

Minutes of the Thursday, February 3, 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:

Stephanie Pollack	Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation
David Mohler	Executive Director, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation
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)
Richard Kos	Mayor, City of Chicopee
Mary MacInnes	Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA)
Richard Masse	MassDOT District Two Office (Northampton) Representing Thomas Tinlin, Acting Highway Division Administrator, MassDOT
Alex Morse	Mayor, City of Holyoke
David Narkewicz	Mayor, City of Northampton
Domenic Sarno	Mayor, City of Springfield

Guests and PVPC Staff Present:

Price Armstrong	Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA)
Tim Brennan	Executive Director, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Ethan Britland	Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
Randy Brown	Town of Southwick, Department of Public Works
Michelle Chase	Town Engineer, Town of Agawam
Matthew Chase	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Mark Cressotti	Vice-Chair of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) and City Engineer, City of Westfield
Jim Czach	Chairman, Joint Transportation Committee & Town Engineer, Town of West Springfield
Tim Doherty	Director of Rail Programs, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
Christopher Dunphy	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Community Development Section
JT Gaucher	Town of Ludlow, Department of Public Works
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1 Office (Lenox)
Joshua Garcia	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Municipal Services Section
Dick Grannells	Town of Southwick, Department of Public Works
Laura Hanson	MassDOT District 2 Office (Northampton)
Yem Lip	City Engineer, City of Holyoke
Andrew McCaul	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Jeff McCollough	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1 Office (Lenox)
Donna Feng	MassDOT District 2 Office (Northampton)
Jeffrey Neece	Department of Public Works, City of Chicopee
Ron O'Blenis	HDR Engineering, Inc.
Yaitza Osario	Massachusetts House of Representatives - Intern
Bryan Pounds	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP), MassDOT
Liz Quiqley	Congressman Richard Neal's Office
Dana Roscoe	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Gary Roux	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Paula Simmons	MassDOT District 2 Office (Northampton)
Louise Sullivan	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Support Staff
Rick Sullivan	Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts
Katina Syner	MassDOT District 2 Office (Northampton)
Brandon Wilcox	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Steve Williams	Director, Department of Public Works, Town of Belchertown
Lyle Wray	Capitol Region Council of Governments – Hartford, Connecticut

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

Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), began the session by expressing her delight in being able to chair the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting. Secretary Pollack stated that in the event that she may have to leave the MPO meeting early, David Mohler, Massachusetts Executive Director, Office of Transportation Planning, can assume her place and chair the remainder of today's MPO meeting. Secretary Pollack underscored that she especially wanted to join the Pioneer Valley MPO members in a discussion of the results and recommendations of the Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative (NNEIRI) Study Report which focuses on a passenger rail connection that would serve Boston, Worcester, Springfield, Hartford and New Haven as well as a way to re-establish a rail connection with Montreal.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO Held on October 29, 2015

Secretary Pollack then called the February 3, 2016 meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO to order at 10:10 a.m. and she asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Pioneer Valley MPO meeting which was held on October 29, 2015.

MOVED BY RICHARD COHEN, MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF AGAWAM, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN MARCUS BOYLE OF THE TOWN OF HATFIELD, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 29, 2015 PIONEER VALLEY MPO MEETING AS PRESENTED.

Secretary Pollack asked if there were any comments, questions or corrections regarding the minutes of the previous Pioneer Valley MPO but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

5. Presentation of the Final Results and Recommendations of the MassDOT – Sponsored Northern New England Interstate Rail Initiative (NNEIRI) Including an MPO Discussion on How to Begin a Phased Implementation of this Passenger Rail Service Which Would Link Boston, Worcester, Springfield, Hartford and New Haven--Plus Eventually Montreal .

Secretary Pollack stated that she wished to begin today's meeting by taking up Agenda item #5: the *Final Results and Recommendations of the MassDOT -Sponsored Northern New England Interstate Rail Initiative (NNEIRI)*. She called on Ethan Britland of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), who serves as the Department's Project Manager for the Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative (NNEIRI) Study, to begin this presentation. Mr. Britland explained that the purpose of the NNEIRI study is to assess the feasibility of how to improve intercity passenger rail services along a 470-mile corridor that connects destinations in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York and Quebec. Mr. Britland explained that this planning study examined the opportunities and impacts of more frequent and higher speed intercity passenger rail service on the NNEIRI Corridor which includes two overlapping rail segments, namely,

- **the Inland Route** (Boston to New Haven with connecting services to New York City)
- **the Boston-to-Montreal Route**
 - Boston, Massachusetts to Montreal, Québec
 - Montreal to New Haven, Connecticut

Mr. Britland explained that given the overlap of these two rail route segments, the funding which was awarded for the Inland Route High-Speed Rail Corridor Feasibility and Planning Study and the Boston-to-Montreal High-Speed Rail Corridor Phase II Feasibility and Planning Study were combined under a single consultant contract. Mr. Britland underscored that although Amtrak provides three rail services along the NNEIRI Corridor which include: the Lake Shore Limited, the Vermonter Service and the Northeast Regional Shuttle (Springfield – New Haven), additional intercity rail service along the NNEIRI Corridor is clearly needed.

