

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GEORGE WASHINGTON REGIONAL COMMISSION**

August 20, 2018
The Robert C. Gibbons Conference Room
406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg Virginia

MEMBERS PRESENT AND VOTING: **Chair** – Meg Bohmke, **Stafford;** **Caroline County:** Jeff Black & Nancy Long; **Fredericksburg:** Matt Kelly & Billy Withers; **King George County:** John Jenkins; **Spotsylvania County:** Greg Benton; & **Stafford County:** Cindy Shelton

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ruby Brabo, King George County & Chris Yakabouski, Spotsylvania County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Rupert Farley, C-TAC; Dave McLaughlin, C-TAC; & Gerald Anderson, Fredericksburg

STAFF: Linda Millsaps, Michele Dooling & Kate Gibson GWRC; Paul Agnello, Nick Quint, Kari Barber & John Bentley, FAMPO; Sam Shoukas, CoC; & Diana Utz, Leigh Anderson & JoAnna Roberson, GWRideConnect

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Bohmke called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. with a quorum present; which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING AGENDA: Upon motion made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all concurring, the agenda for the August 20th meeting was accepted as presented.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES (June 18, 2018) - (Action Item)

Upon motion by Mr. Benton and seconded by Mr. Black, with all others in concurrence, the minutes from the June 18th meeting were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Mr. Farley, citizen of Fredericksburg, spoke on his behalf and was not representing the CTAC committee. Mr. Farley commended the Legislative Committee's proposed priorities list, except for one glaring exception. Mr. Farley stated there was no mention of securing the right for states and localities to institute congestion pricing on existing roadways. Mr. Farley stated that our existing transportation policy of building more roads to relieve traffic congestion is not working. Mr. Farley stated that any reform of the existing policy, or a return to the previous policy, would require some toll element such as congestion pricing being implemented to control traffic congestion. Mr. Farley stated by implementing congestion pricing, this would then free-up roadways for freight and transit vehicles. Mr. Farley asked that freedom to use congestion pricing be added to the list of discussion items the Legislative Committee will move forward.

Ms. Bohmke stated that she is a member of the state legislative board and just this week at its monthly meeting discussions from other regions within the State occurred on the same point Mr. Farley presented. Ms. Bohmke stated no action has been taken by the state executive committee to date; however, reiterated the subject matter is one that is being discussed state-wide and not just regionally within GWRC, and the committee also concurs that discussions need to occur with representatives/legislators at the local, state and federal levels.

DRAFT FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Dooling presented the draft financial report for committee review. Ms. Dooling stated great strides have been accomplished in her 60 days of employment with GWRC in regard to converting previous accounts and record-keeping data over to electronic data capturing. Ms. Dooling stated in addition to the monthly draft financial report, that the committee will also begin receiving a monthly cash flow report. Ms. Dooling asked if there were any questions from the committee and also advised for the committee members to contact her if specific financial information is needed that currently has not been provided.

Mr. Withers stated that he realizes this is a very insignificant cost amount but asked if the \$0.02 amount listed as an unreconciled balance noted on the monthly balance sheets will ever go away. Ms. Dooling stated this will be reconciled with the next audit, so will also be an item that will be resolved with future balance sheets.

OLD BUSINESS

a.) GO Virginia Update – Ms. Kate Gibson & Ms. Linda Millsaps

Ms. Gibson advised the purpose of GO Virginia is to create higher paying jobs within the region through collaboration efforts primarily from out-of-state revenues which diversifies and strengthens the economy for every region.

Ms. Gibson relayed GO Virginia applications and projects are in the following 4 categories; Cluster Scale-Up; Commercialization; Site/Infrastructure Development & Workforce/Credentialing. Ms. Gibson stated the largest number of application requests received to date were in either the Site/Infrastructure Development category or the Workforce/Credentialing category.

Ms. Gibson advised that GO Virginia does not fund the following projects: Healthcare; Quality of Life projects; Private Company incentives; Scholarships; Transportation Projects (unless these are associated with site development application requests) & Implementation of broadband (this item is currently on hold pending a statewide strategy ruling).

Ms. Gibson stated the key project requirements are as follows: More Higher Paying Jobs; Collaboration & Out-of-State Revenues. Ms. Gibson stated higher-paying jobs are defined as above the average wage of the GO Virginia region or project service area; the average wage chart reflects the following data:

	Hourly	Weekly	Annually
Region 6	\$19.890	\$796	\$41,392
GWRC	\$20.68	\$827	\$43,004
Northern Neck	\$17.78	\$711	\$36,972
Middle Peninsula	\$17.23	\$689	\$35,828

Mr. Benton asked how project performance is evaluated. Ms. Gibson advised there are performance metrics for each project.

Ms. Gibson advised the second project requirement (collaboration) requires that in order for an application to be considered, it must have at least 2 participating localities, political subdivisions or public bodies corporate or political. Ms. Gibson stated that participation by an entity can include financial participation, in-kind-contributions, and participation on a project advisory team or administration of a project.

In regard to requirement #3, Out-of-State Revenues, Ms. Gibson advised that projects must align with at least 1 of the 6 priority clusters that have been identified in the Region 6 Economic Growth & Diversification Plan (these clusters primarily will generate revenue from outside the region/state). Ms. Gibson stated that these clusters show a lot of potential within the region. Ms. Gibson advised the clusters for Region 6 are as follows: Seafood Processing/Aquaculture/Commercial Fishing; Forestry/Wood Products/Paper; Manufacturing; Logistics/Distribution; Professional/technical/Scientific Services or Information/Data Centers.

Mr. Benton asked if the approved projects for Region 6 are all funded and what type of apprentice jobs result. Ms. Gibson advised that mostly the apprentice jobs are in the manufacturing field. Ms. Gibson stated no state funding can be used towards the projects and that all projects submitted need to be approved by the State GO Virginia Board. Ms. Gibson relayed the approved projects require a local match. Ms. Gibson stated a project submitted also needs to be completed within a 2-year time period and needs to be a project that will be sustainable.

Mr. Kelly asked how much money is being competed for state-wide. Ms. Gibson advised that currently there is \$1.2m unspoken for at this time and to date, about \$300,000 has been allocated to projects in Region 6. Mr. Black asked what the apprenticeship programs through Germanna entailed. Ms. Gibson stated it is a network program that places students with businesses. Ms. Bohmke asked how involved the local economic development partners state-wide are with the program. Ms. Gibson stated the participation in the past has been minimal and GWRC is working with FRA to facilitate the participation efforts here.

Ms. Gibson also advised that outside of the Region 6 allocations, there is also a competitive grants program of funding resources available state-wide. In order to be considered for these funding allocations from the competitive grant resources, a region needs to partner with another GO Virginia region. Ms. Gibson advised the Virginia Sea Grant Resiliency Planning grant is a step towards an official competitive grant application request as Region 6 is exploring a partner grant with Region 5 (Hampton Roads) to discuss resiliency and sea level rise, etc.

Ms. Gibson advised that GWRC is the fiscal agent for all of Region 6's projects and all approved projects are just underway with them moving forward. Ms. Gibson advised at this time, no reimbursements have actually been requested to date.

Ms. Gibson relayed a lot of the projects are planning grants so the metric is designed for more application deliverables rather than for actually creating jobs. The welding training program application has metrics for the number of people trained; the number of citizens successfully placed into a work site; the average wage of jobs received; etc.

Mr. Kelly also asked if the Commission could see one of the completed applications and necessary documents so the committee members can review an application; see what the proposals look like; determine how they are measured, etc. Mr. Kelly stated the welding application would probably be the most beneficial for GWRC to review. Mr. Kelly stated after review of an application, it then will result in additional committee discussions. Ms. Gibson relayed that on the GO Virginia website all applications submitted state-wide are there for review.

Ms. Gibson advised that currently there are 4 approved GO Virginia Region 6 projects which are as follows:

PamunkeyNet Business Plan – Ms. Gibson advised each locality has contributed approximately \$5,000 towards the required one-to-one match needed

Ms. Gibson stated the other 3 current projects are: Flexible Office Space Due Diligence for Westmoreland County; Virginia Sea Grant Resiliency Planning Grant for the Middle Peninsula; & a Welding Training program in Westmoreland County.

Ms. Millsaps advised that GO Virginia was created in 2016 as a bipartisan, business-led economic development initiative that would create more higher paying jobs throughout the Commonwealth with incentivized collaborations between business, education and government. Ms. Millsaps advised the program strives to enhance job expansions by investing at the regional level in specific economic development projects thus growing the regional economic development capacities. Ms. Millsaps relayed the program is overseen by a statewide Growth & Opportunity Board combined with a series of regional councils. Ms. Millsaps stated GO Virginia funding is available and the region needs to determine how the state money can best be utilized.

