

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC)

Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting  
Thursday, March 23, 2017  
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)  
60 Congress Street, Large Conference Room  
Springfield, Massachusetts 01104

Present were:

Walter Gunn, Chair – Longmeadow  
Judith Terry, Vice-Chair – Chesterfield  
Douglas Albertson, Secretary/Clerk – Belchertown  
George Kingston, Treasurer – East Longmeadow  
Mark Cavanaugh, Assistant Treasurer – South Hadley  
Lynn Arnold – Holland  
T.J. Cousineau – Blandford  
Marilyn Gorman Fil - Monson  
Michael Marciniac - Palmer

PVPC Staff:

Pat Beaudry, Manager of Public Affairs  
Tim Brennan, Executive Director  
Lisa Edinger, Accountant  
Joshua Garcia, Municipal Services Coordinator  
James Mazik, Deputy Director for Operations/Community Development Section Manager  
Catherine Ratte, Principal Planner/Environment and Land Use Section Manager  
Lynn Shell, Support Staff

1. Chairman's Call to Order, Welcome and Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held on February 23, 2017

The March 23<sup>rd</sup> Executive Committee meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Commission Chairman Walter Gunn. Mr. Gunn welcomed everyone in attendance and called for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2017 Executive Committee meeting.

MOVED BY LYNN ARNOLD, SECONDED BY JUDY TERRY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 23, 2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any comments, corrections or questions concerning the minutes of the February 23, 2017 Executive Committee meeting but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 23, 2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING WERE APPROVED, WITH ONE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, MARILYN GORMAN FIL, ABSTAINING FROM THE VOTE.

2. Warrant/Financial Reports

Mr. Gunn asked PVPC Accountant Lisa Edinger to comment on the February 2017 warrant, copies of which had been distributed to Executive Committee members for their information and review. Ms. Edinger then highlighted several of the larger expenses listed on the February warrant, including check #15542 in the amount of \$7,400 payable to Bagge, Cennamo & Pascoe, LLP and she explained that this payment is for the Fiscal Year 2013-2015 audit of the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for the Town of Russell and Southern Hilltowns. Ms. Edinger next highlighted check #15555 in the amount of \$10,364.10, payable to Conservation Works LLC, for consulting work on the Connecticut River Byway project. Ms. Edinger also stated that check #15567 in the amount of \$9,000, payable to the

CPA firm Melanson Heath, is for PVPC's FY 2016 annual audit. Ms. Edinger next reviewed PVPC's account balances as of March 23, 2017 as outlined in a report entitled *Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Financial Summary Profile*. There being no questions for Ms. Edinger, Mr. Gunn then moved to take up the next agenda item.

3. Authorization to Commit an Additional \$13,200 of PVPC Local Funds to the Planning Commission's Special Projects Funding Pool for the Second Half of Fiscal Year 2017

Mr. Brennan stated that this is a housekeeping item that involves moving local funds into PVPC's Special Projects Funds in order to provide free technical assistance for PVPC's member communities through June 30, 2017. Mr. Brennan explained that PVPC commits those funds in 6 month intervals and he noted that after the first of the new calendar year, several categories namely *Land Use*, *Economic Development* and *Data* are diminished and need additional funds. Mr. Brennan stated that this additional commitment of Special Projects funds will take us to the end of Fiscal Year 2017.

Mr. Gunn then called for a motion to address agenda item 3.

MOVED BY JUDY TERRY, SECONDED BY GEORGE KINGSTON, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO COMMIT AN ADDITIONAL \$13,200 OF PVPC LOCAL FUNDS TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S SPECIAL PROJECTS FUNDING POOL TO COVER THE SECOND HALF OF FISCAL YEAR 2017 (I.E. JANUARY 1, 2017 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2017).

