



MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)

REMOTE MEETING ONLY

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2024, 7:00 PM

MRPC MEETING MATERIALS:

[November 7, 2024 MRPC Meeting Material](#)

MINUTES

1. Open Meeting, Introductions and Announcements

This meeting is held under Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, signed by Governor Healey on March 29, 2023, allowing local and regional governments to hold public meetings remotely or in a hybrid fashion. All votes will be taken by roll call.

Chairperson L. Shifrin called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call Followed:

B. Yocum – present
D. Valliere – present
D. Thornton – present
G. Corbosiero – present
K. Norton – present
K. Munroe – present
K. Nartowicz – present
L. Shifrin – present
M. Bohart – present
P. Cunningham – present
P. Duffy - present

2. MRPC Minutes – October 3, 2024 – Approval of Commissioners Requested

Having no questions or comments, G. Corbosiero moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

- B. Yocum – abstain
- D. Valliere – yes
- D. Thornton – abstain
- G. Corbosiero – yes
- K. Norton – abstain
- K. Munroe – yes
- K. Nartowicz – abstain
- L. Shifrin – abstain
- M. Bohart – abstain
- P. Cunningham – abstain
- P. Duffy - abstain

3. Cash Schedule – October 2024 – Acceptance of Commissioners Requested

C. McNamara, Fiscal Manager presented the October 2024 cash schedule. The opening balance for October 1, 2024, \$471,805.37, total receipts, and transfers for the month \$264,431.74, total cash on hand before this warrant \$736,237.11, less the amount of this warrant \$276,618.76, left a balance after the warrant of \$459,618.35.

G. Corbosiero moved to accept the cash schedule as presented subject to audit. Motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

- B. Yocum – yes
- D. Valliere – yes
- D. Thornton – yes
- G. Corbosiero – yes
- K. Norton – yes
- K. Munroe – yes
- K. Nartowicz – yes
- L. Shifrin – yes
- M. Bohart – yes
- P. Cunningham – yes
- P. Duffy – yes

4. Guest Announcements and Questions

B. Yocum mentioned she read in the previous minutes that G. Eaton was supposed to write a letter regarding the closing of Nashoba Medical Center and asked if the letter had gone out, had we had any response and if the Commissioners could receive a copy of the letter. G. Eaton stated the letter went out on November 5, 2024, and confirmed that he would send a copy of the letter to all Commissioners.

P. Cunningham had additional information to share. He stated that they are no longer having ambulances stationed at Nashoba Medical Center however, there is a working group that is trying to work on a way to open the building to treat emergency patients only. Patients who required more care than what they were equipped

for would have to be transported via ambulance to another hospital. Additionally, Steward wasn't keeping up with the maintenance of the building so if there is someone looking to purchase the building to reopen the hospital it could take approximately 80K to a million dollars to reopen.

5. Administrative Matters

5.1 Executive Director's Recommendation: Promotion of Christopher McNamara from Fiscal Manager to Fiscal Director – Approval of Commissioners Requested

REPORT:

As discussed in previous meetings, Ms. Linda Quinlivan, Fiscal Director, retired from the MRPC on October 31, 2024. We advertised for the Fiscal Director position internally on September 23, 2024, and received one internal applicant from Christopher McNamara, MRPC's current Fiscal Manager. Holly Ford, Administrative and Human Resource Director and Glenn Eaton, Executive Director interviewed Mr. McNamara on October 7, 2024. Mr. McNamara interviewed very well. Mr. Eaton and Ms. Ford agreed that Mr. McNamara is an excellent candidate for the Fiscal Director's position.

We are confident in our recommendation of the promotion of Mr. McNamara from Fiscal Manager to Fiscal Director. We have based our decision on his past and present experiences, education, and his knowledge working in the private and public sectors as well as his outstanding performance with MRPC over the past three plus years.

Performing in his new, official role, with the approval of the Commissioners this evening, Mr. McNamara would have greater responsibilities, such as the management of all financial accounts, maintaining all financial accounts, preparing the annual budget for MRPC (a task at which he excels), preparing for the annual audit, providing the Executive Director with advice concerning investing funds in accordance with all, applicable laws and regulations governing government agencies, and overseeing any new staff joining the Fiscal department and performing other duties as needed.

Management recommends that Mr. McNamara be promoted to the position of Fiscal Director commencing November 10, 2024, with an annual salary of \$72,600, from his current level of \$60,000 as Fiscal Manager.