Mr. Kelly asked that for the upcoming September meeting, that each locality bring back an outline for a general goal in which the region desires to strive for. Mr. Kelly stated that what will make sense now is to determine the number of new jobs being created within the region and not focus on an individual locality's plans. Mr. Kelly stated once this is brought to the committee, then businesses and organizations can be sought out so the discussion process of setting goals/objectives can move forward.

Ms. Millsaps advised the GWRC region's local elected & appointed officials have indicated their interest in creating a regional economic development plan as well that has a primary focus on the creation of higher paying jobs within the region. Ms. Millsaps stated these efforts need to begin on the staff side; however, local officials need to send out information to their respective boards for feedback on the proposal.

Ms. Shelton stated before she could make any recommendations accordingly, that the discussion needs to occur with her economic development staff members and the EDA director. Mr. Kelly stated that representation from each locality has served on the committee. Ms. Long asked if a part

of the process can also include education, resources & recommendations with no actual plans/projects being submitted at this time.

Mr. Withers asked how this ties into the regional alliance efforts. Mr. Kelly stated that Mr. Roberts has been instrumental on recommending areas of focus for the region. Mr. Kelly stated that as a follow-up to a request made at FAMPO Policy meeting by Mr. McLaughlin to explore the opportunities for employment centers to re-locate south from the DC area is an opportunity to explore the additional visions laid out for the region. Mr. Kelly stated the committee can establish goals and then open these up to other entities to develop proposals.

Mr. Kelly stated “marching orders” from each locality on its desire to move forward and to provide a list of items a jurisdiction would like to see achieved can be brought to the September meeting. After this has occurred, the meetings can occur with businesses on how the plan can be implemented.

Ms. Long stated that each locality already has its own comprehensive plan in place and she does not see Caroline’s plan being re-updated and available by the September GWRC meeting. Ms. Millsaps stated the first step is to pull together what already exists within each jurisdiction and then determine trends & commonalities that currently exist. Ms. Millsaps stated this will be built on to develop a regional perspective/plan.

Mr. Kelly stated that work force development has been discussed for a long time and the need to focus on having higher-paying jobs in this region to keep the employment regionally based and deter commuters going into Northern Virginia & Washington, DC.

Ms. Millsaps stated the proposal for consideration by GWRC tonight is the drawing together of all existing economic development strategic plans within the GWRC region. Ms. Millsaps stated development of a regional economic development plan will become a finished project with coordination efforts being undertaken by GWRC & FRA. Ms. Millsaps stated a steering committee will include staff representation from Fredericksburg Association of Builders, GWRC, FRA, Redco, FAMPO, University of Mary Washington, Germanna Community College, FAAR, Chamber of Commerce, United Way, Community Foundation, Social Services, Goodwill and potentially K-12 public education representatives. Ms. Millsaps stated the Region 6 Growth & Diversification Plan will be the starting point for this effort.

Ms. Millsaps stated that once implemented, the region would then offer regional meetings that would include latest updates, input opportunities and keynote speakers. Ms. Millsaps stated that informational meetings will be scheduled by GWRC and held on a quarterly basis and would be focusing on the potential future vision for the region that would focus on trends and possibilities.

Ms. Bohmke stated that no action was required by the Commission at tonight’s meeting so she thinks each board representative needs to take the information received tonight back to their respective boards for discussion and feedback with a goal of bringing back for further discussion at the upcoming September GWRC meeting. Mr. Kelly stated the mechanism is in place and also in September staff’s proposal should be received/discussed on how we move forward.

b.) Legislative committee & Goals (Action Item) – Mr. Matt Kelly

Mr. Kelly stated he participated on the Legislative Committee last year. Ms. Bohmke stated she would like Mr. Kelly to chair this committee again for the upcoming year to elect new representation as needed. Mr. Kelly stated the Legislative Committee is now asking for specific agenda items be addressed rather than general items. Mr. Kelly stated it is still important for the Legislative Committee to meet with the local delegates; ask them to attend meetings; and ask why/why not an issue is/is not ultimately approved. Mr. Kelly stated he thought it would be beneficial for 1 representative from each locality serve on the Legislative Committee. Both Mr. Black and Ms. Shelton agreed to serve. Mr. Kelly asked that King George County & Spotsylvania County meet with their respective boards and elect a representative to serve as well.

