and PM3 - system performance measures including travel times and emissions reductions. Mr. Krevat reported that the performance measures

have not changed for PM1 – Safety and PM2 comprised of pavement and bridge measures; however, there are changes to PM3.

Mr. Krevat explained that Performance Measure PM3 refers to the amount of emissions and the air quality estimated to be reduced through projects funded by the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program (CMAQ). He remarked that PM3 affects the Pioneer Valley because of a Springfield TIP project that is incorporated in this Performance Measure. Mr. Krevat explained that there are four air quality maintenance areas in Massachusetts, one of which is the City of Springfield. He displayed a table entitled *Emissions Reductions Targets* and reported that all the TIP projects funded by CMAQ in Massachusetts are shown in the table including the *Springfield Intersection Improvements at Cottage Street, Industry Avenue and Robbins Road (608782)* TIP project.

Mr. Woelfel thanked Mr. Krevat for his presentation and he moved on to the next agenda item.

5. Presentation by Gary Roux on the PVPC Draft List of the Top 100 High Crash Locations

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux stated that the last version of the *Top 100 High Crash Intersections List* was distributed in 2016, and now the draft 2020 *Top 100 High Crash Intersections List* consists of data from 2015 to 2017 for the Pioneer Valley. Mr. Roux explained that data is available for 2018 – 2020 but it is not yet final data and there is a lack of confidence in using it. He reported that ranking of the crash data is based on EPDO which stands for Equivalent Property Damage Only Scoring. Mr. Roux explained that EPDO is now calculated differently. The new method assigns property damage a “1” and serious injury and fatal crashes are assigned a value of “21.” He added that clusters of crashes at closely spaced intersections appear as one intersection on the list, and the list doesn’t include rotaries or intersections with interstate ramps.

Mr. Roux stated that ten different communities have at least one intersection that appears on the list: Springfield (63), Chicopee (17), Holyoke (11), Westfield (4), West Springfield (1), South Hadley (1), Hadley (1), Northampton (1), Wilbraham (1) and Granby (1). He displayed a PowerPoint slide entitled *Top 100 High Crash Intersections for the Pioneer Valley 2015 – 2017*. Mr. Roux pointed out that the #1 location, the one with the most crashes, is the “X” in Springfield. He indicated that there are 46 new locations on the list which are highlighted in yellow and there are 28 locations that were dropped in rank since the last list. He further indicated that 23 locations increased in rank from the last list and four locations had no change in rank. Mr. Roux reported that the intersection location with the largest increase in crashes is Prospect Street at Buckley Boulevard in Chicopee with 78 crashes. Mr. Roux announced that 25 intersection locations have had improvements made and 11 locations are scheduled on the TIP for improvements.

Mr. Roux indicated that the plan is to have the *Top 100 High Crash Intersections for the Pioneer Valley* report finalized for October 2020. He explained that next month an analysis of every community will be completed that will include a map with detailed data for each location. Drone videos of some locations will be collected and locations that are contributing to problems will be identified. Mr. Roux displayed a website (that is not live yet) entitled *Top 100 High Crash Intersections* which has an interactive map reflecting the locations. Clicking on a location will produce a drone video of the intersection and a video of the Prospect Street at Buckley Boulevard intersection in Chicopee was shown.

Mr. Woelfel asked if there were any questions or comments for Mr. Roux. There being none, Mr. Woelfel moved on to the next agenda item.

6. Presentation by Gary Roux on the PVPC Regional Traffic Counting Program

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux explained that back in the spring, a proposal was made to identify locations where traffic can be monitored in order to determine to what extent traffic is returning to normal after March when the amount of traffic was lessened because of the pandemic. Mr. Roux reported that because MassDOT suspended its traffic counting program due to COVID-19 in the spring, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) proposed and MassDOT accepted a proposal for the PVPC to monitor 30 locations monthly. He stated that the PVPC started these traffic counts in June and the goal was to count each location monthly through October. Then MassDOT resumed its traffic counting program in July and asked the PVPC to count 57 locations. As a result, Mr. Roux reported that instead of counting between April and October, the traffic counting will be carried out between August and November. There will be three observations at each of the 30 locations and all the MassDOT counts will be completed this year. Mr. Roux noted that three counts will be provided for each of MPO members' communities and the counts will continue as long as possible. Mr. Roux underscored that significant changes in traffic have been seen during peak hours. He explained that when it becomes cold outside, adhesive tape used in the counting process doesn't stick to the pavement so usually counting stops in late November. Mr. Roux cautioned that when examining traffic counts, historic data needs to be considered. He advised checking with a community's planning board and making sure that current traffic count data is compared with data from previous years to ensure accuracy.

Mr. Roux explained that opportunities for local traffic counts right now are extremely limited but existing requests will be completed. He remarked that new requests will need to wait until regional counts and MassDOT counts are completed. He noted that Shared Use Path counts will continue as planned but on-road bike lane counts won't resume until the spring.

Mr. Woelfel thanked Mr. Roux for his presentations and asked if there were any questions or comments for Mr. Roux. There being none, Mr. Woelfel moved on to the last agenda item

7. Other Business

Mr. Woelfel asked if there was any other business to conduct. There being none, he called for a motion to adjourn today's September 22nd MPO meeting.

8. Adjourn

Mr. Woelfel then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOVED BY DAVID NARKEWICZ, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, SECONDED BY SANDRA SHEEHAN, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE PIONEER VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY (PVTA), TO ADJOURN THIS SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 MEETING OF THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S MPO. THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THIS SEPTEMBER 22ND MPO MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:32 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly H. Robinson, Executive Director
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission