

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC)
Minutes of the Full Commission Meeting Held on Thursday, February 8, 2018
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
60 Congress Street – 2nd Floor Large Conference Room
Springfield, Massachusetts 01104

Commission Members Present Were:

Lynn Arnold	Alternate Commissioner	Holland
Jesse Belcher-Timme	Commissioner	Easthampton
Mark Cavanaugh	Commissioner	South Hadley
Judy Eiseman	Commissioner	Pelham
Marilyn Gorman Fil	Alternate Commissioner	Monson
Walter Gunn	Commissioner	Longmeadow
Scott Hanson	Alternate Commissioner	Springfield
Richard Holzman	Commissioner	Chester
Jack Jemsek	Commissioner	Amherst
Josh Kusnierz	Commissioner	Ware
Douglas Mattoon	Alternate Commissioner	West Springfield
Mark Paleologopoulos	Commissioner	Agawam
Sierra Pelletier	Commissioner	Belchertown
Marcus Phelps	Commissioner	Southwick
Lee Pouliot	Alternate Commissioner	Chicopee
Stephen Snow	Commissioner	Williamsburg
James Whalen	Commissioner	Wales

Guests Present:

Charlie Kaniecki, Chairman, Board of Selectmen, Town of Southampton
Chuck Kaniecki, Town of West Springfield

PVPC Staff Present:

Patrick Beaudry, Manager of Public Affairs
Tim Brennan, Executive Director
Indrani Kowlessar Gallagher, Executive Assistant/Office Manager
Patty Gambarini, Principal Environmental Planner
Joshua Garcia, Municipal Services/Manager
Catherine Ratté, Principal Planner/Section Manager

Communities Not Represented at the February 8, 2018 Commission Meeting Were:

Blandford	Hampden	Plainfield
Brimfield	Hatfield	Russell
Chesterfield	Holyoke	Southampton
Cummington	Huntington	Tolland
East Longmeadow	Ludlow	Westfield
Goshen	Middlefield	Westhampton
Granby	Montgomery	Wilbraham
Granville	Northampton	Worthington
Hadley	Palmer	

1. Chairman's Call to Order, Welcome and Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held on December 14, 2017

The February 8th meeting of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Commission Chairman Walter Gunn. Following Introductions around the room, Mr. Gunn called for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular Commission meeting held on December 14, 2017.

MOVED BY LYNN ARNOLD, SECONDED BY MARK CAVANAUGH, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2017.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions, comments or corrections regarding the subject meeting minutes but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR CORRECTIONS, THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 14TH COMMISSION MEETING WERE APPROVED WITH FOUR ABSTENTIONS.

2. Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting Held on December 12, 2017

Mr. Gunn stated that the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on December 12, 2017 were distributed for information and reference purposes only and no action needs to be taken. Mr. Gunn then moved to take up the next agenda item.

3. Regional Forum: An Introduction to the Role and Responsibilities of the Newly, State-Approved Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District (PVMCD) Encompassing the Three Counties (i.e. Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire) Comprising the Pioneer Valley

Mr. Gunn announced that the presenter for tonight's regional forum on the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District (PVMCD) is Charlie Kaniecki, Board of Selectmen Chair for the Town of Southamptton. Mr. Gunn then asked Mr. Brennan to introduce Mr. Kaniecki. Mr. Brennan explained that Mr. Kaniecki has been working on the PVMCD for several years and has been collaborating with Greg Lewis, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Planner at Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) on this important issue. Mr. Brennan further explained that, in addition to being a select board member, Mr. Kaniecki serves on our planning region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and he has an extensive background working in public health.

At this point, Mr. Gunn asked Mr. Kaniecki to begin his presentation. Mr. Kaniecki began his opening remarks by providing greater detail on his professional background. Mr. Kaniecki first explained that he previously served as the state district health officer for western Massachusetts for almost 20 years. Mr. Kaniecki added that during his service with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, a component of his job had been disease surveillance. Mr. Kaniecki next remarked that the outbreak of West Nile virus occurred during his tenure with the Commonwealth. Mr. Kaniecki stated that the above-noted outbreak created alarm amongst federal and state officials because it signaled the introduction to a host of new diseases that had not previously occurred in this region. Mr. Kaniecki commented that this outbreak caused the federal government to compel Massachusetts to ramp up its mosquito monitoring program. However, Mr. Kaniecki noted that there had been no monitoring in the Pioneer Valley at all until the West Nile outbreak had occurred. Mr. Kaniecki further explained that, once the West Nile virus was contained, monitoring efforts ramped down as the federal government retracted its funding support and the monitoring program was terminated.