Mr. Kelly stated the current issues for including on the Legislative Committee agenda are the following items:

- Smart Scale
- Proffers
- CSA Issue
- Broadband

Mr. Kelly asked that localities bring forth any new items to be added to the agenda for discussion for this year. Mr. Kelly stated the impact fee issue needs to be re-submitted; however, it needs to be stipulated what impact fees will be paid and mandated.

c.)Composting Conference – Mr. Matt Kelly

Mr. Kelly advised the jurisdictional supported composting effort forum will be held tomorrow (August 21st) at the University Center in the University of Mary Washington College. Mr. Kelly stated the forum begins at 8:00 a.m. and will conclude at 12 noon. Mr. Kelly stated that as even though now waste management is mandated by each locality, this is an issue that is going to ultimately result in a regional cooperative effort. Mr. Kelly stated if possible, at least one representative from each of the GWRC/FAMPO districts should be in attendance at the forum. Mr. Kelly stated that as of tonight, there currently is no representation from Caroline County. Ms. Long stated she personally just received her invite and asked if it was also forwarded to the County Administrators, public administration staff, etc. Mr. Kelly advised that invites were sent to all supervisors, county administrators, and public administration staff.

d.)301 Letter of Support – Ms. Linda Millsaps

Ms. Millsaps stated that included in tonight's agenda packet is a letter of support from GWRC that was submitted to the Honorable Shannon Valentine, Secretary of Transportation Office in Richmond. Ms. Millsaps stated the letter of support is endorsement of the BUILD Grant Project Application for the US 301 Arterial Preservation project. Ms. Millsaps stated this project is vital as continued population growth is expected to double over the next 25 years and the arterial preservation project will have positive impacts to both Caroline & King George counties that are within the GWRC region.

e.) FAMPO Update – Mr. Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that the regional Smart Scale applications for Round 3 were submitted by the August 8th deadline. Mr. Agnello relayed that the FAMPO region passed the Air Quality Conformity testing and the analysis report was approved on August 8th. Mr. Agnello stated FAMPO has provided input to VDOT on 3 potential STARS studies for consideration (1 in Stafford & 2 in Spotsylvania). Lastly, Mr. Agnello relayed that FAMPO will kick off its 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) efforts.

Mr. Agnello advised that upcoming meetings are as follows; VDOT Public Information Meeting for the Route 1 STARS project on August 27th at 5:00 p.m. at James Monroe High School; FAMPO Technical Advisory Committee meeting on September 10th at 9:30 a.m.; FAMPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee meeting on September 12th at 6:00 p.m.; & FAMPO Policy Committee meeting on September 17th at 7:15 p.m.

f.) Other Old Business – None

NEW BUSINESS

a.) Executive Director's Report

Ms. Millsaps stated a lot of things have transpired over her first 60 days of employment at GWRC and more will continue to be forthcoming. Ms. Millsaps stated that she has enjoyed the visitation/sites with each of the respective board members and looks forward to continued conversations. Ms. Millsaps stated that if a board member has any questions, concerns, comments, etc. to please make sure they contact her.

i. Annual Report Review

Ms. Millsaps distributed a Draft Annual report for FY2018 to the board members. Ms. Millsaps asked that commission members review the draft & provide comments to her by week-end. Ms. Millsaps stated this report is just the start of the on-going communication process between staff, the board, the public, etc.

ii. Strategic Planning Proposal (Action Item)

Ms. Millsaps stated updated will be given on where GWRC is now and where we wish to go in moving forward. Ms. Millsaps stated she submitted a survey to board members and locality administration staff. Ms. Millsaps stated that 71% of the returned survey had a positive to very positive overview of GWRC. Ms. Millsaps stated the survey results showed no bad/negative replies and the replies that were not in the positive percentage range were simply because they did not know the answer to the survey and not because they thought the services provided by GWRC were bad or ineffective.

Ms. Millsaps stated her report tonight will focus on 5 categories which are as follows: 1 – Opportunities Abound; 2 – Branding Challenges; 3 – Financial Challenges; 4 – Structural Improvements; & Transformational Opportunities.

Ms. Millsaps stated the key take-away bulletins are the following: financial situation is better but still remains challenging; good reputation in the community but need to communicate and market more effectively; desire for GWRC to become more proactive within the region; & we need to do minor process and structure work within the organization.

