

DRAFT Holyoke Community Preservation Act Committee

Minutes November 19, 2025

The meeting was held remotely in keeping with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 for Remote/Hybrid meeting signed into law March 2023.

Members Present:
Jason Ferreira, Chair/Community Representative
Sarah Larose, Vice Chair/Community Representative
Mary Moriarty, Secretary/ Conservation Commission
Michael Falcetti, Housing Representative
Rosanna Lopez, City Planning Representative,
Helene Busby, Parks and Recreation Representative
Chris Gauthier, Historic Commission Representative
Maribel Ortiz, Community Representative
Members Absent
Megan Magrath-Smith, City Council Representative
Also Present: CPA Administrator Naomi Klayman, Holyoke Media,

Chair Jay Ferreira called the meeting to order at 6:02 and took roll call.

1.Minutes: *A motion to approve the minutes from the 9/10/25 and 9/24/25 minutes was made by Ferreira and seconded by Falcetti. The motion was approved unanimously in a roll call vote.*

2.Welcome new member: Ferreira introduced Rosanna Lopez from the Planning Board. She was welcomed by all.

3.Wright's Block award update: There has been a change to the contract. There was a request to make the format of the grant into a loan. Chair Ferreira reached out to Stuart Saginor of the CPA coalition who confirmed that this is a legitimate procedure. The Mayor, The City Solicitor and the Community Development Officer all signed off on it. *A motion to allow the Wright's Block grant to be in the form of a loan was made by Falcetti and seconded by Larose. The motion passed unanimously.*

4. CPA Admin update/discussion of options. Rebecca has moved on and Naomi has stepped in to help. Ferreira envisions splitting the tasks. He suggested having an employee who completes the financial and MUNIS tracking tasks and a second employee who completes the administrative work, sets up meetings, interfaces with project applicants and sends communications. He suggested 5 hours per week for each set of responsibilities. He has been in contact with City Personnel Director Curran in regards to hiring a city employee to do the Financial/MUNIS work and then posting the other position. Busby raised the question of overtime. She pointed out that we have benefitted from the flexibility that Naomi and Amy were willing to offer, saying that there have been times when our Administrator has had to work many hours. She suggested that we could ask for the Financial/Munis Tracking position to be for 5 hours but that the Administrator position might require more time. Falcetti agreed with Busby and added, he is concerned about having a city employee who goes over the hourly limit and then union issues come into play. Moriarty asked if we could post outside of the city for the job. Falcetti mentioned a retired city employee who might be interested. Ferreira agreed with these thoughts but he said the knowledge of and experience with MUNIS is crucial. LaRose asked for a general posting. Klayman said the administrative part of the job is a remote position and can

be done by anyone. Gauthier asked how long do we have Administrator Klayman. Klayman responded that that is to be determined. Ferreira summarized that it seems like everyone is interested in a split position. He will discuss the feasibility of this with the City Personnel Director. He will develop a plan of action and present it at the next meeting.

5. List of FY26 Project applicants. There are 9 applications. Klayman sent them out to everyone. Ferreira stated that all of the applications look great. One item for future discussion is a budget line item in the Community Garden application that is for salary/wages. Ferreira asked the CPA coalition advice on this. He reports the CPA state law says that a CPA grant cannot fund salary on a city project but some CPA member cities do allow non-city projects to receive funds for personnel wages. We would have to decide. Falcetti felt strongly that we should not fund salaries or wages in any form. LaRose suggested that this project is a small one that has relied on donations of time and money and perhaps we should look into it further before deciding. Ferreira said we could look into it and take it up at another time.

6. Communication from the Historic Commission RE: Vote to table work with CPA. Ferreira reported that he received a letter from the Historic Commission saying that they would not work further with the CPAC until issues over monitoring the Historic Preservation Restrictions were resolved. He asked Gauthier to further explain the problem. Gauthier explained that the Holyoke Historic Commission holds the Preservation Restrictions and is obligated to inspect the properties annually to ensure compliance. This is the 5th year of having no help to complete this. The Historic Commission has no budget and has no means of enforcing the details of the restrictions.

