

Meramec Regional Planning Commission
Minutes
September 12, 2024

Call to Order

Chairman Mary Heywood called the Sept. 12, 2024, meeting of the Meramec Regional Planning Commission to order at 7:39 p.m. The meeting was conducted via Zoom and in-person.

Welcome

Vice Chairman Griffin welcomed everyone to the meeting. Board members participating in person were Steve Black, Jason Ward, Gary Larson, John Smith, Vick Stratman, Steve Vogt, Darryl Griffin, Joey Auxier, Dawn Bell, Kent Bagnall, Sean Wilson, Matt McCarter, John Money, Jan Haviland, Shange Anselm, Taisia Gordon and Mary Heywood. MRPC staff members participating in person were Bonnie Prigge, Tammy Snodgrass, Linda Loughridge, Caitlin Jones and Linda Carroll. MRPC staff members Anne Freand and Donald Keeney participated via Zoom. Participating via Zoom was Stefan Herron with the Missouri Department of Economic Development. Grant Wilson with Rep. Jason Smith's office participated in person.

Consent Agenda

The following consent agenda items were presented for approval:

- a. Minutes – Aug. 8, 2024
- b. Local Review
 - 1. Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Jefferson City, MO
66.468 – Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
FY2024 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Capitalization Grant BIL
Supplement
Federal: \$37,421,000
State: \$7,484,200
Total: \$44,905,200

- c. State Review
None.

The Office of Administration issues the Missouri Federal Assistance Clearinghouse grant reviews weekly. Staff is sharing reports in between meetings with board members. If you have questions about grants listed, you can call MRPC staff, or the Office of Administration as listed on the reports.

- d. Contracts

- Missouri Office of Homeland Security

- On Aug. 23, 2024, Region I HSOC reviewed and selected the following projects for funding. The HSOC officially recommends this funding allocation and requests MRPC's concurrence. With MRPC's approval, permission is requested for MRPC's chairman and/or executive director to enter into a grant agreement with Office of Homeland Security for the FY24 Region I HSOC grants and sign all necessary paperwork. Permission is also requested for MRPC's chairman and/or executive director to allocate Region I HSOC grant funds based on the recommendations from the Region I HSOC board and to sign the necessary paperwork to enter into subaward agreements with grant recipients.

Organization	Title	Requested Funds	Score	Awarded	Requested Items	Voter Administrative Review Comments
Meramec Regional Planning Commission	2024 SHSP Region I Planning and Training	\$ 15,000.00	47.25	\$ 15,000.00	Planning & Training	fully funded
Rolla Fire and Rescue, City of Rolla	2024 All Hazard Response Team	\$ 39,712.57	44.67	\$ 29,944.26	1 multirae monitor; decon PPE; decon supplies; detection supplies; CBRNE supplies	remove 2 level A suits, remove 1 chlorine kit, remove all calibration gas for gas meters, remove all detector paper include \$51.97 remaining funds
Rolla Fire and Rescue, City of Rolla	2024 Search and Rescue	\$ 11,023.80	44.67	\$ 10,028.80	4 rescue skids; 6 dry suits; 5 ropes; 5 carabiners; 10 rope bags; 4 helmets	remove 1 dry suit
Waynesville, Police Department	FY 2024 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) Region I	\$ 5,976.00	44.00	\$ 5,976.00	6 wireless microphones; installation	fully funded
Rolla Fire and Rescue, City of Rolla	FY-2024 Command Post & Communications	\$ 8,220.00	42.33	\$ 8,220.00	Subscriber services	fully funded
Pulaski County, Emergency Management Agency	RHSOC Region I 2024 Grant	\$ 25,600.00	31.33	\$ -	2 light towers	withdrawn
Requested Total:		\$ 105,532.37		\$ 69,169.06		
Estimated Award:		\$ 69,169.06		\$ -		

MRPC	2024 SHSP Region I Workplan	\$ 25,000.00		\$ 25,000.00	WorkPlan Activities	
MRPC	2024 SHSP Region I Management and Administration	\$ 3,640.48		\$ 3,640.48	M&A Activities	

- Gasconade Valley Enterprise Zone (GVEZ)

Permission is requested for MRPC's chairman/executive director to sign a contract addendum with GVEZ for cost overruns for fiscal year running July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

- Ozark Rivers Solid Waste Management District

Request permission for staff to apply for and accept grant awards from the ORSWMD to fund solid waste programs: illegal dump cleanups; special collections for tires, white goods and electronics; community funds for mini-grants; environmental education; and HHW collection sites in St. Robert and Rolla, and for MRPC's chairman and/or executive director to sign any necessary documents.