Mr. Britland reported that a schedule has been developed for the NNEIRI Project deliverables. These work products are essentially complete and have been submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for final review. He stated that the NNEIRI Project encompassed five key work tasks as follows:

Task 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed Project Work Plan • Agency & Stakeholder Involvement • Existing Conditions Assessment
Task 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Purpose & Need Statement • Station Site Assessment & Guidelines • Preliminary Service Options Performance Report
Task 3	<u>Alternatives Analysis Report</u> October 2014
Task 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Purpose & Need Statement • June 2014 • Environmental Assessment • December 2015
Task 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inland Route Service Development Plan • February 2016 • Boston-to-Montreal Route Service Development Plan • February 2016

At this point, Mr. Britland introduced Ron O’Blenis, NNEIRI Project Manager for the HDR Consultant Team, saying that Mr. O’Blenis is the single point of contact for NNEIRI Project communications flowing between MassDOT and HDR Engineering. In addition, Mr. O’Blenis is directly responsible for the consultant team’s work activities as well as the overall scope of work in accordance with an approved HDR contract and project budget. Mr. O’Blenis reported that the **Task 3 Alternatives Analysis Report** recommends three service components to be considered for phased implementation, namely:

- New Haven-to-Montreal Service – 1 Daily Roundtrip with a travel time of 8 hours 40 minutes.
- Boston-to-Montreal Service –1 Daily Roundtrip with a travel time of 8 hours 10 minutes.
- Boston-to-New Haven Service – 8 Daily Roundtrips with a travel time of 3 hour 40 minutes

Mr. O’Blenis further reported on the ridership forecast calculated for 2035 as follows:

Proposed Services	2035 Proposed Ridership
Anticipated Vermonter and Lake Shore Limited	79,900 riders/year
Boston-to-New Haven	429,000 riders/year
New Haven-to-Montreal	343,000 riders/year
Total Anticipated Annual NNEIRI Ridership	875,700 riders/year

Mr. O’Blenis reported that the projected NNEIRI capital costs required to achieve a full build of all three route segments currently can be summarized as follows:

Infrastructure (not including costs for supporting/related projects)	\$648 - 721 million
Equipment	\$456 - 527 million
Total	\$1.1 - 1.2 billion

Mr. O’Blenis noted that there are several other rail improvement projects that are related to and support the NNEIRI Project moving forward, namely,

Related/Supporting Projects	
(1) Springfield Union Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (4) Vermonter Extension to Montreal • (4) Customs and Immigration Check-Point at Montreal's Central Station
(2) South Station Expansion in Boston	
(3) Knowledge Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (5) CT Rail Hartford Line Service – New Haven, Hartford, and Springfield

Mr. O’Blenis then called on Mr. Britland to wrap-up their joint NNEIRI project presentation. Mr. Britland reported that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is currently reviewing the two Service Development Plans and that the Tier 1 Environmental Assessment and all of the NNEIRI Study Documents will be posted to the MassDOT website later this month. Mr. Britland added that MassDOT is developing an updated version of the Massachusetts State Rail Plan which will incorporate NNEIRI and this updated rail plan is expected to be completed by the end of 2016. Mr. Britland asked if there were any questions or comments. There were no immediate questions but Secretary Pollack asked Mr. Britland to return to his PowerPoint slide entitled *Related/Supporting Projects* (please see above table).

Secretary Pollack underscored that investment in both passenger and freight transportation is important, not only as a transportation improvement, but also as an economic development investment. Secretary Pollack reported that she, Governor Baker and Lieutenant Governor Polito are in agreement that they are committed to finding ways to select transportation investments that produce multiple returns which will result in better transportation, better quality of life, economic development opportunities and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, among others.

