PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC)
Minutes of Executive Committee Zoom Meeting
March 26, 2026, 5:00 P.M.

Executive Committee Members Present:
William Dwyer, Chair – Hadley
George Kingston, Vice Chair – East Longmeadow
Doug Albertson, Secretary/Clerk – Belchertown
Marilyn Gorman Fil, Treasurer – Monson
T.J. Cousineau, Assistant Treasurer – Blandford
Peri Hall, At-large Member – Goshen
Jack Jemsek, At-large Member – Amherst

PVPC Staff Present:
Kimberly Robinson, Executive Director
Laura Bandara, Deputy Director, Land Use and Environment Department
Lisa Edinger, Director of Finance
Gary Roux, Director of Transportation Planning
Deanna Young, Administrative Services Coordinator

1. Chairman's Call to Order, Welcome, and Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held on February 26, 2026

The Executive Committee meeting on March 26, 2026, was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Chair William Dwyer.

MOVED BY GEORGE KINGSTON, SECONDED BY DOUG ALBERTSON, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 26, 2026, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

2. Listing of Payments/Financial Reports

Lisa Edinger reviewed the February financial reports and noted that overall balances were consistent with the prior year at the same point in time. She reported that cash flow had begun to trend upward. She explained that higher-than-normal accounts receivable and payable balances were primarily attributable to the MVP drinking water plan, which is invoiced on a milestone basis. She noted that approximately $101,000 in expenses were awaiting reimbursement and that receivables would decline once reimbursements were received.

A six-month budget review covering July through December was presented, showing revenues at approximately 44% of the annual budget, which was slightly higher than the same period in the prior fiscal year. Expenses were reviewed by category, with staff costs and office expenditures tracking close to expected levels. It was noted that some categories appeared over budget due to reimbursable, project-based expenses, and changes in how software and technology costs are categorized.

3. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement Between the PVPC and the Town of Huntington to Facilitate Development of a Strategic Economic Development Plan Under the Executive Office of Economic Development's Rural Development Fund

The Committee considered authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract between the PVPC and the Town of Huntington to facilitate the development of a strategic economic development plan. Staff explained that the project originated from a One Stop application submitted the prior year and is funded through the Executive Office of Economic Development's Rural Development Fund.

MOVED BY GEORGE KINGSTON, SECONDED BY MARILYN GORMAN FIL, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PVPC AND THE

TOWN OF HUNTINGTON TO FACILITATE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN UNDER THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

4. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement for a Consultant to Conduct an Economic Impact Analysis of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA)

   The Committee reviewed a request to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a consultant contract, not to exceed $75,000, to perform an economic benefits analysis of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA). Staff explained that the project would be funded primarily through unexpended MassDOT funds, with approximately $16,000 provided as a local match by the PVTA. It was noted that a qualified consulting firm would conduct the analysis and would support transit planning and evaluation efforts.

   MOVED BY MARILYN GORMAN FIL, SECONDED BY DOUG ALBERTSON, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT FOR A CONSULTANT TO CONDUCT AN ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS OF THE PIONEER VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY (PVTA). THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

5. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement with the Town of Longmeadow to Facilitate Development of a Housing Production Plan

   The Committee considered authorization for a contract with the Town of Longmeadow to facilitate development of a housing production plan. Staff explained that the plan would focus on workforce housing needs, with particular attention to improving housing attainability for first responders and teachers. The project is expected to begin over the summer.

   MOVED BY T.J. COUSINEAU, SECONDED BY PERI HALL, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF LONGMEADOW TO FACILITATE DEVELOPMENT OF A HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

6. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement with the Town of Goshen to Assist with an Update of the Town's Zoning Bylaws

   The Committee reviewed a request to authorize a contract with the Town of Goshen to support a comprehensive rewrite of the town's zoning bylaws and to provide ongoing planning staff assistance on both a scheduled and as-needed basis. One Committee member abstained from the vote regarding a potential conflict of interest, noting that Goshen is their home community.