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

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

4. Presentation by and Discussion With PVPC Manager of Public Affairs Pat Beaudry Regarding a Proposed Survey of Commissioners and Alternates

Mr. Gunn welcomed PVPC's Manager of Public Affairs Pat Beaudry. Mr. Beaudry briefly reviewed a survey that he proposed be sent out to PVPC Commissioners and Alternates, and he provided Executive Committee members with a draft version of the survey questions for review and comment. Mr. Beaudry stated that the purpose of the survey is to learn what PVPC's Commissioners and Alternates understand about the Commission's work and how the Commission members tend to interact with their communities. Mr. Beaudry also stated that he anticipates that there will be a significant amount of advocacy work required at the federal and state levels over the next year and he would like to know what level of interest there is in participating in those advocacy efforts by members of the Commission. Mr. Beaudry stated that he hopes this will begin a conversation about a renewed interest of Commission member involvement by those who are interested in pursuing a higher level of active participation. Mr. Beaudry then responded to several questions raised by Executive Committee members. Mr. Kingston noted that in his experience, most planning board members have no idea what the Commission does and he felt that it is helpful to send PVPC staff to planning board meetings. Mr. Brennan agreed and he stated that he would be happy to attend a meeting at any time if that would be helpful, adding that he has done this on many occasions when asked to do so. Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Beaudry when he would need feedback from Executive Committee members on his draft survey. Mr. Beaudry replied that he hoped to receive their comments by March 30<sup>th</sup> and if there are no major changes, he would anticipate sending the survey out to Commission members by Friday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Beaudry if he could share highlights from the survey at a future Commission meeting and Mr. Beaudry agreed to do so. At this point, Mr. Gunn thanked Mr. Beaudry for his presentation and he moved to take up agenda item 5.

5. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With the Town of Hadley in Order for the PVPC to Assist the Hadley Community Preservation Committee to Develop the Town's Community Preservation Act (CPA) Plan

Mr. Gunn called on Catherine Ratte, Principal Planner, Environment and Land Use Section Manager, to address this agenda item. Ms. Ratte stated that the Town of Hadley does not have a Community Preservation Act (CPA) Plan and the Town would like the PVPC to assist them in developing such a plan. There being no questions for Ms. Ratte, Mr. Gunn called for a motion to address agenda item 5.

MOVED BY GEORGE KINGSTON, SECONDED BY DOUG ALBERTSON, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE \$13,000 CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF HADLEY IN ORDER FOR THE PVPC TO ASSIST THE HADLEY COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE TO DEVELOP THE TOWN'S COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA) PLAN.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

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

6. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With the Lead Community of Northampton in Order for the PVPC to Administer an Anticipated \$1.3M MassDOT Capital Grant Award Needed to Procure Valley Bike Share Equipment Required for the Five Participating Municipalities (i.e. Northampton, Springfield, Holyoke, Amherst and South Hadley)

Mr. Gunn again called on Principal Planner Catherine Ratte to address agenda item 6. Ms. Ratte first remarked that the language of the suggested motion will need to be corrected noting that "the amount of \$84,000" should be changed to read "not to exceed \$84,000". Ms. Ratte stated that the PVPC has been working with the communities of Northampton, Springfield, Holyoke, Amherst and South Hadley on the Valley Bike Share project. Ms. Ratte stated that the grant application was submitted on behalf of Valley Bike Share with the City of Northampton as the lead community and she noted that we had the support of the Pioneer Valley Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). Ms. Ratte explained that this contract is for PVPC staff time to assist with administering the Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire the vendor to install the bike share stations in the participating municipalities.

After Ms. Ratte had responded to several clarifying questions raised by Executive Committee members, Mr. Gunn called for an amended motion to address agenda item 6.

MOVED BY DOUG ALBERTSON, SECONDED BY LYNN ARNOLD, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT NOT TO EXCEED \$84,000, WITH THE LEAD COMMUNITY OF NORTHAMPTON IN ORDER FOR THE PVPC TO ADMINISTER AN ANTICIPATED \$1.3M MASSDOT CAPITAL GRANT AWARD NEEDED TO PROCURE VALLEY BIKE SHARE EQUIPMENT WHICH IS REQUIRED FOR THE FIVE PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES (I.E. NORTHAMPTON, SPRINGFIELD, HOLYOKE, AMHERST AND SOUTH HADLEY).

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the amended motion for agenda item 6 but none were forthcoming.