Ms. Millsaps stated her personal observations show that opportunities abound within the region. Ms. Millsaps stated that there has been a common interest regionally in creating and growing good jobs here. This will improve long-term viability; reduce congestion; improve health; potentially increase community involvement; grow a stronger regional identity; retain youth and younger generations; & a significant interest region-wide in addressing the issues faced by the ALICE populations.

Ms. Millsaps stated there is common interest in preserving the rural areas and its natural elements and that open spaces, agricultural heritage, bike/walking trails, river preservation; water/outdoor activities; conservation easements; & interest in the Chesapeake Bay are important region-wide.

Ms. Millsaps stated there is a need for a little more regional glue adhesiveness to occur. Ms. Millsaps relayed there are a significant number of regional organizations already doing good things & people within the organizations are aware of other groups and what they do. However, there could be more in lines of coordination of efforts; learning best practices & joint grant/other applications.

Ms. Millsaps stated the survey results showed GWRC to have the following strengths: desire to address pertinent issues that affect the entire region; effective connectivity of local jurisdictions; friendly meetings; personable staff; good source of information on grants and grant support; good resource for data/statistics on relevant regional areas; & good program specific data relevant.

Ms. Millsaps stated that even though overall positive rating of GWRC, the branding challenges surveyed replied on everything from board member awareness to conducting too many meetings. Ms. Millsaps stated the top 3 survey categories showed Awareness (including Board member awareness) at 9; Marketing/Messaging at 8; & Core Purpose/Impact Unclear at 6.

In regard to finances, Ms. Millsaps stated funding is positive; however, continues to be tight with the current total assets being \$352,615.95 & the current total liabilities being \$192,467.77. In regard to the structural and administrative challenges, Ms. Millsaps stated she will continue to work on the following topics: financial processes; current/new job descriptions for all employees; complete employee personnel files updated/transferred from Stafford County; a better classification system implemented; & more concise documentation of agreements with other partnering organizations.

Lastly, in regard to Transformational Opportunities that could become available, Mrs. Millsaps stated that GWRC could begin charging a management fee for flow through funding. GWRC could offer jurisdictions a small incentive to pay its entire allocation one-time each July. Ms. Millsaps stated that currently all of the 5 jurisdictions pay on different time periods.

Ms. Bohmke asked if Ms. Millsaps could provide specifics on how/when each locality currently pays and the advantages of everyone paying in full one time a year. Ms. Long asked if this item could be added to the September agenda for further discussion as tonight's meeting was more lengthy than normal and there were still items that needed to be addressed. Ms. Bohmke stated that even though unintentional, the current time period on when a locality pays its dues to GWRC could be a contributing problem for the organization's financial cash flow stability. Ms. Millsaps stated this would be a discussion item for the September meeting and a re-cap will be provided that gives the current locality GWRC payment allocation; the time period GWRC is reimbursed by the respective localities, etc.

Ms. Millsaps stated that additional financial opportunities include the establishment of new lines of businesses (revenue generating); seek additional non-VDOT related grants that would be applicable; create educational and other events that would generate revenue; & to better communicate what GWRC already does.

Mr. Kelly stated that establishing a strategic planning proposal for the region has been something that has been trying to get accomplished for a long period of time. Mr. Kelly stated that it is his recommendation that the commission grant Ms. Millsaps the authority to do contingent planning for economic development opportunities and expansions within the GWRC region.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all concurring, authority was given to Ms. Millsaps to begin the strategic planning process.

iii. Finance Committee Appointment & Charge (Action Item)

Ms. Millsaps stated a finance committee for GWRC is going to be formed. Ms. Millsaps advised that Ms. Bohmke has already agreed to serve on this committee. Meeting times will likely occur monthly and will likely take place during the day. Ms. Bohmke asked for other members who would be interested in also serving on the finance committee to let either Ms. Millsaps or her know. Mr. Benton stated he would also be willing to serve on the finance committee.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Shelton, with all concurring, formation of a finance committee to work with GWRC for the upcoming year was approved.

b.)Other New Business – None

CLOSED SESSION

The August 20th, 2018 GWRC meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m. to the staff and public with a closed committee session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters to occur after the conclusion of the regular meeting. The next GWRC meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on September 17th.

Per Chair, Ms. Bohmke, the GWRC Commission went into closed session at 7:50 p.m. and met for thirty minutes. No personnel action was taken and the Commission adjourned the closed session at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Linda Millsaps, Executive Director
(Draft Minutes prepared by JoAnna Roberson)