

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC)

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the PVPC Held on Thursday, June 13, 2019

Northampton Center for the Arts

33 Hawley Street, Northampton, Massachusetts

Commission Members Present Were:

Douglas Albertson	Alternate Commissioner	Belchertown
Lynn Arnold	Alternate Commissioner	Holland
Lillian Camus	Commissioner	Granby
Mark Cavanaugh	Commissioner	South Hadley
T.J. Cousineau	Alternate Commissioner	Blandford
Mark Dunn	Alternate Commissioner	Hadley
Judy Eiseman	Commissioner	Pelham
Marilyn Gorman Fil	Alternate Commissioner	Monson
Walter Gunn	Commissioner and Chair	Longmeadow
Linda Hamlin	Alternate Commissioner	Huntington
Scott Hanson	Alternate Commissioner	Springfield
Richard Holzman	Commissioner	Chester
Jack Jemsek	Commissioner	Amherst
Jay Joyce	Alternate Commissioner	Granby
Michael Marciniec	Commissioner	Palmer
Jay Moore	Alternate Commissioner	Wilbraham
Marcus Phelps	Commissioner	Southwick
Tracey Plantier	Commissioner	Wilbraham
Lee Pouliot	Alternate Commissioner	Chicopee
Stephen Snow	Commissioner	Williamsburg
Judy Terry	Commissioner and Vice Chair	Chesterfield
Kalyan Uprichard	Commissioner	Cummington
Jay Vinskey	Alternate Commissioner	Westfield
Jeffrey Wyand	Commissioner	Huntington

Guest Speakers Present:

Kenneth Kimmell, President of the Union of Concerned Scientists
Mayor David Narkewicz, City of Northampton

Guests Present:

Nancy Ackley	
Thomas Ackley	
Jeff Bagg	City of Easthampton
Paul Bracciotti	
Christine Brestrup	Town of Amherst
Joanna Brown	Town of South Hadley
Paul Burns	Pioneer Valley Transit Authority
Richard Butler	Former PVPC Chair
Robert Camus	
Karen Sawyer Conard	Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
Cosette Cousineau	
Dawn Creighton	Associated Industries of Massachusetts
Becky Czach	
Jim Czach	Town of West Springfield
Peter DeMallie	Design Professionals, Inc.
Mindy Domb	Massachusetts House of Representatives
Sharon Dunphy	
Raylen Dziengelewski	Transportation for Massachusetts
Stephen Franz	Global Environmental Options
Joshua Garcia	Town of Blandford
Steve Goodwin	University of Massachusetts Amherst

Guests Present (cont.):

Carla Gunn	
Ben Heckscher	Trains in the Valley
Shelley Holzman	
Kareem Kibodya	Office of Congressman Richard Neal
Gina Kos	
Richard J. Kos	City of Chicopee
Sheida Kouzehkanani	
Todd Kubik	
Nicole LaChapelle	City of Easthampton
Raymond Lanza-Weil	Common Capital
Ruth Lehrer	
Ellen Leuchs	Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts
Paul Lischetti	Hilltown CDC
Denise Lussier	
Normand Lussier	
Lorenzo Macaluso	Center for EcoTechnology
John Majercak	Center for EcoTechnology
Terry Masterson	City of Northampton
Kevin Maynard	Bulkley, Richardson and Gelinas, LLP
Melissa McCaul	
Patrick McKenna	City of Chicopee
Irma Medina	Holyoke Community College
Susanne Moser	
Israel Ortiz	
Sam Ortiz	Common Capital
Joshua Ostroff	Transportation for Massachusetts
Sarah Page	Wayfinders
Amy-Louise Pfeffer	Leadership Pioneer Valley
Barb Phelps	
Tina Roux	
Matthew Russett	Office of Congressman Richard E. Neal
Lindsay Sabadosa	Massachusetts House of Representatives
John N. Sarno	
Daniel Shanahan	EVSE LLC
Sandra Sheehan	Pioneer Valley Transit Authority
Anthony Stewart	
Amy Wang	Town of Worthington
Michelle White	Cape Cod Commission

PVPC Staff Present:

Rana Al-Jammal	Jim Mazik
Becky Basch	Mary Mazik
Patrick Beaudry	Andrew McCaul
Tim Brennan	Jeff McCollough
Ray Centeno	Monica Moran
Kenneth Comia	John O'Leary
Allison Curtis	Sueann Ortiz
Jillian DeCoursey	Khyati Parmar
Paula Delskey	Catherine Ratté
Chris Dunphy	Keith Robitaille
Jaime Duran	Dana Roscoe
Lisa Edinger	Gary Roux
Constance Englert	Carol Sarno

