

Administration and Finance Committee Meeting Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

June 1, 2023, Meeting

9:00 AM–9:45 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Brian Kane, Chair, representing the MBTA Advisory Board

Decisions

The Administration and Finance Committee agreed to the following:

- Approve the summary of the meeting of April 27, 2023
- Recommend the full MPO board approve the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024 Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) Operating Budget
- Recommend the full MPO board approve the Operations Plan
- Recommend the full MPO board approve the Communication Norms

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on page 7.

2. Public Comments

There were none.

3. Action Item: Approval of April 27, 2023, Meeting Summary

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. April 27, 2023, meeting summary ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Vote

A motion to approve the summary of the meeting of April 27, 2023, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) (Derek Krevat). The motion carried.

4. SFY 2024 Proposed Operating Budget—Hiral Gandhi, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. SFY 2024 Operating Budget Memo ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
2. SFY 2024 Operating Budget ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

3. SFY 2024 Revenue Projections ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

H. Gandhi presented the SFY 2024 budget and revenue projections for Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS), the staff to the Boston Region MPO. SFY 2024 begins on July 1, 2023, and ends on June 30, 2024. Total revenue for SFY 2024 is projected to be \$7,850,000. Approximately 75 percent, or \$5.8 million, comes from the MPO; nine percent, or \$692,000, comes from MassDOT; eight percent, or \$659,000, comes from the MBTA; and eight percent, or \$650,000, comes from other sources. The projected revenue has increased by 13 percent, which can be attributed to the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant.

The SFY 2024 projected operating expenses is \$7,850,000. Operating expenses include salaries, insurance, rent, office supplies, training, the fiduciary agent fee, internet and phone, and other technology. Approximately \$3.97 million, or 51 percent of the budget, is allocated for administrative expenses; \$3.3 million, or 42 percent, is allocated for direct labor; and \$580,000, or seven percent, is allocated for direct costs. The projected overhead rate is expected to be 120.30 percent, an increase from the SFY 2023 overhead rate of 119.34 percent.

The payroll is budgeted for 61 total staff members; seven are administrative positions and eleven positions are currently vacant.

H. Gandhi discussed notable line item changes in the budget, found in Table 1 with notes.

Table 1
SFY 2024 Operating Budget Notable Changes

| Line Item | Projected Year-End SFY 2023 Expenses | Proposed SFY 2024 Budget | Notes |
|--|---|---|--|
| 4. Consultants | \$6,000 | \$405,000 | Consultants to be used for Safe Streets and Roads for All grant work |
| 8. Other (Incentives, Printing, Unanticipated) | \$7,500 | \$36,500 | Support incentives for public engagement efforts |
| 16. Unemployment | \$5,000 | \$10,000 | Cautious budgeting for an increase in unemployment claims, which must be covered in full by the agency |
| 34. IT Equipment Repairs | \$0 | \$0 | Previous budgets included expenses for the braille printer, used for a project that has been completed |
| 36. Office Maintenance and Repair | \$2,000 | \$10,000 | Increased budget to allow for office space maintenance to meet staff needs |
| 39. Postage | \$0 | \$0 | Previous document exchange, which required postage, has transitioned to electronic methods |
| 43. Professional Services – Legal | \$5,000 | \$25,000 | Support visa sponsorships for staff |
| 44. Professional Services – Compensation Planning | \$0 | \$5,000 | Increasing efforts to attract and retain staff through benchmarking positions based on job market data |
| 57. Miscellaneous | \$40,000 | \$10,000 | The annual cost of the finance management system has been moved to line 56. |

Discussion

Lenard Diggins, Regional Transportation Advisory Council, asked about the potential to move CTPS from its current office space. Tegin Teich, Executive Director, stated that administrative priorities within MassDOT leadership have changed, so previous plans to renovate office spaces in the building to better accommodate hybrid work have been delayed.

Vote

A motion to recommend that the Boston Region MPO approve the SFY 2024 Operating Budget for CTPS, was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham) (Dennis Giombetti). The motion carried.

5. Action Item: Draft Operations Plan

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Draft Operations Plan ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

B. Kane stated that the goal of this agenda item is to address final edits made to the Operations Plan for the Boston Region MPO and to vote to bring it to the full MPO board.

Discussion

B. Kane read the first comment on the posted document, asking why a process is referenced if it has never been needed before. B. Kane stated that the purpose of the Operations Plan is to offer contingencies in the event unforeseen circumstances.

E. Bourassa stated that the outlined procedure could be beneficial in the event that there is an in-person board meeting.

E. Bourassa stated, relating to board member interactions with the press, that board members should be encouraged to bring the media request to the attention of MPO staff, but that it is the MPO member's responsibility to determine an appropriate response. T. Teich stated that the section has been simplified, stating that members should contact MPO staff to notify them about the request.

T. Teich summarized the proposed changes on page 33 of the posted document. Many comments received questioned the necessity of quarterly updates on Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects when there are existing coordinating channels for this information. D. Krevat stated that commenters were concerned about creating new processes. T. Teich stated that the intended process is for implementing agencies to provide MPO staff with project updates, which staff present to the MPO, and implementing agencies are then able to address any questions that arise.

Vote

A motion to approve the draft Operations Plan and bring it to the full MPO board, contingent on minor editorial changes, was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

6. Action Item: Draft Communication Norms

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Draft Communication Norms ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

T. Teich stated that the only edit to the Communication Norms was to maintain consistency throughout the document when referring to the chair, vice-chair, or their designees.

Vote

A motion to approve the draft Communication Norms and bring it to the full MPO board for consideration was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

7. Members' Items

T. Teich thanked the committee and MPO staff for their work to produce the Operations Plan and Communication Norms.

8. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members

Representatives and Alternates

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Massachusetts Department of Transportation | Derek Krevat |
| MBTA Advisory Board | Brian Kane |
| Metropolitan Area Planning Council | Eric Bourassa |
| MetroWest Regional Collaborative, City of Framingham | Dennis Giombetti |
| Regional Transportation Advisory Council | Lenard Diggins |

Other Attendees

Affiliation

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Brad Rawson | Inner Core Committee, City of Somerville |
| Jon Seward | MoveMassachusetts |

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director
Silva Ayvazyan
Annette Demchur
Hiral Gandhi
Erin Maguire

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Title VI Specialist

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