- Meramec Local Emergency Planning District (MLEPD)

Permission is requested for MRPC's chairman/executive director to sign a contract addendum with MLEPD for cost overruns for fiscal year running July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

- Meramec Regional Planning Commission

As the contract amount was under the \$3,000 threshold, Bonnie Prigge, MRPC Executive Director, has signed technical assistance contracts – as part of the membership dues renewal – with:

City of Chamois	City of Steelville
City of Irondale	City of Westphalia
City of Meta	Gasconade County
City of Morrison	Maries County
City of Owensville	Washington County
City of St. James	

Presiding Commissioner Joey Auxier made a motion to approve the consent agenda with noted additions; Commissioner John Money seconded. The motion carried.

Presentation: Missouri’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, Stefan Herron, Strategy and Policy Analyst – Strategy and Performance Division, Missouri Department of Economic Development

Mr. Herron provided a summary of the state’s CEDS process, the public input the state has received through workshops around the state and information on the industry cluster study that is underway. He shared information on how the state’s planning efforts align with the Regional Planning (RPC) CEDS process, and what to expect going forward.

Mr. Herron reported that for the statewide CEDS, the DED knows it’s important to help drive federal funding into local communities. These funds are what the regions and local communities use to leverage their regional CEDS programs, he said.

Applications for funding are very competitive and he said one of the best ways to make sure an application is competitive is to ensure there is a statewide strategy in place that is built off of local and regional strategies. Local communities will be able to utilize the statewide strategies when applying for federal funds. Mr. Herron said the DED is looking to improve programs and policies by reaching out to local businesses and local communities for their input on ideas for improvement. He added that part of the DED’s strategy is to promote bold economic ideas, improve on its efforts and be proactive rather than reactive to issues in economic development.

Mr. Herron reported the statewide CEDS will be from 2025 to 2030, which will be a year later than any regional CEDS. He said he feels it is still a positive as it will allow the DED to look at all regional plans before releasing theirs.

He informed that board the last update to the statewide CEDS was in 2011 with goals of streamlining Missouri’s workforce development efforts and modernizing the state’s business incentives. In 2011, Missouri didn’t have a branded workforce development initiative and groundwork was laid for Missouri One Start. Two years later, Missouri Works, a combination of four different programs, was started and is still in use today, said Mr. Herron.

Two years ago, the state began work on updating its CEDS and identified three focus areas and developed action plans for each. Those areas and plans are:

- Focus Area 1 - Gather data and research
 - Conduct state comparisons, regional DEDS analysis, skills assessment, industry cluster assessment, working teams, economic background and strategic plan assessment.
- Focus Area 2 - Engage stakeholders
 - Held eight workshops throughout the state where attendees were asked what the state could do to better support local industries.

- Focus Area 3 - Develop strategic options
 - Four teams were developed: business development, community infrastructure, innovation and talent.

Mr. Herron informed board members the department is currently putting together those working teams. Once all of the research has been analyzed, it will be provided to the working teams so they can begin building strategic options based on the strategies that were identified. Stakeholder engagement will continue into next year, he said. Anyone wanting more information on the presentations that have been held and the process moving forward can go to <https://ded.mo.gov/ceds>.

Bonnie Prigge, Executive Director, informed board members that she had a copy of Mr. Herron's presentation and would share it with everyone. She thanked Mr. Herron for his presentation on Missouri's CEDS update.

Presentation: MRPC's CEDS, Anne Freand, Planning Manager

Ms. Freand reported that MRPC's CEDS is wrapping up. The 30-day public comment period ended on Sept. 7 and some of the comments received have been incorporated into the document.

Board members were provided with a copy of the "Strategies and Action Plan," which she pulled from the full CEDS. She mentioned there would likely be some additional minor edits but added that the biggest change from the August meeting to today is the addition of some of the action items and performance measures, as well as some changes to the goals, the objectives and strategies. Ms. Freand provide a summary of the four goals listed in the "Strategies and Action Plan."

