

Meramec Regional Planning Commission – REVISED
Minutes
June 12, 2025

Call to Order

Chair Darryl Griffin called the June 12, 2025, meeting of the Meramec Regional Planning Commission to order at 7:32 p.m. The meeting was conducted in person and via Zoom.

Welcome

Chair Heywood welcomed everyone to the meeting. Board members participating in person were Steve Black, Ray Mortimeyer, Shawn Bolerjack, John Smith, Tim Schulte, Duane Kraettli, Vic Stratman, Steve Vogt, Steve, Smyth, Darryl Griffin, Joey Auxier, Tom Coots, Kent Bagnall, Sean Wilson, Shane Anselm, Mary Heywood. MRPC board members participating via Zoom Earl Brown, John Casey, Taisia Gordon, Patricia Heaney and Jason Ward. MRPC staff members participating in person were Bonnie Prigge, Tammy Snodgrass, Linda Loughridge, Caitlin Jones, Linda Carroll and Anne Freand. Donald Keeney with MRPC participated via Zoom. Participating in person was Grant Wilson, Representative Jason Smith's office.

Consent Agenda

The following consent agenda items were presented for approval:

- a. Minutes – May 15, 2025
- b. Local Review
None.
- 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

- Gasconade Valley Enterprise Zone (GVEZ)

Permission is requested for MRPC's chairman/executive director to sign a contract amendment with GVEZ to continue providing administration and fiscal services July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

- Central District Coalition for Roadway Safety/MODOT

Permission is requested for MRPC's chairman and/or executive director to submit an application to the Central District Coalition for Roadway Safety/MODOT for activities that discourage distracted/impaired driving, which includes outreach and education at community/school events and meetings, Project Graduation/Docudrama mini-grants, Buckle Buddy presentations, etc. and to sign all documents associated with this contract, should it be awarded.

- Gasconade County IDA

Permission is requested for approval of a contract with the Gasconade County IDA for technical assistance for the period July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, and for MRPC's chairman and/or executive director to sign all necessary documents.

- MCEC Lease Agreement

Approval is requested from the Meramec Regional Planning Commission board to extend the lease rate and the term of lease of a cargo trailer from the Meramec Community Enhancement Corporation

for an additional year. All other covenants contained in the original lease, dated Sept. 14, 2010, remain in full force.

- Missouri Dept. of Transportation

Permission is requested for the chair/executive director to enter into a grant contract with MODOT for transportation planning activities outlined in the MRPC Transportation Work Plan for July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, and to sign all necessary documents.

- City of Newburg, MO

Permission is requested for MRPC's chairman and/or executive director to enter into a technical assistance contract for building inspection services for a building located at 365 Main St., Newburg, MO, and for MRPC's chairman and/or executive director to sign any necessary documents.

Presiding Commissioner Vic Stratman made a motion to approve the consent agenda; Commissioner Steve Vogt seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Chair Darryl Griffin presented Mary Heywood, retiring MRPC chair, with a plaque honoring her for her two years of service as chair of the MRPC board.

The MRB meeting, originally scheduled to start after the MRPC meeting, was moved and held prior to the MRPC meeting.

Presentation: MRPC Rural Opioid Initiatives, Anne Freand MRPC Planning Manager

Anne Freand presented a summary of the completed opioid grants and showcased the accomplishments of these grants. She reviewed the work that MRPC has done over the past seven years related to substance misuse prevention, education and treatment for youth and adults in the region. Ms. Freand mentioned that MRPC has worked with over \$2.8 million in funding from the AmeriSource Bergen Foundation, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Department of Justice: Opioid Affected Youth Initiative.

Ms. Freand explained that opioids include illegal drugs like heroin, synthetic opioids like fentanyl, and legal pain relievers. She discussed the workforce and economic impact of opioid misuse, citing statistics on overdose deaths in Missouri and the Meramec region. She also outlined four grants MRPC had received for opioid-related work, focusing on workforce issues, youth, and adult education.

She discussed the implementation of several grants focused on opioid and substance use prevention and treatment in MRPC's eight-county region. Over seven years, the program reached over 22,000 students through drug prevention education, provided resources and training to community members and organizations, and established partnerships with over 40 agencies. Key initiatives included distributing Narcan, setting up drug take-back boxes, hosting awareness walks, and providing reentry support for individuals leaving jail. The program also trained staff in various intervention techniques and worked to improve access to medication-assisted treatment. While the grants have concluded, efforts continue to assist counties with opioid settlement fund disbursement and maintain resource lists. Future funding opportunities will be monitored, said Ms. Freand.

Updates from State and Federal Legislators:

Grant Wilson from Rep. Jason Smith's office provided an update on recent legislation that was passed. He reported that the "One Big Beautiful Bill" passed the House on May 22 and is now in the Senate. He said the Congressman is working with President Trump and Senate leaders to maintain key priorities.

Mr. Wilson mentioned a provision in the bill that would create federally funded accounts for newborns with an initial \$1,000 deposit. These accounts, which would operate tax-free, similar to Roth IRAs can receive additional contributions from families, churches, or businesses, and can be used at age 18 for education, vehicles, business startups, etc. He added that some business leaders have pledged to contribute to employees' children's accounts.

He also mentioned the following bills that have passed:

- **HR 2483:** Reauthorizes funding for opioid use disorder treatment, first responders, trauma programs, and support for pregnant and postpartum women.
- **Education/Workforce Bill:** Aims to strengthen ties between trade/tech schools and businesses to help students enter the workforce more easily.
- **Disability Employment Bill:** Requires the Small Business Administration to promote employment for individuals with disabilities and support their entrepreneurial efforts.