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

7. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With the Lead Town of Chester for Grant Administration and Coordination Services for a Six Town Economic Development Initiative Encompassing Chester, Blandford, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery and Russell

Mr. Gunn called on Joshua Garcia, PVPC Municipal Services Coordinator, to address this agenda item. Mr. Garcia stated that the PVPC has applied for an Efficiency and Regionalization Grant award under the Governor's Community Compact Cabinet program for a shared rural economic development coordinator position among 6 PVPC communities that share the Gateway Regional School District, namely the Towns of Chester, Blandford, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery and Russell. Mr. Garcia explained that this position will involve implementing the recommended outcomes of an economic development plan to be produced by MassDevelopment for this 6 town region. Mr. Garcia stated that this grant will support the economic development coordinator position for Fiscal Year 2018 beginning on July 1, 2017 and the municipalities will work together to sustain the position beyond the end of the grant period. Mr. Garcia noted that PVPC wrote the grant application on behalf of the municipalities with the Town of Chester serving as the lead community and the subject contract, in the amount of \$17,600, will enable the PVPC to be involved and assist

with the technical assistance portion of the grant. Mr. Garcia pointed out that the subject grant application was for \$86,000 but the state award was for \$100,000. He explained that since the grant period does not line up with the fiscal year period, there was a gap between when the grant period ends and when the new fiscal year starts and this is why the grant award was increased to \$100,000 to fill this time and funding gap.

Mr. Gunn then called for a motion to address agenda item 7.

MOVED BY T.J. COUSINEAU, SECONDED BY JUDY TERRY, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE EFFECTIVE ON APRIL 1, 2017, A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT, NOT TO EXCEED SEVENTEEN THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$17,600.00), WITH THE TOWN OF CHESTER TO MANAGE AND COORDINATE A SHARED RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR POSITION AND ASSOCIATED PROGRAM ENCOMPASSING THE TOWNS OF CHESTER, BLANDFORD, HUNTINGTON, MIDDLEFIELD, MONTGOMERY, AND RUSSELL.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the motion for agenda item 7 but none were forthcoming.

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

8. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With David Carver, dba CT Management Group, LLC, in Order for the PVPC to Provide Historic Preservation Support Services for Two Properties Located in Pittsfield

Mr. Gunn called on James Mazik, PVPC Deputy Director for Operations and Community Development Section Manager to address this agenda item. Mr. Mazik stated that PVPC will be providing historic rehabilitation tax credits for two properties in the City of Pittsfield, noting that Shannon Walsh, PVPC's new Historic Preservation Planner, had a prior relationship with the developer, CT Management Group, LLC, before joining the staff of the PVPC. Mr. Mazik stated that the property on Seymour Street is adjacent to the Tyler Street property. He noted that they are two separate parcels that are related and the developer would like to get tax credits on both these properties. Mr. Mazik reported that the City of Pittsfield is very much in support of this project and he noted that the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission has been contacted and they are also in support of this project and the PVPC involvement with it.

Mr. Gunn then called for a motion to address agenda item 8.

MOVED BY MARILYN GORMAN FIL, SECONDED BY LYNN ARNOLD, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE EFFECTIVE ON MARCH 24, 2017, A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT, NOT TO EXCEED TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$25,000.00), WITH DAVID CARVER, D.B.A. CT MANAGEMENT GROUP, LLC, FOR FEDERAL AND STATE HISTORIC REHABILITATION TAX CREDITS FOR TWO PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 133 SEYMOUR STREET (PITTSFIELD ELECTRIC STREET RAILWAY GENERATING PLANT) AND TYLER STREET (ST. MARY OF THE MORNINGSTAR ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH COMPLEX) IN PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the motion for agenda item 8 but none were forthcoming.

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

9. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With Christopher Curtis for Consulting Services Required on Four Specific PVPC Land Use/Environment Projects During the April 1 Through June 30, 2017 Time Period

Mr. Gunn again called on PVPC Deputy Director James Mazik to address this agenda item. Mr. Mazik stated that there will need to be a friendly amendment to the motion for agenda item 9, noting that the consulting work would be allocated to the Connecticut River Cleanup, United States Forest Service (USFS) Urban Tree Planting and E & R Stormwater/Nitrogen Trading projects. Mr. Mazik pointed out that this is a twofold arrangement which would allow the

PVPC to continue with the workload and to transition the projects during the time period through June 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Mazik noted that the total contract amount is \$9,950.