PVPC Staff Present (cont.):

Patty Gambarini	Emily Slotnick
Molly Goren-Watts	Shirley Stephens
Ted Harvey	Lori Tanner
Erica Johnson	Shannon Walsh
Amir Kouzehkanani	Eric Weiss
Indrani Kowlessar	Todd Zukowski
Christine Kubik	

Communities Not Represented at the June 13, 2019 Annual Meeting of the Commission:

Agawam	Holyoke	Southampton
Brimfield	Ludlow	Tolland
East Longmeadow	Middlefield	Wales
Easthampton	Montgomery	Ware
Goshen	Northampton	West Springfield
Granville	Plainfield	Westhampton
Hampden	Russell	Worthington
Hatfield		

1. Annual Meeting Welcome and Opening Remarks

The 2019 Annual Meeting of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Planning Commission Chairman Walter Gunn who welcomed all those present.

2. Welcome From the Host Community by Mayor David Narkewicz, Mayor of the City of Northampton

Mr. Gunn next invited David Narkewicz, Mayor of the City of Northampton, to begin his welcome address. Mayor Narkewicz noted that one of the distinguishing qualities of Pioneer Valley residents is their true spirit of collaboration and innovation and how well they work together at the regional level. Mayor Narkewicz added that nothing represents this kind of collaborative spirit better than the PVPC. Mayor Narkewicz further stated that he is honored to be present at the last Annual Meeting for Tim Brennan, PVPC Executive Director, and he took the opportunity to thank him for all of his important contributions to improving the quality of life in the Pioneer Valley region.

After Mayor Narkewicz concluded his welcome address, Mr. Brennan stepped forward to present him with the PVPC's Regional Recognition Award for 2019 since Mayor Narkewicz had to leave early for another municipal meeting commitment. Mr. Brennan explained that the PVPC's Annual Meetings are traditionally used as forums to present these Recognition Awards in order to publicly recognize and celebrate the work of the women and men who have made significant contributions to the Pioneer Valley. Mr. Brennan then remarked that, as a result of Mayor Narkewicz's leadership, the City of Northampton is considered a frontrunner in sustainability best practices. Mr. Brennan stated that Mayor Narkewicz serves as a board member on the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and he has been at the forefront of helping to create workforce housing units in Northampton. Mr. Brennan next commented that, as a result of Mayor Narkewicz's leadership, the City of Northampton launched its ValleyBike Share program in partnership with the PVPC and four other anchor communities. Lastly, Mr. Brennan noted that Mayor Narkewicz currently serves as the Chair of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) Advisory Board which is an agency that provides over 11 million trips per year in public transit service for Pioneer Valley residents.

At this point, Mr. Brennan invited Mayor Narkewicz to step forward to receive his Recognition Award. Mayor Narkewicz thanked Mr. Brennan and the PVPC for this special recognition and he added that it was a great honor to work with regional partners throughout the Pioneer Valley to ensure that important services such as public transit are maintained. Mr. Gunn thanked Mayor Narkewicz for his contributions to the region and he moved to take up the next agenda item.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting of April 11, 2019

Mr. Gunn called for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular Commission meeting held on Thursday, April 11, 2019.

MOVED BY JUDY TERRY, SECONDED BY LYNN ARNOLD, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2019 AS PRESENTED.

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 APRIL 11TH REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

4. Keynote Presentation by Kenneth Kimmell, President of the Union of Concerned Scientists: “The Compelling Case for Confronting Climate Change and Realizing a Better Future”

Mr. Gunn asked Mr. Brennan to introduce the next agenda item. Mr. Brennan stated that recent reports from the United Nations as well as scientists regarding climate change are alarming and determining how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions has become a daunting challenge. Mr. Brennan further stated that, as this is his last Annual Meeting, he felt compelled to put climate change at the top of this agenda as this issue is a high priority for the PVPC. Mr. Brennan next stated that Annual Meeting keynote presenter, Kenneth Kimmell, President of the Union of Concerned Scientists, is a leading expert in climate change and he thanked him for agreeing to present the keynote address on this international crisis. Mr. Brennan subsequently invited Mr. Kimmell to begin his presentation.

