



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

111 Liberty Street, Suite 100
Columbus, Ohio 43215
morpc.org

T. 614. 228.2663
TTY. 1.800.750.0750
info@morpc.org

NOTICE OF A MEETING

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
111 LIBERTY STREET, SUITE 100
COLUMBUS, OH 43215
*BOARD ROOM***

Thursday, September 2, 2021
1:30 p.m.

Remote Option

To join by video and see any screen sharing, click on “Join Microsoft Teams Meeting” below. You do not need to have Microsoft Teams for the link to work.

[Click here to Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

To participate by phone, use the conference call information below.

[+1 614-362-3056](#) United States, Columbus
[\(888\) 596-2819](#) United States (Toll-free)
Phone Conference ID: 602 801 590#

AGENDA

1. **Welcome** – Karen Angelou, Chair
2. **Consent Agenda**
 - Approval of [August 5, 2021 minutes](#)
3. **Executive Director’s Report** – William Murdock
4. **Committee Updates**
 - **Regional Policy Roundtable** – Joe Garrity
 - **Sustainability Advisory Committee** – Kerstin Carr
 - **Transportation Policy Committee** – Thea Ewing
5. **Strategic Framework Update** – William Murdock & Thea Ewing
6. **Draft Commission Agenda**
7. **Other Business**

William Murdock, AICP
Executive Director

Karen J. Angelou
Chair

Erik J. Janas
Vice Chair

Chris Amorose Grooms
Secretary

Please RSVP to Shari Saunders at 614-233-4169 or ssaunders@morpc.org to let us know if you are attending in-person or remotely.

**The next Executive Committee Meeting is
Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.
111 Liberty Street, Suite 100
Columbus, Ohio 43215**

PARKING AND TRANSIT: When parking in MORPC's parking lot, please be sure to park in a MORPC visitor space or in a space marked with a yellow "M". Handicapped parking is available at the side of MORPC's building. Electric vehicle charging stations are available for MORPC guests.

Indoor bike parking is available for MORPC guests.

MORPC is accessible by COTA BUS. The closest bus stop to MORPC is S. Front Street & W. Blenkner St. Buses that accommodate this stop are the Number 61 - Grove City, the Number 5 - West 5th Ave. /Refugee, and the Number 8 - Karl/S. High/Parsons.



Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: August 5, 2021
Time: 1:30 p.m.
Location: MORPC Board Room

Members Present In Person

Chris Amorose Groomes
Karen Angelou

Jennifer Gallagher
Erik Janas

Rory McGuinness

Members Attending Remotely

Franklin Christman
Kim Maggard

David Scheffler
Joe Stefanov

Nancy White

MORPC Staff Present In Person

Thea Ewing
Amanda Frey
Joe Garrity
Ralonda Hampton

Niel Jurist
Eileen Leuby
William Murdock
Stephen Patchan

Anthony Perry
Shari Saunders
Aaron Schill
Robert Williams

MORPC Staff Attending Remotely

Ted Geer

Shawn Hufstedler

Welcome – Erik Janas

Executive Committee Chair Erik Janas called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. and welcomed members to the first hybrid Executive Committee meeting. Chair Janas reminded members that the Ohio General Assembly did not extend the authority to convene public meetings virtually beyond July 1, 2021. To be officially counted as attending and to vote, members must attend the meeting in person. Those attending virtually may participate and use the chat feature to provide input or if you have questions. MORPC Team Member Ralonda Hampton is monitoring the chat.

William Murdock welcomed members to MORPC's new space. The room is designed to make hybrid meetings easier, but we are waiting on backordered equipment.

Mr. Murdock introduced new Finance Director Anthony Perry. Mr. Perry served at the Ohio Department of Health for ten years, six as the Chief Financial Officer. Before that he served at the Ohio Office of Budget and Management for five years. He is thrilled to be at MORPC. Chair Janas welcomed Mr. Perry.

Consent Agenda

Chris Amorose Groomes made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, second by Jennifer Gallagher; motion passed.

Executive Director's Report – William Murdock

William Murdock assured members MORPC is back in person. Our team never stopped and is working harder and faster than ever. We are monitoring the bipartisan infrastructure package and the tremendous resources that will impact our local governments and affect every part of our agency. Our goal as we wait for the bill to pass, is to make sure we are aligned internally and know exactly what opportunities we have and what ways we may be able to help communities get out in front.