Secretary Pollack emphasized that strong public support is needed to promote the importance of investments in passenger and freight rail statewide and noted that when she became the Commonwealth’s Secretary of Transportation, she appointed Astrid Glynn as MassDOT Rail and Transit Administrator in order to accelerate the implementation of freight and passenger rail initiatives situated outside the service area of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). Secretary Pollack explained that Secretary Glynn is responsible for transit, freight and passenger rail issues and projects and she plays a key role in the MBTA Commuter Rail System. In addition, Secretary Pollack announced that Jody Ray has been appointed the new Administrator of the MBTA Commuter Rail System and, therefore, he no longer has ample time to focus on non-MBTA rail issues which helps underscore why Astrid Glynn’s role as MassDOT’s Rail and Transit Administrator is so crucial.

Secretary Pollack further explained that the statewide rail plan which focuses on freight rail as well as passenger rail services outside the MBTA were last updated five years ago. Secretary Pollack stressed that the Northern New England Interstate Rail Initiative (NNEIRI) is a critically important input for a broader statewide rail plan and NNEIRI needs to address every project on the *Related/Supporting Projects* list that were discussed earlier in the meeting by Ethan Britland and Ron O’Blenis and which she too wanted to comment on at this point.

- Secretary Pollack underscored that there is a 100% commitment to complete the Springfield Union Station Project. Secretary Pollack explained that funding from MassDOT and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development is now available to provide the Springfield Redevelopment Authority with the full budget that it needs to complete the project and which work is anticipated to reach completion by the end of the current calendar year.
- Secretary Pollack announced that the South Station Expansion in Boston is an essential project because South Station presently doesn’t have sufficient track space to handle expanded Amtrak intercity services or commuter rail services. She explained that South Station expansion is also needed for the South Coast Rail Project which will restore rail service between Boston, Taunton, Fall River and New Bedford in concert with the new rail services which would connect Boston, Worcester and Springfield. Secretary Pollack reported that a Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) grant has been obtained to fund a full environmental assessment of the South Station expansion and after the required public review process has been completed, the final impact report will

be issued later this year. Secretary Pollack added that MassDOT officials are working with the City of Boston and Mayor "Marty" Walsh, to try and secure additional funding needed to advance the South Station Expansion Project.

- Secretary Pollack reported that a very thoughtful letter was received last week from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) Executive Director Tim Brennan delineating the region's thoughts on planning a pilot program to run additional north-south passenger rail trains on the Knowledge Corridor tracks north from Springfield with stops in Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield. Secretary Pollack indicated that MassDOT is now working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with PVPC which will clarify the operating costs, capital costs and the service parameters of such a proposed pilot program. Secretary Pollack underscored that this passenger rail pilot project must have a set time frame, a clear definition of the ridership and sufficient ticket revenue during the pilot phase of the project which would last perhaps three years in order to be considered sufficiently successful to warrant making the additional rail services permanent in nature. Secretary Pollack underscored that although the details of an expanded Knowledge Corridor passenger rail pilot project, such as frequency of service and the cost of a ticket, still need to be worked out, the Knowledge Corridor pilot program could begin by the spring of 2017.
- Regarding the possible Vermonter Train Extension into Montreal, Secretary Pollack stated that on-the-border customs checks and other complicated operating and security issues still need to be addressed and resolved before rail service connecting with Montreal can be realized.
- Secretary Pollack stated that in Connecticut, Governor Dannel Malloy and Connecticut Department of Transportation Commissioner James Redeker are currently spearheading a major investment in a commuter rail service which will connect New Haven, Hartford and Springfield. Secretary Pollack explained that to realize these goals, conversations will be needed with Connecticut officials regarding how to address capital and operating costs in an equitable manner.

Mayor Domenic Sarno and Mayor David Narkewicz advocated for moving forward with expanded north-south passenger rail service as soon as possible. Secretary Pollack replied that MassDOT is developing a Five Year Capital Investment Plan (CIP) that will be tied to Governor Baker's Five Year Capital Investment Plan (CIP) but MassDOT's CIP is a rolling plan so there will be multiple opportunities to revisit proposed projects. Secretary Pollack noted that because there could be passenger accessibility issues at some of the Knowledge Corridor rail stops, increasing the level of service could trigger additional capital investment requirements. Secretary Pollack added that one of the reasons for starting with a pilot rail service project is that it affords an opportunity to test the demand for additional rail service as well as to determine the costs to be considered as a factor in the decision as to whether to make expanded passenger rail services permanent.