Mr. Kimmell stated that his remarks would attempt to answer the following question: Is the United States still committed to addressing climate change, given that President Donald Trump has threatened to pull out of the Paris agreement? Mr. Kimmell consequently reviewed the key points of the Paris Agreement to provide a global context in order to address the above-noted question. Mr. Kimmell explained that the Paris Agreement was founded in 2015 and consists of the following two components: 1) a global commitment to keep temperatures below an increase of no more than two degrees centigrade over preindustrial times; and 2) pledges made by individual countries which specify the actions that each of these countries will take as part of the worldwide effort to keep global warming at bay. Mr. Kimmell added that the goal of no more than an increase of two degrees centigrade over preindustrial levels is not actually a goal, but a guardrail to motivate Paris Agreement countries to raise their level of ambition in lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Mr. Kimmell next referred to a chart in his PowerPoint presentation which depicted that, if the Paris Agreement did not exist, global temperatures could increase as high as five degrees centigrade over preindustrial levels. However, Mr. Kimmell noted that the good news is if all Paris Agreement countries meet their pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the overall global temperature would only increase by three degrees centigrade or slightly less.

Mr. Kimmell next underscored that the problem with the United States climate policy which had been established by the Obama Administration is that it was based exclusively on executive orders. Thus, Mr. Kimmell observed, another president has the authority to undo the previous president’s executive orders. Mr. Kimmell subsequently remarked that the Trump Administration has made a concerted effort to repeal virtually every climate change policy that was established by the Obama Administration. Mr. Kimmell then emphasized that durable, bipartisan legislation is critical in order to protect climate change efforts from the ebbs and flows of succeeding presidential administrations.

Mr. Kimmell next reviewed a chart in his PowerPoint presentation which depicted the negative impact on climate change, should the Trump Administration successfully rollback the Obama Administration’s climate change policies. Mr. Kimmell noted that the Obama Administration’s regulations were getting the United States very close to meeting its pledge of decreasing its greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2025. By contrast, Mr. Kimmell underscored that scientists who have modeled the Trump Administration’s rollback of the previous Administration’s climate change policies have concluded that the overall effect would be an increase in emissions.

However, Mr. Kimmell noted that the good news is that there has been increased grassroots climate change activism and extreme weather events continue to influence public opinion. Mr. Kimmell further stated that attorneys have been bringing law suits to block some of the Trump Administration’s climate change policy rollbacks and, in general, U.S. courts have been receptive to their arguments. Mr. Kimmell noted that another positive effect toward slowing down climate change has been the fact that, as coal plants close, they are being replaced increasingly by wind and solar farms.

Mr. Kimmell next discussed how United States policies can move forward at the regional and federal level. Mr. Kimmell stated that, at the regional level, New England, for example, successfully pioneered the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative which is working toward reducing the region's carbon emissions. However, Mr. Kimmell underscored that the New England area is not making good progress in reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that are produced by vehicles. Mr. Kimmell then suggested that one way to reduce transportation-generated carbon emissions could be to implement a regional cap on those types of emissions. Mr. Kimmell subsequently stated that the other way to reduce vehicle-generated carbon emissions would be to focus on increasing the use of electric vehicles which is a key recommendation from the Massachusetts Future of Transportation Commission.

At the federal level, Mr. Kimmell commented that U.S. Congressman Richard Neal, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, is expected to mark up a tax bill by as early as next week. Mr. Kimmell noted that this tax bill is missing the following key components: an extension of the tax credit for electric vehicles; a tax credit for people who put energy storage into their homes; and a tax credit for offshore wind. Mr. Kimmell next urged audience members to contact Congressman Neal's office to emphasize how important these tax credits would be in combating climate change.

After Mr. Kimmell finished his presentation, he opened the floor for questions. Peter DeMallie of Design Professionals, Inc. asked for the status of implementing energy storage. Mr. Kimmell responded that energy storage is promising but it is not cost effective at this time. For example, Mr. Kimmell observed that huge strides have been made in the development of lithium ion batteries since an electric vehicle can now be driven at least 250 miles on a single charge but at the utility company level, lithium ion batteries are not considered suitable for long-term storage.

Michael Marciniac, Commission member representing the Town of Palmer, stated that his community has approved approximately 15 solar farms, and as a result of these solar developments, 500-600 acres of trees have been clear cut. Mr. Marciniac asked given the above-noted fact, does solar development have an overall positive or negative effect. Mr. Kimmell remarked that trees are precious assets and there are more appropriate areas for solar farm development such as landfills which have already been degraded.

There being no more questions for Mr. Kimmell, Mr. Gunn thanked him for his enlightening presentation and he moved to take up the next agenda item.