- Goal 1: Economic Development – To seek expansion of the regional economy through diversified business growth.
 - Objectives – To retain, establish and attract emerging business through strategic initiatives and a skilled talented workforce.
 - She said the committee also voted to focus on unique opportunities to sustain, diversify and expand employment and investment in the region using the region's natural resources and assets, and then to promote and advocate for local governments of the region as well.
- Goal 2: Infrastructure – To maintain, modernize and expand infrastructure to make the region more competitive for economic development.
 - Objectives – To maintain awareness of infrastructure needs within the region, modernize infrastructure to improve the efficiency and reliability and to enhance economic development and public well-being, and to expand the capacity and reach of infrastructure to meet the growing needs of the region.
- Goal 3: Healthy Communities – To promote revitalized healthy, safe and resilient communities.
 - This goal has the widest reach of all goals, said Ms. Freand. Goals cover anything from health care, the physical health of the community and addressing the needs of the in-house population. Goals also cover assisting communities with planning activities, placemaking and childcare. It's about making sure that people want to move to our communities and then ensuring it's a place where they want to stay.
- Goal 4: Housing – To expand and diversify the local housing supply to provide safe, equitable and affordable housing for all residents of the Meramec Region.
 - Objectives - Focus on engaging local stakeholders and refining goals for the regional housing, identify funding opportunities and incentives for residential infrastructure and renovation of existing housing, to expand the availability of

developable land for residential development and to increase availability of affordable housing units within the region.

Anne reported that the goal of the CEDS is to cover all of the needs as identified in the region, those that are currently in progress and those that may come up within the next five years. She said the CEDS acts as that strategic plan to make sure that we can have a planning document in place that can be used to show needs in the region when applying for funding.

She said the version she shared is an updated, partial version of the document. The full document will be available on-line. The planning committee did vote to recommend the full board approve the CEDS.

Commissioner Steve Vogt made a motion to approve submission of the CEDS to the EDA; Commissioner Shane Anselm seconded. The motion carried.

Ms. Prigge thanked the commissioners who were involved in the CEDS process for their assistance as well as Ms. Freand for her work on it. She also mentioned that Finn Meggitt, who interned with MRPC over the summer, did a lot of the data mining and analysis included in the report, and MRPC was glad to have him do that.

Update from State and Federal Legislators:

Grant Wilson with Rep. Jason Smith's office:

Mr. Wilson reported that Ms. Prigge had sent him an email expressing concern about some of the actions taken by the postal service that were unacceptable with regard to the delivery of mail in rural areas, including areas within the Meramec Region. He mentioned that Congressman Smith, along with Congressman Mark Alford and Congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer, have called on the inspector general of the postal service to audit the sorting and distribution center in Hazelwood to determine the cause of mail being delayed in communities here in rural Missouri. Mr. Wilson said the letter sent by the Congressman stressed the toll on residents who receive their Social Security checks by mail, veterans who receive their benefits by mail, as well as businesses that receive their products through the mail. He said holding the postal service accountable for its actions is a priority of the Congressman. The Congressman also called on the postal service to provide a plan on how they will address the mail service issues in rural Missouri.

Mr. Wilson also provided an update on the following bills that passed out of the Ways and Means Committee:

- HR190 – The Saving Gig Economy Taxpayers Act – Under the American Rescue Plan Act, taxpayers whose transactions exceeded \$600 were required to report that income to the IRS who would in turn send them a 1099. For example, if someone sold furniture or concert tickets and the amount exceeded \$600, that would have to be reported to the IRS. Under HR190, taxpayers only need to report to the IRS if the amount exceeds \$20,000 or 200 transactions.
- HR9461 – USA Workforce Investment Act – This act provides tax credits to those who donate to charitable organizations and those that provide workforce development and training. Some of those could include non-profit organizations, community colleges, community organizations and training institutions that are promoting workforce development.
- HR1157 – Countering the Peoples's Republic of China Malign Influence Funding Authorization Act of 2024 – This act authorizes activities to counter the malign influence of China and Chinese Communist Party.