Mr. Gunn then called for an amended motion to address agenda item 9.

MOVED BY MARILYN GORMAN FIL, SECONDED BY MARK CAVANAUGH, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE EFFECTIVE ON APRIL 1, 2017, A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT, NOT TO EXCEED NINE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$9,950.00), WITH CHRISTOPHER L. CURTIS FOR CONSULTING ASSISTANCE NEEDED ON THREE SPECIFIC LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS (I.E. CONNECTICUT RIVER CLEAN-UP, USFS URBAN TREE PLANTING, AND E&R STORMWATER/NITROGEN TRADING) THROUGH JUNE 30, 2017.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

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

10. Personnel Issues Including a Needed Update to the PVPC's Staff Salary Ranges and Initiation of the Executive Director's 2016 Annual Performance Evaluation by the Operations Subcommittee

Before beginning his report, Mr. Brennan asked Deputy Director James Mazik to provide an update on PVPC's new Community Development Section staff member. Mr. Mazik reported that Stephanie Bozigian-Merrick, who is from Belchertown, was recently hired as PVPC's Public Health Emergency Preparedness Planner. Mr. Mazik noted that Ms. Bozigian-Merrick has many years of experience as a nurse as well as experience in the field of emergency preparedness planning. Mr. Mazik stated that he and PVPC Senior Planner Erica Johnson conducted interviews along with Hampden County Health Coalition (HCHC) members Tom FitzGerald and Jeanne Galloway, and he noted that Ms. Bozigian-Merrick had emerged as the unanimous choice to fill this position. Mr. Mazik stated that Ms. Bozigian-Merrick has accepted PVPC's offer of employment and she will officially begin working at the PVPC on Monday, March 27th.

As regards other personnel issues, Mr. Brennan stated that at the next Executive Committee meeting, he anticipates bringing forward proposed changes to the PVPC salary ranges, noting that there are a number of categories that have become problematic over the past few years. Mr. Brennan also stated that he would like to bring back the practice of providing PVPC staff with a statement of the benefits which are accrued as an employee of the Commission and he noted that the benefits statements will be issued within the next month. Mr. Brennan added that we will try to return to a cycle of annually distributing a Statement of Benefits along with the annual issuance of W-2 forms to all the staff.

Mr. Brennan next reminded Executive Committee members that this is the time of year when the Operations Subcommittee, which is chaired by Judy Terry, typically conducts the Executive Director's Annual Performance Review. Mr. Brennan stated that we will need to schedule a convenient time to convene the Operations Subcommittee for that purpose.

At this point, Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Mazik if he had any project updates that he would like to discuss. Mr. Mazik noted that at the last Executive Committee meeting he talked about an issue involving the Regional Municipal Shared Accounting Program and the Town of Chesterfield. Mr. Mazik reported that after a discussion with the Town, PVPC drafted a letter that was reviewed and modified by PVPC's attorney and then sent to the accounting firm, and there now appears to be an agreement that will insure the accountant firm will continue their services in Chesterfield. Mr. Mazik added that there will be a slight reduction in on-site presence but he noted that this arrangement seems to be acceptable by all parties. Mr. Mazik next provided an update on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund audit. Mr. Mazik stated that the numbers on the final report were different from a previous report and he noted that the EPA and the PVPC have now made those corrections. In addition, Mr. Mazik stated that he was told that the PVPC will need to do post-closeout reports. Mr. Mazik then reported that the PVPC is regrettably now finding out that a number of contracted historic preservation projects that were to be completed during the last two years were never filed or were never completed. Mr. Mazik noted that those projects will require additional work and he stated that this issue is being addressed by the PVPC staff. Finally, Mr. Mazik stated that the PVPC received a request from the WWLP Channel 22 News *I-Team* for public records regarding a PVPC septic repair project dating back to 1990 and Mr. Mazik noted that he has provided WWLP with all the public records related to that project.