RESOLUTION:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission hereby approves management's recommendation to promote the current Fiscal Manager, Christopher McNamara to Fiscal Director and to increase the salary of this individual to an annual salary of \$72,600 commencing November 10, 2024.

Having no objections, G. Corbosiero moved to accept the resolution as printed. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

- B. Yocum – yes
- D. Valliere – yes
- D. Thornton – yes
- G. Corbosiero – yes
- K. Norton – yes
- K. Munroe – yes
- K. Nartowicz – yes
- L. Shifrin – yes
- M. Bohart – yes
- P. Cunningham – yes
- P. Duffy - yes

5.2 Budget Amendment – Approval of Commissioners Requested

REPORT

MRPC's FY25 Budget was adopted on June 6, 2024. A summary of the revenue, expenses, proposed surplus/(deficit), and overhead rate follows.

Table A

BUDGET CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Revenue	\$2,897,334
Expenses	\$2,878,825
Proposed Surplus/(Deficit)	\$18,509
Overhead (OH) Rate (or Indirect Cost Rate)	134.26% (or 1.3426)

A separate proposed and revised FY25 Budget handout has been provided at tonight's meeting. This document reflects proposed changes in revenue and expenses. If the Commissioners approve of the edits to the new FY25 Budget, then the revenue, expenses, proposed surplus, and indirect/overhead rate will be as follows (see Table B):

Table B

BUDGET CATEGORY	AMOUNT	PERCENT INCREASE/(DECREASE)
Revenue	\$2,993,750	3.3%
Expenses	\$2,913,141	1.2%
Proposed Surplus/(Deficit)	\$80,609	335.5%
Overhead (OH) Rate (or Indirect Cost Rate)	120.89% (or 1.2089)	(10.0%)

The projected surplus (of \$80,608) indicates that MRPC does not have enough employees and/or consultants to complete all of our current projects. The management team anticipated that these awards would be made and has been discussing this matter ahead of the award dates. Management is much more inclined to engage consultants over hiring new employees to complete the work at hand. Commissioners will be informed of how management addresses obtaining the correct balance of funding to staffing/consulting ratio for the next eight months in FY25.

G. Corbosiero asked where Glenn saw the overhead rate going for this year. G. Eaton referred to the tables above and confirmed that the overhead rate would fluctuate between 134.26% and 120.89%

P. Cunningham stated, if we outsource work, wouldn't MRPC just become the middleman and if so, why wouldn't a town just hire someone else to complete a task? G. Eaton stated that communities often do that. In our situation, if we hired a consultant to conduct public outreach, collect survey data, etc., it would free up our planners to do what they do best.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission agrees with management's proposed changes to the FY25 Budget, as presented.

G. Corbosiero moved to approve the resolution as presented. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

- B. Yocum – yes
- D. Valliere – yes
- D. Thornton – yes
- G. Corbosiero – yes
- K. Norton – yes

K. Munroe – yes
K. Nartowicz – yes
L. Shifrin – yes
M. Bohart – yes
P. Cunningham – yes
P. Duffy – yes

5.3 Templeton Economic Development Planning Project for Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC)– Chair to Sign the Contract – Approval of Commissioners Requested

REPORT

By a vote of the Commissioners, Glenn Eaton, Executive Director was authorized to sign all contracts on behalf of the MRPC on August 28, 2007. As a resident of Templeton, Mr. Eaton was appointed by Templeton’s Board of Selectmen to serve as the Chairman of Templeton’s Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC). Mr. Eaton informed the Commissioners of this appointment on June 8, 2023.

In accordance with the G.L. of MA, c. 121C, ss. 5 (Powers of Corporation), Templeton’s EDIC discussed the completion of a local economic development plan with Karen Chapman, Planning and Development Director, MRPC (on June 26, 2023) and with Tracy Murphy, Senior Planner on May 6, 2024. Mr. Eaton recused himself from both meetings and vacated the meeting room. The Templeton EDIC agreed to compensate MRPC \$31,900 for the preparation of an Economic Development Plan.

On Thursday, October 24, 2024, Mr. Eaton spoke with Attorney Mike McDonald with the State Ethics Office (“Attorney for the Day” program) concerning any potential conflict of interest. Attorney McDonald advised Mr. Eaton to complete and file Form 6.02(3), (*Paid Employee Taking an Additional Uncompensated Public Position Disclosure Form*) with the Templeton Town Clerk’s Office. Mr. Eaton did so on October 29th. A copy of this completed form is available at tonight’s meeting and has been placed in Mr. Eaton’s personnel file.