MORPC is working with One Columbus and the Economic Development Agency on a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). There are a lot of resources available from the US EDA for CEDS with deadlines coming up over the next year.

MORPC is working with Amtrak behind the scenes as they are still interested in the region. More media is coming out on the RAPID 5 project reimagining our corridors. We are still polishing the strategic planning from earlier this year. The overwhelming message from members was to help them take advantage of the available funding opportunities.

Mr. Murdock announced MORPC is following the mask advisory just issued by Franklin County and the City of Columbus encouraging people attending meetings to wear masks. Ninety-five percent of MORPC employees are vaccinated. MORPC is using a flexible return-to-work policy, but all employees must be in the building a certain amount of time each week. Depending on the delta variant our plan is to move to a more permanent schedule after Labor Day.

Members are welcome to go on a tour of the renovated building following the Executive Committee meeting. Meeting space for members is doubled with new technology added as it comes in. Employee space is upgraded and everything is branded throughout the building.

Last year over 30 governments participated in MORPC's Annual Salary and Fringe Benefit Survey. Mr. Murdock encouraged members to participate again this year. One hundred percent of Executive Committee communities participated last year. The deadline to get the survey in is September 3.

Ohio University has added a new Master of Sustainability, Security and Resilience to their \$1,000 scholarship program which is now available for members and their employees. The scholarship program also applies to the Master of Public Administration.

MORPC has entered a partnership with Franklin University on their FranklinWORKS program. The tuition discount program is for all degree programs and offers a twenty percent discount on prevailing undergraduate tuition and master's degree tuition and a ten percent discount on doctoral degree tuition. Free books may be available with some restrictions. Franklin University offers online courses as well as in-person courses. This is available for member governments and their employees.

Next week is our first in-person Commission meeting since the pandemic started. That evening is MORPC Night at the Columbus Clippers. MORPC Secretary Chris Amorose Groomes is throwing out the first pitch.

Central Ohio Regional Planning Organization (CORPO) – Thea Ewing

Thea Ewing reported CORPO was part of the legislation that received funding for rural transportation planning. Team Members are beginning work on revising the CORPO TIP and Planning Work Program to incorporate the additional \$500,000 per year. CORPO Chair, Commissioner Mark Forrest, will give a full update at the Commission meeting.

Regional Policy Roundtable – Joe Garrity

Joe Garrity reported the bi-partisan infrastructure bill will probably pass this weekend. That means a lot of funding will go into programs that benefit MORPC and its members. There will not be a separate surface transportation reauthorization bill. Mr. Garrity shared bill highlights:

- Earmarks are not included.
- Transit received a 43 percent increase from the FAST Act.
- Capital investment grants include \$16 million for rail.
- \$65 billion for broadband infrastructure with \$40 billion dedicated to states focusing on underserved areas.
- \$110 billion for roads and bridges.

MORPC has received feedback from 25 members on the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Survey. The survey asked how local governments are utilizing the ARP dollars.

Other than not having the authority to meet virtually, ever other item MORPC advocated for in the state budget was included.

MORPC will be hosting several member events on various programs impacting our local governments.

Transportation Policy Committee – Thea Ewing

Thea Ewing reported ODOT staff recommended the following Central Ohio projects to the Transportation Review Advisory Committee (TRAC):

- MPO Projects
 1. I-70/I-270/Brice Road (Far East Freeway) Phases 2 & 3
 2. Hard Shoulder Running I-71 Study
 3. US-23 Corridor Study
 4. Far East I-70 Interchange Improvements for Taylor Road & SR-256
 5. Alum Creek Drive widening (Rickenbacker area)
 6. I-270/US-23 South Outerbelt Interchange
 7. US-33/Pickerington Road interchange
 8. SR-16/Broad Street widening in Pataskala – no funding recommended
 9. I-71/Big Walnut interchange – no funding recommended
- CORPO projects
 1. Madison County - I-70/SR-29 interchange
 2. Knox County – SR-13 relocation – no funding recommended

TRAC will vote on the draft list August 25, followed by a public comment period through September 15. The final vote is September 22.

Team Members launched a new program called the Commute Action Fund. The fund is a tool for Central Ohio companies to fund new incentives and/or commute projects that motivate company employees to drive less and use sustainable modes of transportation to work. MORPC will provide \$5,000 matching funds to companies that make a \$5,000 commitment to create more sustainable commuter options for their employees.