Mr. Kaniecki stated that, since there is no disease monitoring regarding transmission from mosquitoes to people, there is no way to uncover the diseases being carried by mosquitoes until the human population has actually been infected. Mr. Kaniecki next underscored that there have been no new mosquito control districts established in the Commonwealth in over 30-40 years and as a result, there is no institutional knowledge base on how to put these districts together.

Mr. Kaniecki consequently reviewed the work that has been done over the past 1½ years to form a PVMCD. Mr. Kaniecki remarked that the first effort was to define the borders of such a district. Mr. Kaniecki explained that it was determined that the PVMCD should encompass the Connecticut River Valley which has several water sheds and a population of close to 700,000. Mr. Kaniecki next reviewed a slide in his PowerPoint presentation which had a map of mosquito control districts in Massachusetts and indicated the level of risk for West Nile Virus in specific areas and communities in Massachusetts. Mr. Kaniecki observed that the risk level in western Massachusetts is moderate and yet at this time there is currently no surveillance work underway in this area. However, Mr. Kaniecki noted that when surveillance programs are conducted, treatment options ranging from education of the population to larviciding to addressing wetland issues can be considered. Mr. Kaniecki commented that companion work efforts aimed at establishing a PVMCD include putting together a mosquito district template. Mr. Kaniecki further stated that he and Greg Lewis from FRCOG had met last year with the

Massachusetts Department of Agriculture (MDA) and, as a result of this meeting, the MDA voted to form a Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District which is now an official control district under state law.

Mr. Kaniecki remarked that one of the challenges of forming a PVMCD is that, even if a city or town has been included in the PVMCD, a vote has to be taken at the local level, such as town meeting, in order for a community to be able to join the district. Mr. Kaniecki further explained that, when a municipality does join a district, money to support it is levied off of the community's local tax base dedicated to its operations. Mr. Kaniecki next stated that letters have recently been sent to communities that are within the PVMCD, informing them of the formation of the PVMCD and asking them to submit letters of interest. Mr. Kaniecki added that submitting a letter of interest gives a municipality the opportunity to nominate a PVMCD commissioner to represent their community as a district member. Mr. Kaniecki then commented that nominations go to the MDA which determines which individuals are the most qualified to fill a commissioner position. Mr. Kaniecki then announced that the six municipalities which have thus far submitted letters of interest to be part of the PVMCD include East Longmeadow; Hadley; Northampton; Palmer; Southampton; and South Hadley.

Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Kaniecki to review the benefits to cities and towns which decide to participate in the PVMCD. Mr. Kaniecki explained that by joining the PVMCD, communities are taking a proactive approach in protecting the public health of their residents as well as the environment. Mr. Gunn asked Mr. Kaniecki to review the schedule for appointing PVMCD commissioners and staff. Mr. Kaniecki responded that the goal is for PVMCD commissioners to be appointed in March 2018. In addition, Mr. Kaniecki explained that the PVMCD director will hopefully be hired by April or May and by July 1 there will be new funding arriving in order to make the PVMCD fully functional. Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Kaniecki to explain the role of the State after the PVMCD district is in place. Mr. Kaniecki stated that the State essentially has an oversight role to manage PVMCD funds and PVMCD staff members become state employees.

There being no more questions or comments, Mr. Gunn thanked Mr. Kaniecki for his informative presentation and he moved to take up the next agenda item.

4. Staff Report on the Commonwealth's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Certification Process and MVP Grant Program Which Can Assist PVPC Member Communities to Complete Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments and Resiliency Planning

Mr. Gunn invited PVPC staff presenter Catherine Ratté to begin her presentation on the Commonwealth's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program. Ms. Ratté remarked that the MVP program is the Baker Administration's approach to climate change across state government. Ms. Ratté next explained that the Commonwealth has long been a leader in its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and remains committed to meeting the requirements of the Commonwealth's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008 which sets limits on emissions and requires new and innovative strategies to cut carbon.

Ms. Ratté next reviewed Executive Order 569, "An Integrated Climate Change Strategy for the Commonwealth" which outlines a comprehensive approach to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions across Massachusetts as well as to protect municipalities from the impacts of climate change in order to build a more resilient Commonwealth. Ms. Ratté commented that Executive Order 569 consists of the following two-tiered approach: 1) mitigate to avoid the unmanageable; and 2) accept the fact that human actions have changed the climate and that the State needs to adapt in order to manage the unavoidable.