#### 11. Review and Finalize Plans for the Commission's 2017 Annual Meeting on June 15, 2017

Mr. Brennan stated that the venue that is being considered for the Commission's 2017 Annual Meeting is *Mill 180 Park* which is a unique indoor park located in Easthampton that appears to be very popular in the community. Mr. Brennan noted that the principals of *Mill 180 Park* are willing to allow the PVPC to use their space for the Annual Meeting and they also may be amenable to closing it off from the public during that time. Mr. Brennan explained that the husband and wife team who created the space are involved in the development of software and he noted that the park is hooked up to software that is being tested for use in the marketplace. Mr. Brennan stated that instead of having a keynote speaker for this meeting, the principals have been asked to talk about the space. He added that we are also trying to arrange an early pre-meeting tour of the mill. Mr. Brennan stated that there is ample parking but it is not immediately adjacent to the entrance therefore valet parking needs to be provided. Mr. Brennan remarked that we need to obtain additional information, particularly about food, but he first wanted to know if Executive Committee members are favorably disposed to the idea of using the space at *Mill 180 Park* for the Commission's 2017 Annual Meeting. After a brief discussion, Executive Committee members agreed by consensus that the PVPC should move forward with plans to use the space at *Mill 180 Park* for the June 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting.

#### 12. Executive Director's Highlights

Mr. Brennan noted that our next full Commission meeting will take place on April 20<sup>th</sup> in Hadley. Mr. Brennan stated that he invited State Representative Steve Kulik to attend and if he can attend, he'll ask him to talk about the bill Representative Kulik has filed to stabilize funding assistance under the Community Preservation Act.

Mr. Brennan reported that on Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> the Massachusetts State Senate *Commonwealth Conversations* will take place in Western Massachusetts, beginning with a discussion of rural issues that will take place in the Town of Conway from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Mr. Brennan also noted that on March 28<sup>th</sup> at the PVPC, there will be a meeting of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) from 10:00 a.m. until approximately 11:30 a.m. In addition, Mr. Brennan stated that at 12:00 noon there will be a *Mass Moves* workshop focusing on transportation which will be attended by many Senate members and he noted that the workshop will look at priority projects in western Massachusetts and whether additional funds are needed to address our region's transportation investment priorities.

Mr. Brennan next reported that the official date for the grand opening of Springfield Union Station is Sunday, June 25, 2017. Mr. Brennan also reported that the Administrator for the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA), Mary MacInnes, has announced that she will retire at the end of April. Mr. Brennan stated that the Chair of the PVTA Advisory Board, Mayor David Narkewicz, is chairing a Search Committee and has asked Mr. Brennan to serve on the PVTA administrator candidate screening committee. Mr. Brennan stated that he has agreed to do so because he served on the prior search committee which conducted its work ten years ago.

As regards rail issues, Mr. Brennan stated that a meeting was convened on December 28<sup>th</sup> by Congressmen Neal and McGovern with Massachusetts Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack which focused on two passenger rail priorities. Mr. Brennan noted that one priority is adding more service on the North/South Knowledge Corridor from Springfield to Greenfield and the second priority is to move forward with recommendations for an East/West rail link on the "Inland Route" between Boston, Worcester, Palmer, Springfield, Hartford and New Haven, and possibly a train from Boston to Montreal via Springfield and New Haven to Montreal via Springfield. Mr. Brennan stated that there was no feedback from the state since the December meeting therefore we requested a meeting in early March with MassDOT Rail and Transit Administrator, Astrid Glynn. Mr. Brennan reported that there seems to be progress adding service on the Knowledge Corridor, however, the original plan for us to deploy surplus MBTA equipment has changed. Mr. Brennan reported that some of the MBTA equipment will stay with MBTA for backup and a large portion of the equipment is being loaned to Connecticut for 4 or 5 years, after which time it will be rehabilitated and returned to Massachusetts. Mr. Brennan noted that there is another option in the interim. He explained that shuttle trains are run by Amtrak between Springfield and New Haven and the plan is to run the shuttle trains north up the valley to Greenfield. Mr. Brennan noted that the state is agreeable to the idea of the pilot service but we have to find a way to come up with the operational deficit and he noted that the Pioneer Valley region and Franklin County are trying to joint venture to address this. Mr. Brennan stated that Amtrak is willing to look at a proposal that we sent but we need a reliable cost estimate from them. Mr. Brennan added that our only way of covering the operational deficit is to commit Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds.

