

Minutes of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Zoom Meeting
Tuesday, June 27, 2023

MPO Members Present:

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| Stephen Woelfel | Director of Strategic Planning, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), representing MPO Chair Gina Fiandaca, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer |
| Paula Simmons | MassDOT, District Two, representing Jonathan Gulliver MassDOT Highway Division Administrator |
| Walter Gunn | Chair, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) |
| Douglas Slaughter | Chair, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) |
| Joshua Garcia | Mayor, City of Holyoke |
| William Reichelt | Mayor, City of West Springfield |
| Mark Gold | Selectboard Town of Longmeadow |
| Roger Fuller | Selectboard Town of Chesterfield |
| Nicole LaChapelle | Mayor, City of Easthampton |
| Rick Sullivan | President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts |

Guests and PVPC Staff Present:

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| Daryl Amaral | MassDOT – Highway District Two Office, |
| Ben Breger | MassDOT – Office of Transportation Planning |
| Van Kacoyannakis | VHB |
| Christopher Klem | MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning |
| Derek Krevat | MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning |
| Andrew McCaul | Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section |
| Dawn Nims | City of Holyoke |
| Sandra Sheehan | Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) |
| Peter Frieri | MassDOT Highway District 1 |
| Derek Shooster | MassDOT |
| Jim Czach | VHB |
| Connor Knightly | Town of West Springfield |
| William Dwyer | Town of Hadley – JTC Chair |
| Alexis Hosea-Abbott | MassBike |
| Bailey Pennington | |
| Peri Hall | Town of Goshen |
| Mark Berman | Town of East Longmeadow |
| Allison McMordie | City of Westfield |
| Dana Roscoe | Principal Planner, PVPC |

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

Stephen Woelfel, Director of Strategic Planning, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, representing MPO Chair Gina Fiandaca, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and CEO, called the June 27, 2023 meeting of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at 10:00 a.m. Dana Roscoe first reviewed the virtual meeting format and noted that the meeting was being recorded.

PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe took roll call, and the following MPO members responded that they were present: Steve Woelfel, representing MPO Chair Gina Fiandaca; Paula Simmons, representing Jonathan Gulliver MassDOT Highway Division Administrator; Walter Gunn, Chair PVPC; Douglas Slaughter, Chair PVTA Advisory Board; Mayor Garcia of Holyoke; Rick Sullivan, Western Mass EDC; Mark Gold of Longmeadow; Roger Fuller of Chesterfield,

and Mayor Reichelt of West Springfield. Mr. Roscoe confirmed that this roll call constitutes a quorum.

2. MPO Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO Held Remotely on May 23, 2023

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the May 23, 2023, meeting minutes of the Pioneer Valley MPO.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY ROGER FULLER, TO APPROVE THE MAY 23, 2023, MEETING MINUTES OF THE PIONEER VALLEY MPO. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED BY A ROLL CALL VOTE.

3. Review, Discussion, and MPO Approval Endorsement of the Proposed Amendments to the FFY 2023 HIGHWAY – Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – currently out for 21-day and comment

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Andrew McCaul stated that at the last meeting, the MPO released the amendment for the increase in the construction cost for the Cummington Retaining Wall of over \$700,000. There were no comments received.

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to endorse the amendment to the FFY 2023 Highway TIP.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY ROGER FULLER, TO ENDORSE THE AMENDMENTS TO THE FFY 2023 HIGHWAY TIP.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call, and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

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

4. Review, Discussion, and MPO Approval to Release the Proposed Amendments to the FFY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the Required 21-Day Public Review Period

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Gary Roux reported that a notice was received that there had been a failure to include a grant that was received in the amount of \$166,000. It is a proposed amendment to the current UPWP ending in September 2023. The objective of the project is to help meet the transportation and mobility needs of seniors and people with disabilities. The funds are from the 5310 (Enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities funds and the State Mobility Assistance Program (MAP). A budget modification was also proposed, which included moving \$10,000 from task 3.8 and \$10,000 from task 3.9 to direct costs. New staff computers were needed, traffic counting supplies needed updating, and a few hard drive failures.

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the FFY 2023 UPWP with the changes detailed by Gary Roux.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY PAULA SIMMONS, TO APPROVE THE FFY 2023 UPWP WITH THE CHANGES DETAILED BY GARY ROUX.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call, and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

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

5. Review, Discussion, and MPO Approval to Release the Draft 2024 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Required 21-Day Public Review Period

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Gary Roux reported that the full draft document was finalized. There is a request for it to be released for the 21-day comment, which would allow for requesting endorsement at the July MPO meeting. Mr. Roux reported that all draft chapters were available for download from the website. There is a postcard that has a QR code on the back that will allow people to go right to the website. On June 28th, there will be an online presentation of the document. It will be recorded and made available. There will also be virtual office hours on July 12th and July 18th. There were in-person events also done for outreach. It was discussed that most people are excited about the prospect of east-west rail service, and there were also interesting comments all

around. It was discussed that the locations were chosen to ensure a larger presence in the rural areas. Palmer was targeted as they would be interested in getting a rail station.