- HR9456 – Protecting American Agriculture from Foreign Adversaries – This act requires the committee on foreign investment to investigate land transactions with foreign countries of concern. Those countries could include North Korea, China and Russia.
- HR1398 – Protect America’s Innovation and Economic Security from the CCP Act of 2024 – In 2022, the Department of Justice ended a program named the China Initiative. This bill reestablishes and renames it the CCP Initiative to counter threats to the United States, curb spying by the CCP on U.S. intellectual property and academic institutions and identify those who engage in undermining U.S. security and protect U.S. infrastructure.
- HR7980 - End Chinese Dominance of Electric Vehicles in America Act of 2024 – It mandates that electric vehicles not be fitted with battery components made in China. Mr. Wilson reported that in speech on the House floor today, Congressman Smith stated the U.S. should be investing in its own resources and not be relying on countries that are a direct threat to the U.S.

Chairman Heywood asked about HR 82 the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023. Mr. Wilson said the Ways and Means Committee has held numerous hearings on the topic, but he didn’t have any updates. The problem he’s been hearing from local residents is that if you are in the teaching profession and your spouse is on social security and your spouse dies, you don’t get the spousal benefits and survivor benefits because you’re on teacher retirement. Mr. Wilson said the policeman and firefighters aren’t able to receive certain Social Security benefits either. He said he would pass the concern to the Congressman for his awareness and added he’s been hearing these same concerns from others.

Commissioner Steve Smyth asked what Congressman Smith expects to happen on the postal issue. Mr. Wilson said the Congressman has called on the inspector general to conduct a direct audit on the distribution facility. Much of the mail coming to residents in the Meramec Region appears to come though the Hazelwood distribution facility. If no further action takes place, he said he’s sure that the Congressman and other members of Congress will create a plan to address the issue.

Ms. Prigge reported the email she shared with Mr. Wilson said there was a plan being circulated within the postal service that priority was going to be given to those locations in X number of miles from the processing hub, which would delay the delivery of outstate mail. The concern is that if this plan moves forward, it will push out the delivery time frame for rural areas even further.

Mr. Wilson said it is his hope that the inspector general will be much more responsive to this issue given it is election time. He asked if this was currently happening or if it was proposed.

Ms. Prigge said the article she read said it was proposed. It would speed up delivery to communities withing a certain proximity of distribution hubs, but it would slow down delivery into the outstate areas.

Mr. Wilson said in addition to Congressman Smith pushing hard on the issue, Congressman Graves of Northern Missouri and Congressmen Blaine Luetkemeyer and Mark Alford would also be pushing hard for a solution.

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC): Bonnie Prigge
Bonnie reported on transportation activities as follows:

She informed the board that the county level transportation meetings have been scheduled and provided a copy of the schedule to board members. Cities, TAC members, other stakeholders and multimodal entities will be invited to participate in those meetings. The meetings will focus on the needs in both the county and state highway system as well as multimodal needs. After gathering information from eight counties, that information will then be brought to the TAC.

The newly formed multi-modal advisory committee will handle multi-modal needs. The first meeting for this group will be Sept. 20. Invited to this first meeting are stakeholders that MoDOT helped identify as well as stakeholders identified by various board members. She said MRPC would like to see representation from all eight counties and are looking at one rail seat, one port, four transit, four bike/ped and four airport representatives. Once the group solidifies, it will be brought before the MRPC board for approval.

She said there will be a TAC committee in October but no MRPC meeting.

Anne Freand asked that anyone with contacts for airports in their area, send her an email. Commissioners T.R. Dudley and Dawn Bell have provided information for airports in their area.

External Relations Committee: Shane Anselm, chair
Commissioner Anselm reported on External Relations activities as follows:

Chairman Anselm reported that Annual Dinner invitations have been sent out and reservations are due by Sept. 26. He noted that on the invitation, dinner attendees can RSVP for the tour of the Haviland Corporation which will begin at 4:45 p.m.

As Bonnie said, there will be no MRPC board meeting in October, but there will be a TAC meeting. If something arises and an MRPC meeting is needed, it will be a very short meeting with no committee meetings or meal.

He reminded board members that items are needed for the silent auction and door prizes. If anyone plans to donate items, please let staff know. Also, if you plan on bringing your donation the night of the dinner, please let staff know prior to the event so they can plan for it.