Ms. Ratté next referred PVPC Commission members to the Commonwealth's applicable website, www.resilientma.com, which is where the State has posted its hazard mitigation and climate adaptation plan. Ms. Ratté explained that Massachusetts is the first state in the union that is taking an integrated approach toward hazard mitigation and climate adaptation and she added that the PVPC has been a leader in supporting this integrated approach here in the Pioneer Valley region.

Ms. Ratté remarked that the following six Pioneer Valley cities and towns are currently MVP cities: Belchertown, Holyoke, Northampton, Pelham, Springfield, and Ware. Ms. Ratté stated that Massachusetts has taken steps to expedite the MVP certification process. More specifically, Ms. Ratté noted that the Request for Responses (RFR) was released in April 2017; the application deadline was in May; and grant applications were reviewed within one week by a multi-agency team. Ms. Ratté next commented on the benefits of becoming an MVP community which she noted include receiving a small grant for

the facilitated planning process at the city or town level. Ms. Ratté added that once a community has been MVP certified, the municipality becomes eligible for plan implementation funds.

Ms. Ratté then reviewed the MVP program requirements which include:

- A signed letter of support from the select board chair, mayor or town administrator
- A brief statement from the community confirming its commitment to accepting the MVP grant and to engage in planning for the impacts of climate change
- A summary of community support
- A description of ongoing planning efforts such as local hazard mitigation plans, master plans, etc.
- A description of any ongoing community or regional climate-change related projects

Ms. Ratté further explained that MVP program eligibility criteria include an in-kind staff time match of approximately 80 hours and municipalities are expected to work with a state-certified technical service provider. Ms. Ratté underscored that PVPC staff are available to assist interested member communities with the MVP application process and she added that she will circulate a sign-in sheet at tonight's meeting for Commission members who would like to be contacted by her regarding the MVP program.

After Ms. Ratté had concluded her report, Mr. Gunn thanked her for her informative presentation and he moved to take up the next agenda item.

5. Certification of Local Assessment Payments at a Proposed, Per Capita Rate of .16138¢

Mr. Gunn reviewed the certification of the local assessment payments for Fiscal Year 2019. Mr. Gunn remarked that the PVPC's per capita rate for Fiscal Year 2019 has been set at .16138¢ and he added that this is the third year that the PVPC has slightly increased its assessment rate in accordance with the limits set by Proposition 2½. Mr. Gunn added that the PVPC has been raising its assessment rate per the recommendation of its auditors due to the PVPC's need to increase sources of funding. At this point, Mr. Gunn asked Mr. Brennan to provide further details on this agenda item. Mr. Brennan commented that the Pioneer Valley region is unique in that a large portion of these assessment funds is allocated every year to a special projects pool which funds free local technical assistance to its member cities and towns upon request by the subject city or town. Mr. Brennan added that member communities with any in-house staff receive two-person days of staff time per LTA request and rural towns with no or few staff can receive three-person days of staff time per LTA request.

After Mr. Brennan had responded to several clarifying questions from Commission members, Mr. Gunn called for a motion to address this agenda item.

MOVED BY RICHARD HOLZMAN, SECONDED BY JUDITH EISEMAN, TO APPROVE AND CERTIFY THE ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS OF THE PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION'S 43 MEMBER COMMUNITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019, AS OUTLINED IN A REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DATED FEBRUARY 1, 2018, AT A PER CAPITA RATE OF .16138¢, AND WHICH HAVE BEEN CALCULATED BASED ON U.S. CENSUS 2010 POPULATION FIGURES AND ALL RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S STATE ENABLING LAW (I.E. CHAPTER 40B M.G.L.)

There being no questions or comments on this agenda item, Mr. Gunn called for a vote.

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

6. Annual Budget Estimates – Fiscal Year 2019 (in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40B M.G.L., the PVPC's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2019 will be introduced at the February 8, 2018 Commission meeting, however, final approval will not be sought until the April Commission meeting to allow ample time for budget review and feedback)

Mr. Gunn explained that the proposed Fiscal Year 2019 budget, which had been previously distributed to Commission members, was provided for review purposes and a final vote on it will not be taken until the April 12th Commission

meeting. Mr. Brennan remarked that under the State's enabling law the PVPC must bring forward its budget for the upcoming fiscal year at its February meeting. Mr. Brennan added that Commission members are being asked at tonight's meeting to only act to accept the staff budget report. Mr. Brennan further explained that the proposed budget, after tonight's meeting, will be distributed to all 43 PVPC member cities and towns for budget review, feedback and commentary after which the proposed budget is brought back to the Commission at its April meeting as an action item seeking its final approval.