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to endorse the release of the draft FFY 2024 RTP for the required 21-day public review period.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY PAULA SIMMONS, TO RELEASE THE DRAFT FFY 2024 RTP FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call, and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

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

6. Review Discussion and MPO Approval to release the proposed Highway amendment to the FFY 2023 TIP for the Required 21-Day Public Review Period

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Andrew McCaul stated that this was no longer just a transit amendment but included the highway. There were two highway items. The first item was to reduce the cost of the Westfield Levee Project from \$5,185,122 to \$5,149,161 due to a minor decrease in the scope of the project. The second item was the increase in the cost of Granby improvements at two locations on Route 202 from \$4,552,959 to \$5,262,687. There was still \$378,348 remaining without going over the target funds. Transit-wise, the adjustment was for the Low/No Grant awarded in December 2022, which was for two projects with multiple phases involving the electrification project. The MPO approved the projects, and there was a rough outline of how much would be spent, but the budget has changed over time.

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the adjustments for highway and transit items on the FFY 2023 TIP.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY ROGER FULLER, TO APPROVE THE HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT ADJUSTMENTS FOR THE FFY 2023 TIP.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call, and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

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

Mr. McCaul reported several grants awarded for transit funds for 5310, which technically included three projects with several different funding sources.

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to release the Granby Project and the funding for the 21-day public review period.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY ROGER FULLER, TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF THE GRANBY PROJECT AND THE FUNDING FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call, and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

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

7. Review, Discussion, and MPO Adoption of the Regional Vision Zero Statement

Derek Shooster reported that the MPO was developing an application for the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant. The Regional Vision Zero Statement was drafted in support of the application. The JTC recommended that the MPO adopt the Vision Zero Statement. The JTC recommended some additions, which were presented. It was discussed to accept all recommended changes. Dawn Scaparotti provided examples of what would help to address the impacts of climate and climate change on road safety in the Pioneer Valley Region.

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to adopt the regional vision zero statement.

MOVED BY NICOLE LACHAPPELLE, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, TO ADOPT THE REGIONAL VISION ZERO STATEMENT.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call, and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

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

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

Daryl Amaral, MassDOT District Two, provided the following updates:

- **Project 606895** – Granby improvements at 2 locations on Route 202, School Street, and Five Corners; the design is at 100%; review comments were completed on October 3rd; PS&E review comments were completed on June 9th; current ad date is September 9, 2023
- **Project 608073** – Westfield River Levee multi-use path construction; design is at 100%; PS&E review completed on January 18th; it was approved for acquisition; current ad date is September 9, 2023
- **Project 604209** - Holyoke, West Springfield rehab of Route 5 – design at 100%; 100% submission including water main review completed on December 19th; PS&E comments were completed on May 18th; current ad date is July 29, 2023
- **Project 608560** - Springfield improvements on St. James Ave at Tapley Street – advertised on April 15th; bids were opened on May 16th, with the low bidder for Mariah's Concrete Services for \$4.8 million
- **Project 608163** – Wales reconstruction improvements on Monson Road from Monson town line to Reed Hill Road; design is at 75%; the 75% revision is due on September 29th; the current ad date is March 2, 2024
- **Project 608717** – Springfield reconstruction of Sumner Avenue at Dickinson and Belmont. Design is at 100%; PS&E is due on October 17th; current ad date is September 30, 2024
- **Project 608881** - Longmeadow Springfield resurfacing and intersection improvements at Longmeadow St, Route 5, and Commerce St; the design is at 100%; 100% review comments were completed on May 5th; the current ad date is January 18, 2025
- **Project 609065** - Holyoke, resurfacing related to the Center City Connection Project; the design is at 75%; 75% was received on April 4th; comments are due on July 5th; current ad date is February 22, 2025
- **Project 609286** - North Hampton downtown complete streets corridor and intersection improvements on Main St; the design is at 25%; DPH was held on April 26th; 75% submission is due on August 21, 2023; current ad date is March 1st, 2025

Peter Frieri, MassDOT District One, provided the following updates:

- **Cumington Project** – The final design was submitted on May 11th; the project has cleared MassDOT's right of way and environmental clearance. It is ready to advertise.
- **Project 609287** - Phase 2 Worthington Route 143 Reconstruction; the PS&E submittal is expected in August 2023
- **Chesterfield North Road** – the review process was underway and should be done in early July.
- **Reconstruction of Mountain Rd and Williamsburg St** – a revised 25% design was anticipated in early July.

9. Updates from PVTA Administrator Sandra Sheehan on Relevant Transit-Related Issues and Projects of Interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

PVTA Administrator Sandra Sheehan reported that ridership for May was very strong, with 592,000 passengers. There were seat increases except for five locations. Ridership was expected to surpass June's numbers. The major capital projects were in the process of being completed and were expected to be finished by the end of June.

10. Other Business

The next meeting will be held on July 25th in a virtual format. It was discussed to do hybrid formats when it was necessary. It was reported that a Principal Transit Planner, Carl Jackson, from Virginia, was hired.

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

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY ROGER FULLER, TO ADJOURN THE JUNE 27, 2023, MEETING OF THE PIONEER VALLEY MPO. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:52 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION.

Respectfully submitted,
Minutes Services

List of Documents Distributed at June 27, 2023, MPO Meeting

1. MPO Agenda: June 27, 2023
2. May 23, 2022, MPO Meeting Minutes