



## **Meeting of the Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committee (“LCMAC”) Region A**

**Date/Time:** August 6, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.

**Place:** VIA CONFERENCE CALL NUMBER: 1 646 741 5293  
PARTICIPANT CODE: 111 275 9207 Passcode: 386717

**Members Present:** Rick Caraviello, Chair - Medford  
Gail Hackett, Boston  
John Cotter, Cambridge  
John DePriest, Chelsea  
Keith Slattery, Everett  
Brad Rawson, Somerville  
Norm Abbott, MAPC  
Vincent Panzini, Chamber of Commerce  
David Bancroft, Regional Economic Deve.

**Others Present:** Eric Demas, Subcommittee Member  
Jacqui Krum, Encore  
Juliana Catanzariti, Encore  
Joseph Delaney, MGC  
Mary Thurlow, MGC

### **Call to Order**

Chair Caraviello called the Region A Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committee (“Committee”) meeting to order. Mary Thurlow did a rollcall.

### **Approval of minutes**

The Chair then proposed approving the minutes from the committee meetings of September 19, 2023, and October 17, 2023, subject to correction for typographic errors and other nonmaterial matters. The Chair moved the motion which was seconded by David Bancroft. The minutes were unanimously approved by members: Gail Hackett, David Bancroft, Richard Caraviello, John Cotter, John DePriest, Vin Panzini, Kether Slattery, Brad Rawson and Norman Abbott (abstained).

### **Summary of Community Mitigation Fund FY2025**

Mr. Delaney then began updating the Committee on the results of the FY 2025 Grant cycle and highlighted the success of the new Block Grant program. He recognized that selection of projects on addressing a casino related impact is still difficult. There were a few projects that had anti-aid issues and could not be funded. We are going to provide more guidance on these



issues in the upcoming year. Agawam, Hampden and North Attleboro did not come in for grants.

Mr. Delaney provided detail as to the State Budget process and explained how the state budget has incorporated the anticipated funding from the Community Mitigation Fund so that no additional funding will be added to the fund for fiscal year 2025. What that means is that after the recent \$18.3 million in awards there is approximately \$30 million left in the account which is sufficient to keep the program going at its current level. Starting at the beginning of FY 2026 money should start flowing back into the fund. Mr. Delaney noted that we don't know what will happen next year, but the expectation is that the funds will start to flow back into the CMF in FY 2026. There was discussion about whether this could happen next. Mr. Abbott noted that Section 194 of the final budget provides more detail.

**Discussion continued FY 2026 Community Mitigation Fund Policy Issues** (based on memo provided.)

1. **How much money should be allocated for the FY 2026 CMF?** Mr. Delaney suggested leaving the current program as it was this past year. He asked for comments. Mr. Panzini was in favor of spending as much as possible this year. He understood why the legislature did what they did in putting the CMF into the general budget. Members unanimously approved leaving the program as it is for this year.
2. **Should funds be transferred from Region A to Region B?** Mr. Delaney explained the long-standing policy of keeping the funding in each region. With the taking of funds this year, Mr. Delaney proposed transferring some of the funds from Region A to Region B to keep the balance in the regions as it had been in the past. As this is an extraordinary circumstance for this year, Mr. Delaney recommended that the Commission keep funding at the same level as last year - \$4.3 million in Region B and \$11.5 million in Region A. Region B members of the LCMAC were in favor. Mr. Panzini noted that it should be only for one year. If no money comes into the fund next year, Region B will have to lobby for more funds. Members agreed.
3. **Should the Commission make any changes to grant eligibility?** No changes were made last year to eligibility, but some eligible communities are distant from the casino and impacts resolved. Smaller impacts the further in distance from the casino. Communities are still competing for discretionary dollars. We may want to limit categories that some communities can apply. Mr. DePriest noted that if the legislature takes the fund next year it would make sense to start looking at grant eligibility, but it's a bit premature for this year. Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Slattery and Mr. Panzini, concurred. Mr. Delaney noted that applications need to be more in line with the impacts, and we will be steering communities towards that goal.
4. **Should the Commission make any changes to the distribution formula?** We are not proposing to make any changes. Some communities requested more funding in which case they used the waiver form. Mr. Panzini felt it was too soon to make changes to the formula.



5. **Should the Commission change the length of the grant term or not allow extensions of current grants?** Mr. Delaney explained that the grants are currently for four years. A change to a reduced length of grant would be done to compel people to spend funding in a timely fashion. We could shorten up the term of the grants so that towns will spend quicker, or we can take back dormant grants. Region B mentioned 3 years instead of the four years. Mr. DePriest thought 4 year was very generous. He suggested two years and allow for waivers if they really need it. Mr. Panzini noted the end of ARPA Funds and other grants which communities were trying to spend at the same time of the CMF Funds. Now those are gone cities and towns may be more able to spend the CMF funds quicker.
6. **Should the Commission be more prescriptive on what backup documentation is required?** Mr. Delaney cited the lack of scopes of work and other necessary information in the applications for the grants as an impediment to providing an expeditious review. The Commission will be more prescriptive in the Guidelines this year. We would like to see a quote, a catalogue cut, or detailed scope of work for studies with details such as location, etc. We need to know these are actual projects that have been developed and need back up documentation to ascertain that.
7. **Should the Commission make any changes to the identified project impacts?** Mr. Delaney asked members about when is an impact considered remedied. When should we re-evaluate the categories and impacts? If we start limiting what people can spend money on, we may not be able to distribute all the funding. Do the current categories make sense? Mr. DePriest noted that there may be additional impacts created by expansion of the casinos so may be premature to think about limiting.
8. **Should the Commission limit lease assistance to Hampden County Sheriff?** The CMF has funded this lease increase for the past 9 years for the Western Massachusetts Recovery & Wellness Center, a regional correctional treatment center in Ludlow. When have we mitigated the impact? Chair Caraviello feels that it is enough. Mr. Panzini thought that the push back by legislature shows that it should be line item in someone else's budget.
9. **Should the Commission establish a policy on the purchase of vehicles?** Mr. Delaney explained that there are a large number of requests for vehicles. He noted we are not a vehicle replacement program. We are not buying replacement vehicles for when communities need to retire a car. Should we limit the number each community can request? Mr. Slattery of Everett noted that a lot of wear and tear on vehicles in host community. Maybe, if proven, communities could show they use a vehicle for 25% of the time that funding for 25% of a new vehicle would be fair. Limiting the number will impact different communities. Mr. Caraviello said that the traffic never materialized to what they thought it would be. He felt evidence of use should be required. Mr. Delaney noted that we would like communities to tell us those things you really need. We want to get all the money out to the communities. Communities still have to show the connection to the casino. We will try to do some additional guidance on this when we draft the Guidelines.



### **Discussion of Next Steps:**

1. The next LCMAC meeting will be on September 24, 2024 at 10:30 a.m.
2. Members were reminded to send in their Ethics Certificates
3. Members were reminded that at the next meeting will be the vote for next year's Subcommittee representative and Chair.

With no further business, John DePriest made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Keth Slattery. Members unanimously voted to adjourn.

The Chair adjourned the meeting.

/s/Mary Thurlow  
Secretary

### **List of Documents and Other Items Used**

1. Agenda and Notice of Meeting
2. Vote on Minutes from:
  - (a) September 19, 2023
  - (b) October 17, 2023
3. Draft F/Y 2026 Community Mitigation Fund Policy Memo