Mr. Brennan remarked that the proposed budget has been prepared by the PVPC's Accountant Lisa Edinger and consists of two components: the operating budget for the Planning Commission itself; and a budget encompassing pass-through funds that are designated for specific projects such as housing rehabilitation and Connecticut River combined sewer overflow clean-up projects. Mr. Brennan noted that, in this way, the PVPC serves as the fiscal agent for pass-through funded projects such as those he had noted as examples.

After a few clarifying questions on the proposed Fiscal Year 2019 budget by Commission members, Mr. Gunn called for a motion to address this agenda item.

MOVED BY JOSH KUSNIERZ, SECONDED BY MARK CAVANAUGH, TO ACCEPT THE PVPC STAFF REPORT APPLICABLE TO THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2019 PVPC CONSOLIDATED BUDGET WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT FINAL BUDGET APPROVAL WILL BE SCHEDULED FOR ACTION BY THE FULL COMMISSION AT ITS APRIL 2018 MEETING FOLLOWING AN EXTENDED PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD.

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Gunn called for a vote on the motion.

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

7. Review, Discussion and Final Endorsement of the Commission's Top Ten Resolves for 2018

Mr. Gunn asked Mr. Brennan to begin his remarks concerning the Commission's proposed Top Ten Resolves for 2018 which had been first presented at the December 14th Commission meeting. Mr. Brennan noted that after the December 14th meeting the Top Ten Resolves were broadly circulated to local chief elected officials, the western Massachusetts legislative delegation and key state officials that the PVPC routinely interacts with. Mr. Brennan added that an extended period of time was given for any changes to be submitted and no suggested amendments were offered this year. There being no questions or comments for Mr. Brennan, Mr. Gunn called for a vote to endorse the PVPC's Top Ten Resolves for 2018.

MOVED BY RICHARD HOLZMAN, SECONDED BY JAMES WHALEN, TO APPROVE AND ADOPT IN FINAL FORM, THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDED TOP TEN RESOLVES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2018 WHICH WERE INITIALLY PROPOSED AND DISCUSSED BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS DECEMBER 14, 2017 MEETING.

Mr. Gunn called for a vote on the final version of the PVPC's Top Ten Resolves for 2018 as presented.

THERE BEING NO QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, THE FINAL VERSION OF THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDED TOP TEN RESOLVES FOR 2018 WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

8. Community Reports/Updates from PVPC Commission Members

Mr. Gunn asked for any community reports and updates from Commission members. Scott Hanson, Alternate Commission member representing Springfield, announced that the City will be making its annual state of the city presentation on Tuesday, March 27, 2018 at CityStage in Springfield. Judy Eiseman, Commission member representing the Town of Pelham, remarked that the Town has been working for many years on creating village-centered zoning. Ms. Eiseman further stated that over the past year PVPC staff member Dillon Sussman has been instrumental in helping with this zoning effort. Ms. Eiseman added that a vote on village-centered zoning will be taken up at Pelham's next town meeting.

James Whalen, Commission member from the Town of Wales, announced that in October 2017 the Town overwhelmingly approved putting monies toward getting its first 25% phase done for a Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) grant for Monson Road. Marcus Phelps, Commission member from the Town of Southwick, stated that the Southwick Planning Board has been working over the last six months on developing a bylaw for medical and recreational marijuana. Mr. Phelps added that the Planning Board will most likely hold a hearing in early March 2018 and he noted that the goal is to get this bylaw completed in order for the Town Meeting to consider and vote on in May 2018.

Mr. Holzman, Commission member representing Chester, remarked that Chester is trying to integrate the cultural activities of the Springfield Museum with three museums in Chester. Mr. Holzman further stated that the Town is working with the Springfield Symphony Orchestra to bring classical musicians to the hilltowns in general and to Chester in particular. Stephen Snow, Commission member representing Williamsburg, remarked that Mr. Sussman has spent 3-4 meetings with Williamsburg officials to help update the Town's zoning bylaws.

There being no more community updates, Mr. Gunn thanked Commission members for their updates and he then moved to address the next agenda item.

