

# **Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee Meeting Minutes Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization**

## **November 17, 2022, Meeting**

9:00 AM-10:00 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Derek Krevat, Chair, representing Jamey Tesler, Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

## **Decisions**

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Administration & Finance (A&F) Committee agreed to the following:

- Approval of the October 6, 2022 meeting summary

## **Materials**

Materials for this meeting included the following:

1. Approve the minutes of the meeting of October 6, 2022

## **Meeting Agenda and Summary of Discussion**

### **1. Introductions**

See attendance on page 5.

### **2. Public Comments**

There were none.

### **3. Meeting Summary of October 6, 2022—Approval of this summary**

A motion to approve the summary was made by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Derek Krevat) and seconded by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Eric Bourassa). The motion carried.

#### **4. Agenda Item: Discussion: Operations Plan - Standing and Ad Hoc Committees—*Brian Kane, Chair***

Tegin Teich, Executive Director of the Central Transportation Planning Staff opened her discussion by sharing a worksheet for Standing and Ad Hoc Committees, which compiles guidance from the Operations Plan Memo and the 2011 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). T. Teich shared some discussion questions:

- Are the existing MPO committees enough to complete the MPO's work in the region?
- Should any of the work or discussion currently carried out by board member be shifted into committees or should any work currently carried out in committees shift to board members?
- What expectations might there be for committee members in terms of ongoing education around best practices of MPOs and committee members? What training opportunities would benefit committee members?
- Should there be requirements/guidance around committee meeting attendance, preparation (reviewing materials), and participation?
- Should there be requirements or restrictions on board members' participation on committees (requirement to serve, eligible members, eligible officers, alternative representation)?

T. Teich discussed the TIP Screening and Readiness Committee as a possible committee to focus on the development of the TIP Universe of Projects. The purpose of this committee would be to have more detailed and in-depth conversations about project specifics at a level that is not currently done at the board. This committee would also allow more time and capacity to have conversations about the TIP development process overall.

B. Kane stated that there would be a lot of value in having some kind of committee to allow for more in-depth discussion and presentation, especially from project proponents.

Lenard Diggins (Regional Transportation Advisory Council) agreed with B. Kane and suggested that this committee could also hear comments that are critical of projects before a draft TIP is presented to the MPO Board. L. Diggins raised the potential issue that many members of the MPO Board will want to be on this committee, and it could be difficult to manage. L. Diggins asked about the congestion management committee and how it came into existence.

Jonathan Church (MPO Staff) stated that the Congestion Management Process Committee was formed about ten years ago, and while it is not federally required, staff

are having discussions on whether to prioritize this committee as part of the MPO's processes. Historically, it has met about two times a year.

E. Bourassa expressed his support for the creation of a TIP committee, and asked about a timeframe for launching this committee and its associated logistics. He additionally agreed with L. Diggins in that the TIP is the process to which the MPO members may feel the most connected or invested, and suggested that a potential TIP Committee should be focused on learning more about projects and improving the process overall, not on making recommendations.

B. Kane asked whether this committee could make decisions and changes on project details in the outer years of funding, similar to how MassDOT's Highway Division currently reports to the full MPO board. E. Bourassa stated that those actions may be best suited to this committee, but then runs the risk of its membership being effectively the full MPO board.

D. Krevat asked whether this committee would focus solely on regional target projects. T. Teich stated that staff had not directly discussed this possibility. J. Church additionally stated that regional target projects would be part of the committee's discussions as they relate to the scenarios the committee would be charged with developing. D. Krevat agreed that keeping the committee's focus on project readiness rather than making decisions about programming would be preferable.

Dennis Giombetti (MetroWest Regional Collaborative/City of Framingham) additionally agreed that keeping the committee's focus on project readiness would allow for more streamlined decision making while staying away from the more political aspects of a given project. He asked why the MPO Board moved away from TIP Readiness Days.

E. Bourassa stated that about ten years ago, TIP Readiness Days consisted of 15-20 minute slots for project proponents to present to the board. These presentations were largely consultant driven, and board members felt that there was not much space for robust discussion.

B. Kane suggested that the charge of the committee should be to ensure that projects are completely ready for funding and that there are no technical issues to overcome before they go in front of the entire MPO Board.

L. Diggins asked when the committee would begin its work on reviewing the Universe. J. Church responded that that the committee would begin its work from the next fiscal year.

D. Krevat suggested two distinct forms the committee's membership would take. The first would be a way to facilitate closer conversations between staff and MassDOT earlier in the process without the involvement of board members. The second would be to emphasize the role of the subregional representative and have them present projects from their subregion. This approach would necessitate closer relationships between the subregional representative and projects from that subregion.

Brad Rawson (City of Somerville) stated that the City of Somerville has spent a lot of time in the past advocating for projects in the Inner Core Region, and offered its experience in working on project readiness and advocacy.

E. Bourassa raised the issue of public comment during MPO meetings. Oftentimes, public comment on TIP projects can take close to an hour, and there is less time and energy among board members to conduct robust discussions of the day's agenda.

B. Kane stated that it may be worth it to bring this discussion in some form to the larger MPO board to gauge interest.

D. Giombetti cautioned that the more power this committee is given, the more board members will want to participate in it, reducing its efficiency.

B. Kane asked MPO staff to begin thinking about a draft charter or charge for a TIP Readiness Committee based on this discussion.

T. Teich moved to discuss the final item of the meeting concerning board participation and attendance, and asked members how they felt about establishing some guidelines around these questions.

B. Kane emphasized that board members are elected to committees. He stated that he did not see participation in board discussions as a requirement.

L. Diggins highlighted that currently, there is not a process of electing members to committees; it is a primarily volunteer-based process. Thus, requiring an election would indicate a new process to implement.

T. Teich clarified that since committee membership is currently voluntary, staff would need to make the language in the strategic plan more explicit.

B. Kane offered that it may be important to show that the board is delegating some of its authority to committees, and stated that requiring a 2/3 majority participation may be too high.

T. Teich stated that staff will develop a framework for the TIP Committee, and make a few other edits based on the day's discussion.

### **5. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (Brian Kane) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Lenard Diggins). The motion carried.

DRAFT

## Attendance

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<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
MBTA Advisory Board	Brian Kane
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning	Derek Krevat
MetroWest Regional Collaborative, City of Framingham	Dennis Giombetti

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<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Jon Seward	Town of Burlington
Brad Rawson	City of Somerville
Jackie LaFlam	Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Perry Grossman	

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### **MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Logan Casey

Jonathan Church

Annette Demchur

Sandy Johnston

Srilekha Murthy

Gina Perille

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