Staff presented one nominee for the open at-large for lending position, Steve Smyth. Although he is not currently in lending, he has a very diverse background. Tammy Snodgrass said he has met with Bonnie, and he said he would visit with bankers to get their input and bring it back to the board. Chairman Anselm reported the committee recommends appointing Steve Smyth as the at-large for lending representative.

Presiding Commissioner Darryl Griffin made a motion to appoint Steve Smyth as the at-large for lending representative; Commissioner Jason Ward seconded. The motion carried.

The committee reviewed the state priority survey and copies were handed out at the start of this meeting. The issues listed on the survey are from last year. Once all of the submissions are compiled, it will be sent out again for prioritization. Surveys need be turned in by Oct. 30. After the prioritization process, the final document will be brought to the full board for approval. Once approved, it will be distributed to our legislators when MRPC meets with them in January at the Capitol. The date for the visit has been set as Jan. 21 with a backup date of Jan. 28.

Staff provided a handout on legislative updates.

Chairman Anselm reported that with being time left, Caitlin Jones provided information on improvements that have been made to the MRPC website. New tabs have been added along with a lot of new information. Information can be narrowed down by county or city, and you can also find information on things like grant opportunities and copies of various reports on the site as well, he said. He encouraged members to check out the website.

Operations Committee: Jan Haviland, chair

Commissioner Haviland reported on operations activities as follows:

The committee reviewed MRPC/MRB and MRPC/MRDC-RLF and IRP program financial statements for the period ended Aug. 31, 2024.

Commissioner Jan Haviland made a motion to approve the financials for the period ending Aug. 31, 2024; Sean Wilson seconded. The motion carried.

A proposed EDA RLF loan modification request and propose procurement policy revision were tabled.

Planning Committee: Joey Auxier, chair

Presiding Commissioner Auxier reported on planning activities as follows:

Ms. Freand provided copies of the final edited CEDs to committee members.

Kathryn Hawes, who works in MRPC's Environmental Department, reviewed household hazardous waste and discussed disposal and recycling options in the region. Ms. Hawes talked about how to recycle batteries, oil waste, oil-based paints and pool chemicals, which are all hazardous waste. In the Meramec Region, there are two locations that accept household hazardous waste for recycling. One is the St. Robert Transfer Station and the other is the Rolla Recycling Center. Latex paint can be left to dry up and then thrown in with regular trash. Staff touched on the multimodal transportation advisory committee that is being formed. Commissioner Jan Haviland asked about disposing of fluorescent lights. Tammy Snodgrass said she would get information for the disposal of commercial lights.

Housing Board: Tim Schulte, chairman

No report was given.

Environmental: Tammy Snodgrass, Assistant Executive Director/Environmental Programs Manager

Ms. Snodgrass updated the committee on the Missouri Emergency Response Commission (MERC) Tier II sunset issue. She said it did not pass session. A meeting was held at MRPC with participants from area LEPCs, fire and police departments and legislators. She said there was a good turnout with good discussions with the legislators, including Rep. Tim Taylor, bill sponsor, who drove down from the northern part of the state.

She said the discussion provided a lot of good ideas, including planning an education awareness session with legislators at the Capitol. Representatives Tara Peters and Bennie Cook offered to assist in arranging the meeting. A fact sheet was also created. Ms. Snodgrass informed board members that a short video would be created, and she planned to loop in other LEPCs and LEPCs across the state to push the issue hard this year. She said the legislators weren't against the fees, it just couldn't get through the Senate. As it stands, the MLEPD will have a year with no funds, she said.

A meeting is planned with SEMA/MERC leadership to see how they plan to approach this legislative session. Those at the MRPC discussion suggested that the proposed legislation have no sunset going in. If that was an issue, then negotiate a sunset date or a number of years.

Another issue is that the Missouri Emergency Response Commission (MERC) is still operating under the \$1 million cap that was established in 1993 when the legislation was first created, said

Ms. Prigge. She explained that what this means is that if they receive more than that \$1 million in Tier II funds, they have to return to industry anything over that. MERC would like to see the cap raised to \$2 million as it would take a lot of time and effort to divide the excess funds and send it back to the various entities. Ms. Prigge said the first step is to see what SEMA is considering putting in the legislation and then trying to work with them, sharing the information that Representatives Tim Taylor, Bennie Cook, Bill Harwick and Tara Peters shared with MRPC during the recent meeting.