9. Executive Director's Highlights

Mr. Gunn asked Mr. Brennan to begin his Executive Director's report. Mr. Brennan announced that the PVPC's Fiscal Year 2017 audit reports have been completed by the PVPC's CPA firm Melanson and Heath. Mr. Brennan further stated that he has hard copies of the above-noted reports on hand at this meeting should any Commission members wish to review these documents first hand.

Mr. Brennan announced that, after several delays, the state finally issued its draft Massachusetts State Rail. On the positive side, Mr. Brennan remarked that three regional priorities, specifically two passenger rail projects and one rail freight project, had been included in the plan. Mr. Brennan explained that one of the priority one projects designated in the draft plan includes expanding service on the Knowledge Corridor north of Springfield to serve Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield. Mr. Brennan noted that the PVPC has been advocating for more than two years for the State to add two trains in the morning and two trains in the evening and he added that the Commonwealth has agreed to work with the PVPC and FRCOG on this project, provided it would be run as a pilot service over a 3-5 year time period. Mr. Brennan next remarked that the above-noted project is tethered to a commitment annotated in the plan to finish the high-level platform at Springfield Union Station. Mr. Brennan then commented that the other priority one project is the freight line that starts south of the Canadian border and ends in New London, Connecticut. Mr. Brennan noted that although this is a priority freight line the Massachusetts segment of this track must be reinforced in order to meet the modern weight standard which is 286,000 pounds.

Mr. Brennan announced that the disappointing news concerns the east-west passenger rail project. Mr. Brennan explained that nearly a decade ago former US Congressman John Olver was able to get the east-west rail connection study as an earmark. Mr. Brennan remarked that the above-noted study was moved forward in the last few years and, with the assistance of US Congressman Neal, this study was released in final form in June 2016. Mr. Brennan explained that the study called for eight round trips per day between Boston, Worcester, Palmer, Springfield, Hartford and New Haven. Unfortunately, Mr. Brennan noted that the State has chosen to designate this project as a tier two which translates to recommending it for further study. Mr. Brennan underscored that the PVPC is engaged in advocacy to keep the above-noted project alive and moving forward. Mr. Brennan added that the proposed rail stop in Palmer has been allocated to category three in the draft rail plan which translates to setting this project aside indefinitely which is a decision the PVPC is advocating be reversed.

Mr. Brennan remarked that the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) is facing severe cuts to its transit service in addition to a fare increase. Mr. Brennan noted that a huge advocacy appeal needs to be made to the State Legislature in order to get transit funding for the RPAs increased since in our region there is a shortfall of \$3.1 million applicable to the PVTA. Mr. Brennan underscored that cuts in transit service and fare increases translate into a big economic hit and will result in negative impacts on commuters who depend solely on transit to get them to jobs, schools, medical appointments etc.

Mr. Brennan announced that the first meeting of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) workgroup regarding a new interchange on the Massachusetts Turnpike between Lee and Westfield was convened earlier today in Blandford. Mr. Brennan remarked that there will be a feasibility study on the above-noted interchange which will last at least one year.

Mr. Brennan remarked that PVPC staff are working in concert with the Executive Committee on the PVPC's 2018 Annual Meeting which will take place on Thursday, June 14th in West Springfield at the Irish Cultural Center of Western New England. Mr. Brennan next remarked that the April 12th Commission Meeting will not take place in Hadley due to an unforeseen conflict at its regular off-site location, Hadley Farms Meeting House. Mr. Brennan noted that the April 12th meeting will instead take place at Delaney House in Holyoke. Mr. Brennan next announced that a lead staff member from the Department of Housing and Community Development, Chris Kluchman, will be attending to present on the Commonwealth's new Housing Choice Initiative at this meeting.

10. Other Business

There being no further business to conduct, Mr. Gunn called for a motion to adjourn the Thursday, February 8th Commission meeting.

MOVED BY JUDY EISEMAN, SECONDED BY RICHARD HOLZMAN, TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 8th COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:15 P.M. THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas Albertson, Secretary/Clerk
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at this Meeting:

- Agenda of the Thursday, February 8, 2018 Commission Meeting and Suggested Motions
- Meeting Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held on December 14, 2017
- Office of Technical Assistance & Technology (OTA) Handout on Climate Change Resources for Local Governments
- OTA/PVPC Handout on Chemical Safety & Severe Weather Emergency Preparedness Training
- Report on Proposed Annual Assessment of PVPC Member Municipalities for Fiscal Year 2019
- PVPC Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Proposal
- Draft 2018 Top Ten Resolves
- Announcement of the Saturday, March 17, 2018 Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) Annual Conference