Mr. Brennan returned to the topic of noting that the recommendations laid out in the NNEIRI report are undeniably very long term projects and he asked Secretary Pollack if the preliminary engineering and design work for the NNEIRI could commence focused on the extensive capital improvements that are needed between Worcester and Springfield and do so over the next five-years. Secretary Pollack responded that the Worcester-Springfield segment is already a critically important freight rail corridor especially with the relocation of the CSX freight facility from Boston westward to Worcester and she stated that MassDOT's updated statewide rail plan is the logical opportunity to examine the interplay of passenger and freight services that are possible for the Worcester-Springfield rail line. Secretary Pollack reported that Amtrak has launched a conversation related to its Northeast Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan and the comment period will occur later this month.

Holyoke Mayor Alex Morse advocated for additional train runs on the Knowledge Corridor between Springfield and Greenfield and he stressed that western Massachusetts communities would like to have more rail service available within a year. Secretary Pollack replied that MassDOT is eager to start a conversation about additional service on

the Knowledge Corridor as a pilot project that could include an aggressive implementation schedule using refurbished MBTA rail equipment.

There being no further discussion, Secretary Pollack moved to the next agenda item.

6. Informational Briefing Focusing on MassDOT's Current Efforts to Develop a Five Year Capital Investment Plan (CIP) for Transportation and How this CIP Will be Used by Decision Makers Over the CIP's 2016-2020 Time Horizon

At this point, Secretary Pollack commented that MassDOT's Five Year Capital Investment Plan (CIP) will be a statewide document encompassing highway, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, bus modes as well as Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) support. Secretary Pollack reported that, in 2015, a decision was made to produce only a one-year capital plan at the statewide level for FY 2016. This has resulted in the Department of Transportation (DOT) currently being mid-way through a two billion dollar DOT capital plan and a one billion dollar MBTA capital plan for FY 2016. Secretary Pollack added that before July 1, 2017, MassDOT will complete and release an integrated, statewide, multimodal, five year CIP, which will be revisited annually that will cover the FY 2017 through FY 2021 period.

Secretary Pollack called on David Mohler, Massachusetts Executive Director, Office of Transportation Planning to discuss MassDOT's current efforts to develop a Five Year Capital Investment Plan (CIP) for transportation. Mr. Mohler reported that MassDOT expects to have a draft CIP assembled in late February with a public release date in March 2016. Mr. Mohler explained that this CIP will cover all capital needs and projects proposed in Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) will be included. Mr. Mohler underscored that for the first time, TIP projects will be scored using project evaluation criteria and these scores will be available to the public at large.

Mr. Brennan asked if MassDOT's Five-Year CIP can be considered a document consisting of specific transportation projects or considered more taking a programmatic approach. Secretary Pollack replied that one of the highest priorities that she, Governor Baker and Lieutenant Governor Polito share is the need to have the state's billions of dollars in capital spending invested in a portfolio that synergistically generates more return than individual investments would on their own and thus requires rethinking the process by which capital investments are selected. Secretary Pollack indicated that MassDOT's draft CIP should be considered version 1.0 so as to symbolize a new way of thinking about how to conduct capital investment planning work.

Secretary Pollack explained that once MassDOT's draft five-year CIP plan has been completed and released, public meetings will be scheduled around the state and communities and regions will learn whether or not their transportation improvement projects were selected for inclusion in the statewide CIP. Unlike the TIP documents developed by the MPOs around the state, Secretary Pollack emphasized that most of the CIP spending in the first year will be devoted to ongoing projects. Secretary Pollack stated that MassDOT is suggesting to all MPOs that since the state by statute does its planning on a five-year cycle, and the federal government allows five-year TIPs, it would be wise to allow TIPs to be on a five-year planning cycle as well. Another suggestion, Secretary Pollack said, is for MassDOT to develop a uniform, online form that municipalities can use to propose one or more transportation projects that were not selected for inclusion in the CIP and/or to describe a project that they're thinking of pursuing in the future. Mr. Brennan asked if there was an example anywhere in the country where these suggestions are already being utilized. Mr. Mohler responded that no examples are known of yet but MassDOT is researching best practices in several states.

Secretary Pollack asked if there were any other questions or thoughts regarding the CIP process which is currently underway. There being none, Secretary Pollack thanked everyone for their support and she encouraged ongoing feedback on MassDOT's draft CIP including questions on projects that were included or not included in the draft CIP. Secretary Pollack urged continued conversations on MassDOT's participation in the MPOs, in how projects are scored, and how capital planning is done. Secretary Pollack stated that she looks forward to a continuing dialog with the Pioneer Valley MPO and underscored that she is committed to making sure that every dollar of capital

investment made in the state produces multiple returns and is distributed in a way that is fair, transparent and accountable including the dissemination of spending reports.