5. Nomination and Election of Five (5) Commission Officers and Four (4) At-Large Executive Committee Members for 2019-2020; Report of the Nominating Committee Presented by Walter Gunn

Mr. Gunn took up the nomination and elections of the PVPC's five Executive Committee officers and four at-large members and he added that, in the interest of time, he will combine the ballots for the Commission Officers and At-large Executive Committee Members.

In his role as the Chair of the Nominating Committee, Mr. Gunn first presented the recommended slate of the following five (5) Planning Commission officers for 2019-2020.

Chair:	Walter Gunn, Longmeadow
Vice Chair:	Judy Terry, Chesterfield
Secretary/Clerk:	Douglas Albertson, Belchertown
Treasurer:	George Kingston, East Longmeadow
Assistant Treasurer:	T.J. Cousineau, Blandford

Mr. Gunn next presented the following recommended slate of four (4) at-large Executive Committee members for 2019-2020:

Lynn Arnold, Holland
Marilyn Gorman Fil, Monson
Michael Marciniac, Palmer
Mark Paleologopoulos, Agawam

Mr. Gunn opened the floor for additional nominations for Planning Commission Officers and At-large Executive Committee members. There being none, Mr. Gunn closed the nominations and he called for a motion to approve the two above-noted slates:

MOVED BY SCOTT HANSON, SECONDED BY JUDY TERRY, TO CAST A SINGLE VOTE TO ELECT THE SLATE OF FIVE (5) PVPC OFFICERS AND FOUR (4) AT-LARGE MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE PVPC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE 2019-2020 YEAR. THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THE RECOMMENDED SLATES WERE UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED BY THE COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Gunn next acknowledged former Executive Committee member Mark Cavanaugh, Commission member representing the Town of South Hadley. Mr. Gunn stated that Mr. Cavanaugh had been with the Planning Commission for 13 years and served on the Executive Committee for 11 years. Mr. Cavanaugh will be stepping down from his PVPC Commissioner post on July 1st and Mr. Gunn thanked him for his exemplary service to the region.

6. Presentation of the PVPC's Regional Recognition Awards for 2019

At this point, Mr. Gunn invited Mr. Brennan to begin his introduction of the PVPC's Regional Recognition Awards for 2019. Mr. Brennan announced that the second recipient of the PVPC's Regional Recognition Award is Richard Kos, Mayor of the City of Chicopee. Mr. Brennan explained that he was particularly interested in having Mayor Kos receive this special recognition since he will step down as Mayor at the end of his third term. Mr. Brennan noted that Mayor Kos has contributed generously to the Pioneer Valley region. Specifically, Mr. Brennan remarked that Mayor Kos is a board member of the MPO representing the core cities of Chicopee, Holyoke and Springfield and he had also been the interim PVTA Administrator. Mr. Brennan next remarked that when the Planning Commission became involved in a new initiative that focused on making communities friendly to all age groups, it was Mayor Kos who suggested that this effort should be in concert with other PVPC member communities. Mr. Brennan subsequently asked Mayor Kos to come forward to accept his award.

Mayor Kos remarked that he has enjoyed working in partnership with mayors of other cities and towns since we are all working toward the common good. Mayor Kos next thanked PVPC staff for all that they do for the region and he further stated that he felt honored that he has been part of this agency's efforts for the Pioneer Valley region.

Mr. Brennan stated that the next PVPC Regional Recognition Award recipient is Judy Terry, Commission member representing the Town of Chesterfield. Mr. Brennan next explained that in 2015, as a result of the efforts made by legislators such as former Massachusetts Representative Stephen Kulik, legislation was passed to create the Massachusetts Rural Policy Advisory Commission (RPAC). Mr. Brennan added that the Massachusetts regional planning agencies were each asked to recommend someone to represent their rural municipalities. Mr. Brennan then remarked that the Planning Commission nominated without hesitation Ms. Terry to the RPAC. Mr. Brennan noted that Ms. Terry has proven to be a thoughtful, hardworking and able RPAC Commissioner and he subsequently asked her to come forward to accept her award.

Ms. Terry thanked Mr. Brennan, who in his capacity as the President and Secretary/Treasurer of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) acquired funding from MARPA to support the development of the Massachusetts Rural Policy Plan. Ms. Terry next acknowledged Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) and Chair of the RPAC for her strong leadership.

Mr. Gunn announced that the next part of the agenda will consist of PVPC staff recognition awards. Mr. Gunn then invited Patty Gambarini, Principal Environmental Planner/Section Manager, to present a certificate to Catherine Ratté, PVPC Principal Planner/Section Manager in the Land Use and Environment Section, in recognition of her 20 years of service with the PVPC.

