Northern Middlesex Council of Governments  
40 Church Street, Suite 200  
Lowell, MA 01852

Minutes of Meeting: February 20, 2019

The February 20, 2019 meeting was held at the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments office, 40 Church Street, Lowell, Massachusetts. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Chair Pat Wojtas presiding. The following were in attendance, as indicated in Attachment #1:

Councilors

- Mary McBride, Billerica Alternate
- Pat Wojtas, Chair, Chelmsford Board of Selectmen
- S. George Zaharoolis, Chelmsford Alternate
- Philippe Thibault, Dracut Alternate
- Sen. Edward Kennedy, Lowell City Council
- Jerry Frechette, Lowell Planning Board
- Chuck Walkovich, Pepperell Planning Board
- Stephen Themelis, Pepperell Alternate
- Jay Kelly, Tewksbury Board of Selectmen
- Rick Reault, Tyngsborough Board of Selectmen
- Darrin Wizst, Westford Planning Board
- Jim Silva, Westford Alternate

Staff

- Beverly Woods, Executive Director
- Jay Donovan, Assistant Director
- Carmen Bellerose, Financial Officer
- Katrina Garavanian, Executive Assistant
- Justin Howard, Transportation Program Manager

I. Minutes of Meeting: January 16, 2019

The minutes were distributed to all Councilors for review. Based on a motion made by Steve Themelis and seconded by Mary McBride, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2019 meeting. Jim Silva and Jay Kelly abstained as they were not present at the January meeting.
II. Executive Director’s Report

The Executive Director’s Report was previously distributed to the Councilors for review. Upon a motion made by Phil Thibault and seconded by Rick Reault, the Council voted unanimously to accept the Executive Director’s Report as presented. The report is included as Attachment #2.

III. Financial Report and Warrant

Carmen Bellerose presented the Financial Report and the Warrant for review and signature. Based on a motion made by Rick Reault and seconded by Steve Themelis, the Financial Report and Warrant were unanimously approved. The Financial Report is included as Attachment #3.

IV. Old Business

1. Update on DLTA XII

Jay Donovan provided a DLTA XII Project Listing for the Council packet and informed the Council of the budget, project timeframe and staff hours estimated for each community and project. Projects to be undertaken include the following:

- Billerica-Chapter 40R study for the North Billerica Mill area
- Chelmsford-Work on chapters of a Master Plan update
- Dracut-Housing Production Plan update and Chapter 40R study of various locations
- Dunstable-Participation in the Massachusetts Rural Policy Plan and work on Green Community Designation
- Lowell-Pedestrian Infrastructure Inventory in Downtown and the Acre
- Pepperell- Housing Production Plan Update and continued work on the Master Plan
- Tyngsborough-Master Plan Update
- Westford-Updated Economic Development section for the Master Plan and Chapter 40R study
- Regional activities include assistance with the Housing Choice Initiative, Regional Weights and Measures, NMRECC implementation, Regional Stormwater Collaborative, and Energy Efficiency/Renewable Energy Opportunities.

2. Proposed FY 2019-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment

Justin Howard informed the Council that NMMPO members voted at their last meeting to release Draft Amendment 2 of the FY 2019-2023 for a 21-day Public Comment period. This Amendment includes a decrease in funding for the Mill Street Bridge over the Shawsheen River in Tewksbury and the programming of funds for the purchase of six LRTA replacement vans to reflect a recent Community Transit Grant award. The NMMPO will meet on February 27th to vote on the endorsement of the Amendment.
Based on a motion by George Zaharoolis, seconded by Darrin Wizst, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the Chair to vote to endorse the FY 2019-2023 TIP Amendment at the February 27th NMMPO meeting.

3. Update on the Development of the FY 2020-2024 TIP, FY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Justin Howard provided an update on the development of the certification documents. The Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO) has begun the development of the FFY 2020-2024 TIP and the FY 2020 UPWP. The NMMPO is also in the process of updating the Regional Transportation Plan, as federal regulations require that the document be updated every four years. Justin Howard provided an overview of the development process and reviewed the funding available for projects on the TIP, the UPWP and the RTP. He informed the Council that NMCOG staff met with each community to discuss their priorities and to formulate potential plan recommendations. NMCOG has also released an online Regional Transportation survey to the public and there has been a good response to date.

4. Other Old Business

There was none.

V. New Business

1. Community Reports

Phil Thibault informed the Council that Dracut is going out to bid for Fire Station 3 in the Collinsville neighborhood within the next month.

Jim Silva advised the Council that Westford’s Roudenbush Community Center is scheduled to reopen in March, following the facility’s refurbishment.

Mary McBride stated that she toured Billerica’s beautiful new High School this week. The school building is scheduled to open in September, on time and on budget.

2. Project Referrals

Beverly Woods informed the Council that currently there is one project in the region under MEPA review. The project involves the construction of intersection improvements at Route 129 and Riverneck Road in Chelmsford and is subject to MEPA review due to the removal of several shade trees. A copy of the NMCOG staff comment letter was included in the Council packet.

Based on a motion by Rick Reault, seconded by Ed Kennedy, the Council voted unanimously to approve the staff comment letter.

The Finance Committee met prior to the Council meeting to discuss proposed revisions to the FY 2019 Budget and made recommendations to the Council in support of the proposed revisions. Based on a motion by Rick Reault, seconded by Steve Themelis, the Council voted unanimously to approve the FY 2019 Budget as revised.

4. **Approval of the FY 2020 Budget**

Jerry Frechette explained that the Finance Committee discussed the establishment of the proposed FY 2020 Budget. Beverly Woods, Carmen Bellerose and Jay Donovan presented an overview of the proposed FY 2020 budget to the Finance Committee based on what is known at this point in time. The Finance Committee recommended to the Council that the FY 2020 budget be adopted by the Council as presented. He noted that the Council will revisit the budget in June and make any needed adjustments at that time.

Based on a motion by Steve Themelis, seconded by Mary McBride, the Council voted unanimously to approve the initial FY 2020 Budget as presented.

5. **Proposed FY 2020 Community Assessments**

Jerry Frechette, on behalf of the Finance Committee, presented the FY 2020 Community Assessments, which are set by the Council each February. The Finance Committee recommended a 2.5% increase, as allowed by Proposition 2½.

Based on a motion by Rick Reault, seconded by Mary McBride, the Council voted unanimously to approve the 2.5% increase as presented for the FY 2020 Community Assessments.

6. **Other New Business**

There was none.

VI. **Announcements**

Ed Kennedy invited the Council to attend Lowell’s Winterfest February 22 – 24, 2019 and to spread the word to their communities.

VII. **Adjournment**

Following a motion made by Steve Themelis and seconded by George Zaharoolis, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.
CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

I certify that this is a true copy of the Minutes of the meeting of February 20, 2019.

Attest: __________________________

Stephen Themelis, Clerk