Mr. Eaton suggests that he should not sign this planning for services agreement with Templeton. Mr. Eaton respectfully requests that the Commission’s Chair, Ms. Laura Shifrin, execute the Economic Development Planning contract with the Templeton Select Board, for the local EDIC.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission hereby resolve that its Chair, Ms. Laura Shifrin, execute an Economic Development Planning services contract on behalf of the MRPC with the Town of Templeton’s Select Board (on behalf of its EDIC).

P. Cunningham moved to accept the resolution as presented. The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote Followed:

P. Duffy – yes
P. Cunningham – yes
M. Bohart – yes
L. Shifrin – yes
K. Nartowicz – yes
K. Munroe – yes
K. Norton – yes
G. Corbosiero – yes
D. Thornton – yes
D. Valliere – yes
B. Yocum – yes

5.4 FY24 One Stop Award List – Information Only

During the week of October 21st, the State’s One Stop Program announced over \$164 million in awards from 13 programs. At least nine of the 22 municipalities in the Montachusett region earned one or more “One Stop” grants. Royalston was awarded \$50,000 for master planning services and MRPC will work on this project.

A complete list of awardees can be found here <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/fy25-community-one-stop-for-growth-awards>.

The Massachusetts “One Stop Grant Program” includes a variety of funding programs. Many local projects such as municipal planning, rehabilitation of buildings, and designing and constructing infrastructure improvements can be funded. MRPC staff will host several online learning sessions concerning planning for the next anticipated “One Stop Program” funding round through the winter. At these sessions questions concerning other grant programs available to cities and towns will also be welcome.

5.5 Other Administrative Matters

6. Department Updates

Status of all ongoing projects can be found by clicking on the link, below:

<https://mrmapper.mrpc.org/webapps/v2.27/CurrentProjects/>

6.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

No additional updates at this time

6.2 Planning & Development

6.2.1 Devens Nature-based Solutions and Resilient Design Tour – Information Only

J. Legros, Senior Planner shared the following information

- Devens Nature-based Solutions and Resilient Design Tour
- Tuesday November 19, 2024 from 2PM-4PM (*rain date/Alt. date Friday Nov 22 from 1-3 or 2-4*)
- [Devens Playground](#) – 27-29 Antietam Street, Devens, MA

Join us for an interactive tour of Devens and a number of projects that have implemented Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and resilient design measures for the many co-benefits, such as increasing carbon sequestration, biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity, soil health, air/water quality, public mental and physical health, energy efficiency, reducing heat island effects, and mitigating stormwater runoff, as well as flooding and drought. Whew, that was a lot! But that is the point! This tour will explore how Devens has integrated NbS into all development projects through a combination of education, incentives, and regulations to further the sustainable redevelopment goals of the Devens Reuse Plan. The [Bolton-Harvard-Devens Apple Country Natural Climate Solutions Project](#) and the [Ayer-Devens Pocket Forest Pilot Project](#) will be featured as innovative and replicable tools that communities can use to help integrate the natural and built environment to create better spaces for people and nature to co-exist.

Space is limited, so be sure to [REGISTER](#) today!

6.2.2 One-Stop Funded Projects – Information Only

See above 5.4 for a link to a list of all awarded grants.

6.2.3 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Expression of Interest (EOI) Submissions – Information Only

The MA EEA and MVP Program instituted an Expression of Interest (EOI) phase to their funding process to occur prior to the full MVP Action Grant applications due in spring 2025. The EOI is intended to provide EEA with an idea of how many communities will be applying for funding and for what types of projects. EEA will provide feedback to communities on the efficacy of the projects prior to the full action grant applications being open. This process has worked well for the One Stop for Growth Program and hopefully more grant programs will utilize this process.

Bernie Cahill, Principal Planner and our grant writer submitted the following MVP EOIs by the November 1st deadline.

- Ashby – 2 EOIs

- Groton – 1 EOI
- Harvard – 1 EOI
- Hubbardston – 2 EOIs
- Lunenburg – 1 EOI
- Petersham – 2 EOIs
- Royalston – 2 EOIs
- Westminster – 1 EOI

6.3 Transit & Transportation

B. Doherty announced that the next MJTC and MMPO meetings will be held in December. We will not have an MJTC meeting or MMPO meeting in November.