Ms. Gambarini stated that Ms. Ratté has devoted a great deal of her professional life to promoting sustainability in the Pioneer Valley. Ms. Gambarini further stated that Ms. Ratté helped to secure a significant U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant that enabled the PVPC to pursue bi-state regional sustainability planning. Ms. Gambarini then noted that Ms. Ratté, working with concert with FRCOG staff, brought together experts in energy production to put together the Pioneer Valley Energy Plan. Ms. Gambarini remarked that this work has continued along with other

greenhouse gas reduction projects, the most visible and recent of these efforts being ValleyBike Share. After Ms. Gambarini presented Ms. Ratté's 20th anniversary certificate, Ms. Ratté expressed her sincere appreciation for receiving this special recognition.

Mr. Gunn next invited Jim Mazik, Deputy Director of Operations/Community Development Section Manager, to present Chris Dunphy, Principal Planner/Manager in the Community Development Section, with a certificate acknowledging his 20 years of service to the Planning Commission. Mr. Mazik remarked that Mr. Dunphy is recognized as an authority in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), not only in the Pioneer Valley but throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Mr. Mazik further stated that Mr. Dunphy's efforts have resulted in millions of dollars in funding to the PVPC's member communities as well as to central Massachusetts municipalities. Mr. Mazik then asked Mr. Dunphy to step forward to receive his 20th anniversary certificate. Mr. Dunphy thanked the PVPC for this special recognition and he further stated that he felt honored to have worked at the PVPC for so long because its staff members are such committed, caring and smart people.

Mr. Gunn asked Mr. Mazik, Ms. Ratté and Gary Roux, Principal Planner/Traffic Manager to make the last staff recognition presentation of the evening to Mr. Brennan who will be retiring as the PVPC's Executive Director at the end of September 2019. Mr. Mazik remarked that since this will be the last Annual Meeting for Mr. Brennan, it was only fitting for staff to take this opportunity to honor him for his many years of dedicated service with the PVPC. After Mr. Mazik presented Mr. Brennan with a certificate that had been signed by the entire PVPC staff, he asked Ms. Ratté and Mr. Roux to make their joint presentation to Mr. Brennan. Ms. Ratté remarked that Mr. Brennan has been an inspiration by leading by example and leaving a legacy of people, institutions and communities transformed by his vision and inspired by his leadership. Mr. Roux stated that he has learned a great deal from Mr. Brennan, one of those more important lessons being to provide the same level of service to communities no matter how large or small they are. Mr. Roux further stated that, even though Mr. Brennan is retiring, his impact on the region will never go away and what he has taught staff will be practiced for years to come.

Mr. Brennan remarked that deciding when to retire was one of the most difficult decisions that he has ever made since he has loved his work at the Planning Commission. Mr. Brennan further stated that he is extraordinarily proud of the PVPC's efforts in the Pioneer Valley region and he expressed his appreciation for the PVPC's staff and Planning Commission members by noting that they are smart, dedicated, talented and thoughtful people.

7. Chairman's Announcement of the Two Finalists for the Position of PVPC's New Executive Director and Details of a Special Commission Meeting Scheduled for June 27th to Act on a Selection

Mr. Gunn reminded Commission members that a special Commission meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, June 27, 2019 in the PVPC's second floor Large Conference Room. Mr. Gunn stated that at the above-referenced meeting there will be a meet and greet session with Executive Director finalists Wayne M. Feiden, FAICP from Northampton, Massachusetts and Kimberly H. Robinson, MUP from Reno, Nevada after which a ballot vote will be taken to determine the next Executive Director. Mr. Gunn next thanked the Executive Director Search Committee (EDSC) members for their hard work and dedication in selecting such highly qualified finalists.

8. Other Business

There being no further business to conduct, Mr. Gunn called for a motion to adjourn the 2019 Annual Meeting of the PVPC.

MOVED BY LYNN ARNOLD, SECONDED BY JUDY TERRY, TO ADJOURN THE 2019 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PVPC. THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO CONDUCT, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED WITHOUT OBJECTION AT 7:48 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Albertson, Secretary/Clerk
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at this Meeting:

- Agenda of the 2019 Annual Meeting of the PVPC
- Meeting Minutes of the Thursday, April 11, 2019 Commission Meeting
- Election Ballots for the Executive Committee Members and At-Large Members
- Advance Notice of a Special Commission Meeting Scheduled for Thursday, June 27, 2019 in Springfield
- Proposed Commission and Executive Committee Meeting Schedules for the Second Half of 2019