Falcetti agreed that this is a legitimate issue. He also said it's a real dilemma for the volunteer members of the Historic Commission to have to make decisions on things they may not be trained in. He suggests telling applicants for Historic Preservation Projects that they must include a line item in the budget for an expert in this field to inspect and report on a yearly basis. Gauthier has spoken with the Mayor and the City Attorney regarding concerns about liability issues and the possibility of hiring someone to do these tasks. LaRose asked if this is a one-time inspection or something that is on going annually. Gauthier answered that it is on-going. She asks if that is an expense that could be quantified for the CPA to include as an expenditure. LaRose suggested CPA hire an expert for a short time to help resolve this and decide on how to move forward after that. Moriarty asked if this year's Historic Preservation grants could include a requirement that the recipient file reports of their progress and compliance? She also asked what does the CPA coalition have for information about this problem in other CPA cities? Gauthier responded that some cities ask the applicant to include a fee for these inspections in their budgets. Moriarty suggested that we include a requirement that recipients of historic preservation funds complete compliance reports. Gauthier pointed out that the Historic Commission would still have to verify and there is no one to do that. Also, some applicants make non-compliant alterations after they have finished the project. Falcetti pointed out that we could ask the applicant to include a one-time inspection when they have finished the project we funded but that is it. He felt we cannot expect to monitor it going forward. Busby asked if there is any enforcement now in our contracts? If a project is non-compliant, is there any way of getting the money back? She offered that in the case of Historic Preservation Grants, there are some projects that are visible to the public but there are others that are not

visible at all. She asks if the City Solicitor can be asked how we can enforce our restrictions. Lopez pointed out that many departments are having issues with enforcement. She suggested that we ask the Mayor's Task Force on Compliance to help out.

Ferreira asked Gauthier to forward all the Historic Preservation Restrictions that need compliance verification to the CPA Administrator. He asked Busby if she could help him look at the restrictions. Ferreira said if a recipient does not comply with the terms of their contract, they are ineligible for future CPA funds. Moriarty remembered that our Historic Preservation Restrictions do say that the recipient must follow the parameters of the restriction for "x" number of years or there is a claw back of money. Falcetti agreed, saying that compliance is required for 25 years and there is a claw back clause. Busby said this is all worth looking into. It is easier to claw back money before it is all given out but it is difficult to get it back years later. She asked if the Preservation Restrictions are registered with the registry of deeds. Ferreira said they are. Busby said that that would help inform new owners in the event a property changes ownership. She re-stated that enforcement and monitoring are important. Busby said she would not practice law here, but she will help Ferreira review the restrictions and develop questions to ask the City Solicitor. Ferreira then addressed the idea of charging the applicant for inspections, saying that the charge will become part of the application and in the end CPA funds pay for it. LaRose offered a rough prediction of costs and man-hours necessary for a monitoring program, saying it would be better to access some other resources for this like the Mayor's Task Force.

Ferreira said that the Nick's Nest Bandbox Project is the only project that will be left out due to this. He asked if Gauthier could ask the Historic Commission to lift the moratorium for this project this year. Busby expressed concern that one project would be left out. Yet she felt we do need to relieve the Historic Commission of this burden. She also said if we aren't serious about enforcement, why bother with a preservation restriction. She would like to continue this discussion to the next meeting. She appreciated that Gauthier brought the issue forward. Gauthier agreed to bring it back to the Historic Commission. Ferreira appreciated Gauthier and all the work he and the Historic Commission have done.

7. Old Business: The deadline for applications was November 7, 2025. Nine were submitted.

Term Limits for Officers: Ferreira concerned that the present officers will reach the end of their term limits and there will be no one to step forward. Discussion at a future time.

Re-instating the Treasurer position: As our finances become more complicated, it would be beneficial to have someone oversee our them, interface with City Council and report to CPA. Discussion at another time.

Next meeting Wednesday December 10 at 6 P.M.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15