   MOVED BY GEORGE KINGSTON, SECONDED BY T.J. COUSINEAU, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF GOSHEN TO ASSIST WITH AN UPDATE OF THE TOWN'S ZONING BYLAWS. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE WITH ONE ABSTENTION.

7. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement with the Town of Chester for the PVPC to Administer Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding for the Provision of the Implementation of the Prospect Street Improvement Project (Phase 3)

   The Committee considered authorization for a contract with the Town of Chester for the PVPC to administer fiscal

year 2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding related to the Prospect Street Improvement Project (Phase 3). Staff clarified that the amount referenced in the motion represented payment to the PVPC for grant administration services (not to exceed $185,500), not the full amount of the CDBG award, which is contracted directly between the state and the town.

MOVED BY MARILYN GORMAN FIL, SECONDED BY T.J. COUSINEAU, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF CHESTER FOR THE PVPC TO ADMINISTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FUNDING FOR THE PROVISION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROSPECT STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (PHASE 3). THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

8. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement with the Town of Huntington for the PVPC to Administer Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding for the Provision of the Implementation of the Town's ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, Implementation of the Stanton Avenue (Phase 2) Infrastructure Improvement Project, and Implementation of Engineering Designs for the Blandford Hill Road Infrastructure Improvement Project

   The Committee reviewed a request to authorize a contract with the Town of Huntington for the PVPC to administer fiscal year 2025 CDBG funding. Staff explained that the scope includes an ADA self-evaluation and transition plan, work on infrastructure improvements on Stanton Avenue, and related engineering design activities. The contract amount was stated as not to exceed $217,500 payable to the PVPC.

   MOVED BY T.J. COUSINEAU, SECONDED BY MARILYN GORMAN FIL, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON FOR THE PVPC TO ADMINISTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FUNDING FOR THE PROVISION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOWN'S ADA SELF-EVALUATION AND TRANSITION PLAN, IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANTON AVENUE (PHASE 2) INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGINEERING DESIGNS FOR THE BLANDFORD HILL ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

9. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement with the Town of Ware for the PVPC to Administer Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding for the Provision of the Implementation of the Cottage Street Infrastructure Improvement Project, and the Oversight of Three Public Social Services: Domestic Violence Prevention Services, the Ware Senior Outreach Program, and the Ware Adult Learning Center

   The Executive Committee considered authorization for a contract with the Town of Ware to administer fiscal year 2025 CDBG funding for the Cottage Street infrastructure improvement project and to oversee three public social service programs. A Committee member asked whether domestic violence services overlapped with a subsequent agenda item. Staff clarified that the services were funded under different grant years and required separate contracts and motions.

   MOVED BY T.J. COUSINEAU, SECONDED BY DOUG ALBERTSON, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF WARE FOR THE PVPC TO ADMINISTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FUNDING FOR THE PROVISION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COTTAGE STREET INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, AND THE OVERSIGHT OF THREE PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION SERVICES, THE WARE SENIOR OUTREACH PROGRAM, AND THE WARE ADULT LEARNING CENTER. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

10. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement with the Town of Ware for the PVPC to Conduct the Ware Domestic Violence Prevention Program through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

    The Committee reviewed a request to authorize a separate contract with the Town of Ware to conduct the Ware Domestic Violence Prevention Program through CDBG funding. Staff explained that the contract would support coordination of the Ware River Valley Task Force at approximately 20 hours per month, along with funding for mileage and outreach materials. The task force was described as a collaborative group of community residents and representatives focused on prevention, education, training, and service coordination.

    MOVED BY MARILYN GORMAN FIL, SECONDED BY JACK JEMSEK, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF WARE FOR THE PVPC TO CONDUCT THE WARE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM THROUGH A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG). THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

11. Contracts Signed Under $25,000

    Kimberly Robinson reported that 15 contracts under $25,000 were executed during February, totaling approximately $104,000. These contracts included GIS work for another regional planning agency, grant application assistance, stipends for community engagement activities, planning support services, and public health-related projects.