Transportation Advisory Committee: Anne Freand

Ms. Freand provided an update on transportation matters discussed at the TAC meeting which was held just prior to the MRPC meeting. She reported that TAP applications are due soon. The FY26 MoDOT work plan, covering various transportation-related activities, was approved by the TAC and she asked for board approval.

Mayor Sean Wilson made a motion to approve the FY26 MoDOT work plan; Presiding Commissioner Joey Auxier seconded the motion. The motion carried.

She reported that a nominating committee was formed to discuss committee officers at the August meeting. Ms. Freand also mentioned updates to the Regional Transportation Plan, a review of the high priority and unfunded needs list, and an upcoming road safety audit which will be conducted at the intersection of Highway DD and U in Osage County. Fatality statistics for different types of road incidents was provided by Bonnie Prigge. Ms. Freand provided information on upcoming events and resources related to transportation safety. She concluded by discussing MoDOT updates, including the draft STIP, FLAP grants, and the I-44 study.

External Relations Committee: Shane Anselm, chair

Commissioner Anselm reported on External Relations activities as follows:

The committee discussed the need to fill several at-large commissioner positions, seniors, tourism and the underrepresented. Tai Kimes, who was serving as the underrepresented, has moved out of the region and is no longer eligible to serve on the board. The committee also discussed moving Steve Smyth from the lending position into the for-profit position in Osage County as Rich Eisterhold is retiring. This opens up the lending position, so there are four vacancies.

Presiding Commissioner Joey Auxier made a motion to move Steve Smyth to the for-profit Osage County position; Commissioner Steve Vogt seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Commissioner Anselm reported the committee chose a menu for the annual dinner and recommended that the ticket price be set at \$40.

Presiding Commissioner Joey Auxier made a motion to set the ticket price for the annual dinner at \$40; Mayor Sean Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Operations Committee: Sean Wilson

Mayor Sean Wilson reported on operations activities as follows:

The committee reviewed MRPC/MRB and MRPC/MRDC-RLF and IRP program financial statements for the period ended May 31, 2025.

Mayor Wilson made a motion to approve the financials for the period ending May 31, 2025; Presiding Commissioner Vic Stratman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Linda Loughridge, MRPC Fiscal Officer, presented the FY25-26 budget which included revenues of \$2.7 million and expenses of nearly \$2.7 million, resulting in a projected surplus of \$19,950. She outlined the budget process

timeline and discussed funding sources, with federal projects comprising 63% of revenues, local contracts 27%, and local dues 5%. Ms. Loughridge emphasized the importance of local dues for matching grants and research and development. She mentioned that budget included a 3% merit increase for staff, while overall salaries decreased due to attrition. She also highlighted new and continuing programs, changes in department budgets, and key investments in contract services, equipment, and staff development.

Linda Loughridge, MRPC Fiscal Officer, discussed the FY25-26 draft budget for MRPC/MRB and MRPC/MRDC-RLF.

Mayor Sean Wilson made a motion to approve the FY25-26 draft budget; Commissioner Jason Ward seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mayor Wilson reported that the committee reviewed a Revolving Loan Fund loan notification for CS pallet who is in good standing.

Mayor Wilson made a motion to approve the loan modification request; Commissioner Jason Ward seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Planning Committee: Joey Auxier, chair

Presiding Commissioner Auxier reported on planning activities as follows:

Presiding Commissioner Auxier reported that the committee discussed potential dates, locations and planning activities for the FY26 MRPC Board Retreat and Training. They discussed the need for a venue with multiple rooms for breakout sessions.

Staff provided an overview of the 604b grant that DNR awarded to MRPC for the development and implementation of a source water protection plan for Crawford County.

Housing Advisory Board: Tim Schulte, chair

Presiding Commissioner Schulte reported the board approved the May financials and the FY25-26 budget. Donald Keeney, Housing Manager, reported on the annual utility allowance and reviewed updates to the PHA administrative plan. The board approved the plan updates.

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

Ms. Snodgrass reported that there will be special collection on Saturday, June 14 at Brewer Science in Rolla. A flyer was provided.

A handout of environmental activities was provided.

Business Loans: Linda Loughridge, Fiscal Officer

Linda Loughridge reported that the decertification of MRDC has been completed. She added that the IRP loan has been paid off, with the excess funds covering the deficit that MRDC is unable to pay for work related to the SBA 504 program. Ms. Loughridge reported there is approximately \$631,657 in RLF funds available for relending.

Meramec Community Enhancement Corporation (MCEC): Vic Stratman

No report was given.

Meramec Regional Community Foundation (MRCF): Bonnie Prigge

Ms. Prigge reported there were eight applications submitted to the Phelps County Community Fund for disaster assistance related to the recent tornado in Rolla. She said there was approximately \$105,000 to distribute and that the MRCF and Phelps County Community Fund boards would meet later this month to make awards.

Chairman's Report

Presiding Commissioner Darryl Griffin reported that the MRPC Executive Committee met with Bonnie Prigge prior to the TAC meeting to conduct her annual performance evaluation. He said the results were overwhelmingly good, and the committee recommended she be given a 3% raise.

Mayor Wilson made a motion to approve the raise; Commissioner Shane Anselm seconded the motion. The carried.

Director's Report

Ms. Prigge shared that SB81, which extends TIER II funding, passed with no gap in funding.

She also mentioned that MRPC has a copier, with toner, for sale and there will be some computers for sale soon.

Ms. Prigge reported that there was a lot of interest from communities wanting to work with Dr. Schuler's S&T students. Waynesville was selected for this fall, with St. Robert scheduled for Spring 2026 and Crocker for Fall 2026.


She also reported that MRPC's EDA planning grant has been awarded and thanked Grant Wilson for his help.

Adjourn

Presiding Commissioner Joey Auxier a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Mayor Sean Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.



Darryl Griffin, chair



Attest