She said the lack of funding is a statewide issue. There were representatives from the Hannibal Fire Department and from the Mid America Regional Council at Kansas City, who drove down for the meeting as well as representatives from Laclede County.

Ms. Prigge reported that the LEPDs and LEPCs will have a year without funding and the group discussed asking the counties to help. She said it really is a county responsibility and added that even if legislation passes in 2025, it would be 2026 before there would be any money.

A handout was provided.

Business Loans: Linda Loughridge, Fiscal Officer

Ms. Loughridge reported the next full board meeting for MRDC is scheduled for Oct. 9, 2024, at noon. This will be the board's annual meeting.

She informed board members that staff are working to close the Beemis loan.

Ms. Loughridge said the department will be looking at some marketing efforts. She said they plan to reach out to all of the banks in the region and get as many as possible to participate. Meetings will be held via Zoom. She said the meetings will be mostly an introduction to staff and what MRPC can do for them such as mitigating risk on higher fixed projects.

Ms. Loughridge also provided the following information on rates and amount available for relending:

- SBA rates for 25 and 20 year loans are at 4.45% and 10 year loan rates are at 4.15%.
- Between all assets there is about \$912,880 available for relending.
- SBA loan portfolio is about \$5.3 million.

Anyone interested in loans can contact Bobbie Bailey or myself for assistance.

Meramec Community Enhancement Corporation (MCEC): Gary Larson

No report was given.

Meramec Regional Community Foundation (MRCF): Bonnie Prigge

Ms. Prigge informed board members the next meeting would be Sept. 17 and Luge Hardman and Jax Wilburn will be joining the meeting to talk about the Route 66 Centennial Committee and what the state is planning for the celebration. They will also touch on available sponsorships and projects along Route 66.

She reported the main focus of the meeting would be on how to grow scholarships and filling board vacancies. Nominees are being accepted and will be discussed at the Sept. 17 meeting. Ms. Prigge said recommendations had been received from Phelps and Washington counties, but the group is still looking for representatives from Crawford and Dent counties. She asked for any

recommendations be turned in by Sept. 17 so the committee can review the recommendations and then reach out to those individuals to see if they would be interested in serving on the committee.

Director's Report

Ms. Prigge reported that listening sessions for the Military Installation Resiliency Review (MIRR) will be held in Pulaski County next week, with a review from Benchmark Planning, the consultant on the project. She said a kickoff meeting will be held on Monday with the technical assistance committee, followed by one-on-one conversations with stakeholders from Fort Leonard Wood and around the four-county area of Pulaski, Phelps, Laclede and Texas.

She mentioned she and Caitlin Jones would be attending the Blueprint Conference Sept. 24-26 in Columbia, MO. The conference is in partnership with MoDOT and looks at ways to reduce fatalities on our roadways.

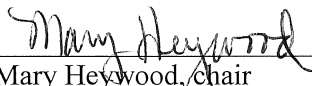
Ms. Prigge said she had talked to several board members about having a housing discussion tonight to talk about a PRO housing grant that is available through HUD. The grant is really wide open as to what you can do with it, and we think it would be a good opportunity to study the housing issue we have in the region. She said it includes implementation dollars that would allow setting up loan programs and housing development.

She said demolition and renovation projects could be funded with this grant. Ms. Prigge said as staff got deeper into the grant application, it was decided there wasn't enough time to complete a well thought out application by the Oct. 18 deadline. She said the decision was made to postpone applying for this round of funding and then take another look after the completion of some bigger projects, including the annual dinner. Ms. Prigge said part of the application process is engaging stakeholders and having those conversations and crafting a strategy that could help development. She said a meeting would be scheduled with all members being invited to participate in a discussion about housing needs across the region.

Ms. Prigge said the grant had a six-year time frame with a minimum funding amount of \$1 million and a maximum of \$7 million. More information to follow.

Adjourn

Joey Auxier made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. Jason Ward seconded the motion. The motion carried.



Mary Heywood, chair

Attest 