MORPC recently submitted three grant proposals:

- Department of Energy - \$5.5 million for electric vehicle charging in the region. Approximately \$2 million of this is for COTA bus charging.
- MORPC is the lead MPO on a grant application from a national group of local governments, chambers of commerce, MPOs, local businesses, and clean fuel organizations to employ a charging strategy for regions. This \$300,000 Department of Energy grant is only looking for a model.

- Department of Transportation RAISE Grant - \$2 million for planning rural/urban transit connections.

Team Members are ready to help members prepare grant submissions as opportunities arise.

Proposed Resolution EC-03-21: “Authorizing the executive director to enter into agreements with the State of Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) for the 2021 Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) and to enter into related subcontracts” – Robert Williams

Karen Angelou made a motion to approve Resolution EC-03-21, second by Nancy White; motion passed.

Proposed Resolution EC-04-21: “Authorizing the executive director to enter into agreements for July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023, with the Franklin County Board of Commissioners for a home repair program and to administer the joint Columbus and Franklin County Housing Advisory Board for the period of July 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022” – William Murdock and Robert Williams

This is a long-standing function of MORPC. The Residential Services Team maintains the home repair program which now has a two-year waiting list. Funding is increased \$100,000 over last year due to the post COVID exponential increase in material costs. The Housing Advisory Board is being transitioned to the Planning & Sustainability Team to engage the board more often as we tackle housing challenges in the area.

Rory McGuinness made a motion to approve Resolution EC-04-21, second by Chris Amorose Groomes; motion passed.

Quarterly Membership Update – Eileen Leuby

Eileen Leuby presented the [Membership Services Quarterly Update](#) highlighting:

- Summer Rural Forum Series
- Summer Intern Program
- Easton Future Vision Fellows
- MORPC Night at the Clippers
- Upcoming Events
 - Trains, Planes & Flying Cars – Tuesday, August 31
 - The Future of Central Ohio Airports – Thursday, September 16
 - Regional Collaboration Southwest – Thursday, September 21
- Membership Visits

William Murdock commended Eileen Leuby for her work on the intern program. The Executive Committee gave Ms. Leuby a round of applause.

Quarterly Financial Statements – Shawn Hufstedler

Shawn Hufstedler reviewed the [June 2021 Financial Report](#) highlighting:

- Strong cash position of 50 days.
- Operating income loss. The biggest part of the loss is due to revenue recognized in 2020 and spent in 2021. The loss of \$231,000 in weatherization to date is due to the struggle to get sufficient contractor crews. The Residential Services Team is working hard to get more contractor assistance.
- Members dues are under budget by almost \$18,000.

- Fringe and indirect rates are unfavorable by relatively small amounts.
- Expenses are well within appropriations.
- Operating cash on hand is over \$2.5 million and the operating reserve investment is over \$1.2 million together equating about 72 days of expenditures. That's within our 60-90 day targeted range in the Operating Reserve Policy.

Mr. Hufstedler was asked about the trend of the Operating Reserve. This is the highest amount we've had in the reserve. It is trending up. The Executive Committee asked that the Reserve and Investment Advisory Committee revisit the reserve policy highlighting the growth of the budget and organization in terms of the 60-90 target. The Reserve and Investment Advisory Committee meets regularly and will re-evaluate the current reserve policy at their next meeting.

Draft Commission Agenda

The Executive Committee reviewed the draft August 12, 2021 Commission Meeting Agenda.

Chair Janas announced the Executive Committee and Commission meetings will follow the CDC guidance on masks and offer people the opportunity to wear masks at the meetings. Chair Janas thanked members of the Executive Committee for wearing masks at today's meeting.

Rory McGuinness gave kudos to the entire MORPC Team and members on the City of Columbus and ODOT being awarded an INFRA grant for the Columbus Crossroads project. Mr. McGuinness was thankful for the widespread support which was a key factor in the award.

William Murdock announced this is Aaron Schill's last Executive Committee meeting. Mr. Murdock is proud of the legacy Mr. Schill is leaving. Mr. Schill shared it was a difficult decision. He and his fiancé are getting married and moving to Portland. They will miss Columbus. Mr. Schill will serve in a limited role providing support in broadband. Chair Janas congratulated Mr. Schill.

The meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

Chris Amorose Groomes, Secretary
Executive Committee