With regard to the East/West rail connection, Mr. Brennan stated that we will need to broaden the advocacy for this project and he noted that there are rail briefings taking place this week with the western Massachusetts Congressional Delegation to start to enlist support from their ranks and likewise our region's major employers. Mr. Brennan underscored that we must try to get this project into the State Rail Plan, noting that a draft of the plan is expected to be ready in the fall and the final version would be ready by the end of the 2017 calendar year. Mr. Brennan added that Secretary Pollack has said that if this project is not in the State Rail Plan it will not receive any funding, and if it does not get funding within 5 years, all the reports may be required to be redone.

Mr. Brennan then reported that on March 30<sup>th</sup>, the PVPC will host a meeting for the Young Professional Society of Greater Springfield (YPS) at their request. Mr. Brennan noted that the YPS would like to learn more about what the PVPC is doing and how we interface with cities and towns, and with state and federal officials.

Mr. Brennan next stated that the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has issued draft regulations for Starter Home Zoning Districts and he noted that he sent the draft regulations to Executive Committee members for their information. Mr. Brennan reported that there will be a public hearing on Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup> in Boston and he stated that we have until April 27<sup>th</sup> to send written comments. Mr. Brennan remarked that he did not think that this tool will have much traction in the Pioneer Valley region particularly in the rural towns that don't have water and sewer infrastructure in place.

Finally, Mr. Brennan provided an update on the issue with the Massachusetts State Retirement Board regarding funds that they have claimed are owed to them by a majority of the regional planning agencies. Mr. Brennan stated that legislation was created to establish a *Retirement Funding Obligation Workgroup* which was formed over a year ago to find a recommended solution to this problem. Mr. Brennan stated that recently there was a request for the parties of interest to nominate a representative to the Governor and he noted that the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) nominated Janet Pierce who is the Executive Director of the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Brennan stated that the first meeting of this workgroup will take place on March 24<sup>th</sup> in Boston and he noted that the initial meeting is only for invitees and, apparently, will not be open to the general public.

### 13. Other Business

Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contract Agreement With The National Association of County and City Health Officials For Capacity Building For Four Hampden County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Units (West Springfield, Agawam, Holyoke, and Chicopee) .

Mr. Gunn called on PVPC Deputy Director James Mazik to address this agenda item. Mr. Mazik stated that PVPC was involved in writing a grant application to the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). Mr. Mazik explained that four municipalities, which include West Springfield, Agawam, Holyoke and Chicopee, are looking to revamp their Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units and regionalize, and they would like to try to see how they can sustain those units over time. Mr. Mazik stated that the PVPC will need to issue a bid for a consultant and the most qualified response would be awarded the contract. Mr. Mazik stated that the PVPC would oversee and manage this project.

Mr. Gunn then called for a motion to address agenda item 13.

MOVED BY LYNN ARNOLD, SECONDED BY JUDY TERRY, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE EFFECTIVE ON APRIL 1, 2017, A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT, NOT TO EXCEED THIRTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$13,000.00), WITH THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY AND CITY HEALTH OFFICIALS IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT AND MANAGE A CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT WHICH WILL DEVELOP A 4-COMMUNITY REGIONAL MRC UNIT AND EXPAND RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION EFFORTS. (NOTE: \$11,050 FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES, \$1,950 FOR PVPC GRANT ADMINISTRATION).

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

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

Mr. Gunn asked if there was any other business to discuss. There being no further business for the Executive Committee to conduct, Chairman Gunn adjourned the March 23<sup>rd</sup> Executive Committee meeting at 5:00 p.m. without objection.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas Albertson, Secretary/Clerk

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at the March 23, 2017 Meeting

1. Executive Committee March 23, 2017 Meeting Agenda and Suggested Motions
2. Executive Committee February 23, 2017 Meeting Minutes
3. PVPC Warrant: February 1, 2017 through February 28, 2017
4. PVPC Financial Summary Profile as of March 23, 2017
5. PVPC Letter dated March 13, 2017 to new PVPC staff member