7. New Business

Open session - This time is reserved for topics that the chair did not reasonably anticipate would be discussed.

B. Yocum was happy to announce that Shirley now has a part-time Planner, Mark Archambault. Mr. Archambault started this past month.

8. Adjournment - The date of the next MRPC meeting – December 5, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

G. Corbosiero moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. There were not objections. Meeting was adjourned at 7:42 pm.

This meeting will be recorded by the GoToMeeting app and will be made available for viewing at <https://www.youtube.com/user/MontachusettRegion/videos>.

This notice is subject to change with reasonable notice provided to all.

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) is located at 464 Abbott Ave., Leominster, MA and is accessible to people with disabilities. MRPC provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MRPC by phone (978-345-7376), fax (978-348-2490) or by email mrpc@mrpc.org. All requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting. Sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the meeting.

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Anyone in need of translation services for any MRPC meeting or document should contact the MRPC directly in advance in order to arrange applicable services. Please contact the MRPC at mrpc@mrpc.org or (978) 345-7376 ext. 300 with questions, concerns or assistance needs regarding accessibility and/or language services.

Cualquier persona en necesidad de servicios de traducción para cualquier reunión o MRPC documento pueden dirigirse a la MRPC directamente con antelación para organizar los servicios correspondientes.

Meeting Attendance					
Name	M/A	Representing	Appointment Date	Present	Absent
Arpano, Abby	A	Ashburnham	12.2023		X
Vacant	M	Ashburnham			X
Leab, Doug	A	Ashby	7.2023		X
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001		X
Bialecki, Rebecca	A	Athol	7.2020.		X
Norton, Kathy	M	Athol	11.2023	X	
Copeland, Shaun	A	Ayer	7.2020.		X
Tillotson, Geoff	M	Ayer	7.2022		X
Vacant	A	Clinton			X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011	X	
Angus, Neil	N/V	DREZ	7.2023		X
Bohart, Mary Jo	A	Fitchburg	7.2021	X	
Butland, Alyne	M	Fitchburg	7.2020.		X
Labonte, Amber	A	Gardner	1.2024		X
Swartz, Robert	M	Gardner	7.2019		X
Burke, Russell	A	Groton	7.2022		X
Cunningham, Peter	M	Groton	7.2016	X	
Minar, Kara	A	Harvard	7.2021		X
Thornton, Doug	M	Harvard	9.2024	X	
Kresge, Mark	A	Hubbardston	7.2023		X
Munroe, Kristofer	M	Hubbardston	7.2023	X	
Dolan, Kelly	A	Lancaster	7.2023		X

Streeter, Frank	M	Lancaster	7.2023		X
Vacant	A	Leominster			X
Valliere, Dean	M	Leominster	7.2019	X	
Vacant	A	Lunenburg			X
Reid, Amanda	M	Lunenburg	7.2022		X
Poodry, Deb	A	Petersham	7.2024		X
Vacant	M	Petersham			X
Jackson, Melanie	A	Phillipston	7.2022		X
Telepciak, John	M	Phillipston	7.2001		X
Barclay, James	A	Royalston	7.2017		X
Nartowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2022	X	
Oelfke, Bill	A	Shirley	7.2020.		X
Yocum, Barbara	M	Shirley	8.2017	X	
Newman, Kirsten	A	Sterling	7.2023		X
Newman, Eric	M	Sterling	8.2024		X
Bennett, Jeff	A	Templeton	7.2023		X
Rich, Dennis	M	Templeton	7.2017		X
Vacant	A	Townsend	9.2024		X
Shifrin, Laura	M	Townsend	7.2019	X	
Vacant	A	Westminster			X
Ferris, Michael	M	Westminster	7.2025		X
Beauvais, Andrew	A	Winchendon	7.2025		X
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	

Staff: G. Eaton, H. Ford, C. McNamara, J. Stanton, B. Doherty, T. Murphy, J. Legros

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS DISTRIBUTED FOR THE MEETING

October 3, 2024, MRPC Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2024, MRPC Meeting Agenda

November 7, 2024, MRPC Meeting Agenda with Details

MRPC Grant Opportunities Spreadsheet

FY25 Budget For November 7, 2024

FY25 One Stop Award List

MRPC Tour Map 2024

Devens NBS Tour Photo

QR Code for Devens Nature-based Solutions and Resiliency Design Tour Registration

Templeton Quote EDIC EDPlan 2023