12. Human Resources Items

    Ms. Robinson announced the successful hiring of a Senior Planner in the Land Use and Environment Department, with the new employee scheduled to begin in April. She also announced the promotion of an internal candidate to the position of Community and Economic Development Director, effective the completion of the CDBG application deadlines. One staff departure was reported, and the Committee was informed that updates to the employee handbook are nearing completion and will be brought forward for approval at a future meeting.

13. Executive Director's Highlights and Updates

    Ms. Robinson reported that the PVPC received 13 media mentions since the previous meeting. She described recent regional housing forums held in partnership with Way Finders and the UMass Donahue Institute, each attended by approximately 60 participants. She noted ongoing assistance to communities with One Stop and CDBG grant applications, participation in DLTA Day at the State House, and meetings with state legislators to advocate for local technical assistance funding.

    Ms. Robinson reported that the PVPC was invited to apply for annual Economic Development Administration funding and that an application has been submitted. Updates were also shared regarding anticipated state and federal transportation and infrastructure funding announcements, including a forthcoming announcement related to East-West Rail.

    The Committee raised a concern about a provision in a state budget bill that could remove the enforcement link between nonpayment of local motor vehicle excise taxes and RMV license or registration renewals, noting that this change could significantly impact municipal revenue collection, particularly for smaller towns that rely on excise taxes as an important local revenue source. The Massachusetts Municipal Association has flagged the issue and expressed concern that it could advance without sufficient scrutiny if included as a budget rider. Brief references to this issue have been noted in Beacon Hill newsletters, but additional follow-up is needed. Ms. Robinson confirmed that she will consult with the PVPC's legislative and policy contacts and report back with additional information.

Ms. Robinson provided an update regarding the anticipated timing of the state environmental bond bill. She noted that the bill is expected to be taken up by the Senate in mid-April rather than by the House, which is atypical, and that the legislation could include funding for combined sewer overflow advocacy efforts. Members expressed interest in continued updates as the legislative process moves forward.

14. Committee Member Comments, Suggestions, and Future Agenda Items

Ted Cousineau shared an update from Blandford, reporting that the town's request for a temporary moratorium related to large-scale solar development was declined by the Attorney General's office. Mr. Cousineau explained that the town is currently facing multiple large solar project applications, ongoing concerns about battery energy storage systems, and capacity challenges within the volunteer planning, zoning, and conservation boards. He also noted additional development pressures, including a new cannabis facility application, which further strains limited local resources.

Jack Jemsek provided a community update regarding staffing changes, noting that his municipality hired a new Planning and Economic Development Director following a recent departure. Mr. Jemsek observed that the role will place greater emphasis on economic development. He noted that the new director participated in recent regional housing discussions hosted by Way Finders and the UMass Donahue Institute.

The Committee discussed whether those housing discussions are expected to lead to a more permanent regional housing coordination effort or an ongoing collaborative framework among municipalities. Staff explained that the events were part of broader regional housing planning efforts and that data and public input gathered through these forums will inform the development of an updated regional housing plan. Members acknowledged that housing pressures are being felt across the region and expressed interest in continued coordination and shared solutions.

MOVED BY WILLIAM DWYER, TO ADJOURN TODAY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED WITHOUT OBJECTION AT 5:48 P.M.

15. Action Items

- Ms. Robinson is to review options for making the PVPC media mentions publicly accessible, including potential posting on the PVPC website and promoting selected mentions through social media channels.
- Ms. Robinson will follow up on the state budget provision that would remove RMV enforcement for non-payment of local motor vehicle excise taxes, shifting enforcement responsibility to municipalities, and report back to the Committee with additional information.

Respectfully Submitted,
Doug Albertson, Secretary/Clerk

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at the March 26, 2026, Meeting

1. Executive Committee March 26, 2026, Meeting Agenda
2. March 26, 2026, Possible Motions
3. Executive Committee February 26, 2026, Minutes
4. February 2026 Financial Summary
5. February 2026 Check Listings
6. FY26 Expense Budget vs Actual 6 months
7. FY26 Revenue Budget vs Actual 6 months

8. February 2026 List of Payments
9. February 2026 Payment History
10. Signed Contracts – February 2026