Secretary Pollack then called on Mr. Mohler to take over as the MPO Chair and to take up the next agenda item as she needed to depart for another commitment.

3. Review, Discussion and MPO Endorsement of the Updated Public Participation Plan (PPP) Currently Advertised for the Required 45 day Public Review Period

Mr. Mohler called on PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Andy McCaul for an update on the Updated Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the Pioneer Valley region. Mr. McCaul stated that this document was presented to the MPO members at the last MPO meeting on October 29th and was released for the required 45-day public review period. Mr. McCaul explained that the PPP document has been updated to ensure that all state and federal requirements have been satisfactorily addressed especially with respect to civil rights and environmental justice. Mr. McCaul reported that during the public review period significant public comments were received along with comments that were brought forth during the PVPC's October 2015 Federal Certification Review. Mr. McCaul stated that all of these comments have been addressed and he requested that the MPO members vote to endorse the updated version of the region's PPP.

Mr. Mohler called for a motion to endorse the updated Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the Pioneer Valley region.

MOVED BY RICHARD MASSE OF THE MASSDOT DISTRICT TWO OFFICE, SECONDED BY DAVID NARKEWICZ, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, TO ENDORSE THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S UPDATED PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP) AS RECOMMENDED BY STAFF. THERE BEING NO FURTHER QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, THE MOTION WAS THEN UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

4. Review, Discussion and MPO Endorsement of the Proposed Amendments to the Pioneer Valley Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Currently Advertised for the Required 30-day Public Review Period

Mr. Mohler next called on PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe to present an update and summary of a set of proposed amendments to the Pioneer Valley's 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) noting that these amendments have been advertised for the required 30-day public review period. Mr. Roscoe stated that Federal Fiscal Year 2016 began October 1, 2015 and will end on September 30, 2016. Mr. Roscoe reported that changes made to the region's 2016-2019 TIP consisted of revising the costs of several programs and projects and moving projects between fiscal years as indicated in the document entitled *2016 – 2019 Pioneer Valley Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Proposed Amendments – October 2015*. Mr. Roscoe indicated that the regional discretionary fund target hasn't been exceeded and no projects have been removed from the TIP because of the fiscal constraint mandate. Mr. Roscoe announced that since the 2016 – 2019 TIP amendments document was released for public review, there are two additional changes affecting FFY 2016, including:

- Increase CMAQ funding for the Westfield Columbia Greenway Rail Trail (604968) from \$300,000 to \$682,633 for a funding total of \$3,004,516
- Increase STP funding for Brimfield/Sturbridge Route 20 Resurfacing (608022) Project from \$3,500,000 to \$3,645,203.

After responding to a question raised by Holyoke Mayor Alex Morse's regarding the status of a Holyoke traffic signals upgrade project, Mr. Mohler called for a motion to endorse the proposed amendments to the Pioneer Valley region's FFY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as recommended by staff.

MOVED BY SELECTMAN MARCUS BOYLE OF THE TOWN OF HATFIELD, SECONDED BY RICHARD COHEN, MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF AGAWAM, TO ENDORSE THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S PROPOSED FFY2016-2019 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AS RECOMMENDED BY STAFF INCLUDING THE ADDITION OF INCREASED CMAQ FUNDING FOR THE WESTFIELD COLUMBIA GREENWAY RAIL TRAIL

(604968) FROM \$300,000 to \$682,633 AND INCREASED STP FUNDING FOR THE BRIMFIELD/STURBRIDGE ROUTE 20 RESURFACING PROJECT (608022) FROM \$3,500,000 to \$3,645,203

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

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

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

7. 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 October 29, 2015

Mr. Mohler called on Mr. Czach to report on issues and projects discussed at the last meeting of the region's Joint Transportation Committee (JTC). Mr. Czach noted that the first meeting of a new Regional Freight Committee which will help craft the Regional Freight Plan for the Pioneer Valley, is scheduled for next week. Mr. Czach indicated that PVPC staff member Gary Roux and the attendees will discuss at the meeting how freight is moved through the region with the objective of increasing the cost effectiveness of the regional freight network. Mr. Czach announced that a Complete Streets workshop will be held following the next JTC meeting which is scheduled for March 9th. Mr. Czach also announced that at the March 9th JTC meeting he will be asking for feedback from the JTC members regarding their collaboration with State Senator Eric Lesser to obtain increased Chapter 90 funding for local road and bridge projects. Mr. Czach added that there will also be discussion on whether or not bike trail miles should be included in the Chapter 90 funding formula.

Mr. Mohler thanked Mr. Czach for his report and he then moved on to the next agenda item.

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

Mr. Mohler called on Peter Frieri of the MassDOT District One office in Lenox to present District One's updates on relevant transportation issues and projects. Mr. Frieri replied that the Town of Cummington's FFY 2015 Retaining Wall Replacement Project on Route 9 is underway and the construction work is about 25% complete. Mr. Frieri reported that there are no new projects scheduled in FFY 2016 but there is a municipal bridge replacement project scheduled for FFY 2017 in the Town of Chesterfield with its 25% design plans anticipated early this year. Mr. Frieri added that work is continuing on municipal designs in the Town of Worthington for the reconstruction of Route 143 and in the Town of Goshen for the reconstruction of West Street. Mr. Frieri stated that both these reconstruction projects are currently at the 25% design stage.

Mr. Mohler next called on Laura Hanson of the MassDOT District Two office in Northampton to present District Two's updates on relevant transportation projects within their jurisdiction. Ms. Hanson reported that she will focus on several District 2 construction projects, namely:

Project #	City/Town	Description	Update	Next Major Activity
607072	Statewide	Implementation (Phase III) of the Flashing Yellow Arrow at Signalized Intersections. Will begin with District 1 and move East across Massachusetts.	Awarded to Dagle Electric Company 1/6/2016	Notice to Proceed
604035	Hadley	Signal & Intersection Improvements at Route 9 (Russell Street) & Route 47 (Middle Street)	Awarded to E,T&L Corporation 1/20/2016	Notice to Proceed
605222	Springfield	North End & Brightwood Infrastructure Improvements at Sumner Avenue, Allen Street, Abbot Street & Harkness Avenue	Awarded to Baltazar Contractors, Inc 1/20/2016	Notice to Proceed

Mr. Mohler thanked Mr. Frieri and Ms. Hanson for their District One and Two project updates and he moved to take up the next agenda item.

9. 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. Mohler called for a report and update from Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) Administrator Mary MacInnes. Ms. MacInnes reported that the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) has secured Gilbane Construction to be the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) for its new Cottage Street Operations and Maintenance Facility with plans to lay the building's foundation in May and June of this year. The other PVTA project, she said that has progressed since the last MPO meeting is the Westfield Transit Pavilion. Ms. MacInnes explained that the PVTA has advertised for construction bids for the Westfield Transit Pavilion and currently asbestos is being removed from the existing building. Then, she said that the building will be demolished and construction will begin on the Transit Pavilion in May of this year. Ms. MacInnes announced that the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) study will be completed by the end of next month. Ms. MacInnes also announced that real time signs will be installed by the PVTA at Springfield Technical Community College (STCC), at Smith College and at the Academy of Music in Northampton.

There being no questions for Ms. MacInnes, Mr. Mohler thanked her for her report and he moved to take up the final agenda item.

10. Other Business

Mr. Mohler asked if there was any further business for the MPO members to address and if a date had been proposed for the next MPO meeting. Mr. Roscoe replied that a date for the next MPO meeting will be proposed after "TIP" day. Brandon Wilcox interjected that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) Certification Review Team has completed its draft Federal Certification Review of the PVPC and the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and looks forward to sharing the draft public certification review with the MPO members and the MassDOT staff in the near future.

There being no further business for the MPO members to address, Mr. Mohler asked for a motion to adjourn this February 3, 2015 MPO meeting.

MOVED BY RICHARD COHEN, MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF AGAWAM, SECONDED BY DOMENIC SARNO, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 2, 2016 MEETING OF THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO). THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THE MPO MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:23 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy W. Brennan, Executive Director
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at the October 29, 2015 MPO Meeting

1. *Pioneer Valley Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting Notice and Agenda: February 2, 2016*
2. *Minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting: Wednesday, October 29, 2015*
3. *2016- 2019 Pioneer Valley Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Proposed Amendments – October 2015*
4. *Pioneer Valley MPO Transportation Improvement Program (FY2016 -2019)*
5. *2016- 2019 TIP Comments Received During Public Review (February 2016)*
6. *2016 PVMPO Draft Participation Plan Comments Received During Public Review*
7. *The Pioneer Valley Region's Ten, Regionally Significant Transportation System Investments for 2016-2020*
8. *Tim Brennan's letter to Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Stephanie Pollack, dated January 29, 2016*

