

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

November 21, 2016
The Robert C. Gibbons Conference Room
406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg Virginia

MEMBERS PRESENT AND VOTING: Chair – Jeff Black, Chair **Caroline County; City of Fredericksburg:** Matt Kelly & Billy Withers; **Caroline County:** Nancy Long; **King George County:** Jim Howard; **Spotsylvania County:** Greg Benton; and **Stafford County:** Meg Bohmke & Laura Sellers

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ruby Brabo, County of King George & Paul Trampe, County of Spotsylvania

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Kim McClellan, FAAR; Tim Barody, City of Fredericksburg & Rupert Farley, CTAG

STAFF: Tim Ware, Executive Director; Paul Agnello & Marti Donley, FAMPO; Kate Gibson, CoC; and Diana Utz & JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Black called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with a quorum present; which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING AGENDA

Upon motion by Ms. Sellers and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all others in consensus, the agenda for the November 21st meeting was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES (October 17, 2016) - (Action Item)

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all others in consensus, the minutes from the October 17th meeting were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT - None

DRAFT FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Ware advised that the Financial Report is included in tonight's agenda packet. Mr. Ware relayed that the Commission still remains financially sound and the balance sheet, revenues and expenditures are included in tonight's agenda packet. Mr. Ware relayed that the total assets are \$529,408.01 and the total liabilities are \$179,384.06.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ware stated that approximately four months ago, the decision was made to try a paperless meeting packet and staff was asked to review this change at the end of the year. Mr. Benton stated that he does not always have access to a mobile unit so he would definitely prefer to continue receiving a paper copy of the agenda and packet handouts. Mr. Ware stated that several copies are still made and available for each meeting and that Ms. Donley would be glad to put Mr. Benton on the list to permanently receive a paper copy. All other members felt the paperless approach was working and expressed interest in the process continuing as is.

Mr. Ware advised that last week a USDA roundtable meeting was held in King George County and there were approximately 24 people from the local jurisdictions in attendance. Mr. Ware stated that a Hazard Mitigation Workshop and a FEMA Resilience Workshop are planned. Mr. Ware stated that there will be no December meeting; however, meetings will commence again monthly beginning in January.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS:

- a.) **2016 GWRC Annual Audit**– Mr. Michael Aukamp, Dunham, Aukamp & Rhodes, PLC,

Mr. Ware advised that Mr. Aukamp was not in attendance yet and stated that he was enroute but delayed in traffic. Mr. Ware stated that he could give the audit report and findings or the Commission could defer this topic until later in the meeting when Mr. Aukamp arrived. It was consensus from the Commission members for Mr. Ware to give the report.

Mr. Ware stated that a copy of the 2016 audit was received last week and was submitted to the Commission members for their review. Mr. Ware relayed that the 2016 audit showed no findings and indicated that the Commission's accounting records were in great shape. Mr. Ware stated that these efforts are thanks to Ms. Barbara Bigelow who is GWRC's bookkeeper and who consistently does a great job each year in having the proper records, documentations, etc. that ensure the audit process goes smoothly.

Mr. Ware advised that the net assets for the 2015 auditing year were \$93,000 and they are \$96,000 for 2016. Mr. Ware stated that the 2016 assets would have been even higher if it was not for a \$56,000 bad debt that had to be removed.

Mr. Ware relayed that the bad debt has remained open on the books for several years and it was now time to remove it. Mr. Ware stated that the debt outstanding resulted in a private corporation that had requested that FAMPO do a traffic study, with the understanding that once the study was completed, the private firm would reimburse FAMPO for the cost of the study. Mr. Ware relayed that the study was for Exit 126 in Spotsylvania County when approval was being sought for a J-Ramp design at Southpoint Parkway. The agreement for reimbursement was in email and verbal concurrence; however, there was not a formal written agreement signed. As the J-Ramp for this intersection was not recommended to move forward, the private partnership feels they were only to

be held financially responsible if the J-ramp recommendation had been approved to move forward. Mr. Ware stated that efforts are still going to be pursued by staff in collection of the study fees; however, to date no financial reimbursement has been received.

Upon motion by Mr. Withers and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all others in consensus, 2016 audit for the George Washington Regional Commission was accepted as presented.

b.) **Housing Discussion**– Ms. Kim McClellan, FAAR

Ms. McClellan advised that she is the Public Policy Director for the Fredericksburg Area Board of Realtors. Ms. McClellan stated that meetings have occurred with Mr. Curry Roberts in regard to housing needs for the region. Ms. McClellan relayed that there are national grant opportunities available to regions in regard to housing needs that are related to economics. Ms. McClellan advised that Mr. Roberts liked the idea and would like to see something in place that addresses the region's housing needs by the year 2025. Ms. McClellan stated that after meeting with Mr. Roberts it was felt significant for them to make presentations to the George Washington Regional Commission to see if they too were in support of moving forward with the grant opportunities that are available.

Ms. McClellan stated that by the year 2025, 70% of the work force will be millennials and a two-hour work commute will not be something that attracts millennials to reside in a specific region. Ms. McClellan advised that the Task Force committee is addressing what can this region do that would be attractive to the millennial generation by 2025.

Ms. McClellan advised that a task force meeting is scheduled for December that will involve membership from Germanna Community College, the University of Mary Washington, the Fredericksburg Regional Alliance, the Fredericksburg Board of Realtors, etc. Ms. McClellan stated that this meeting is more for discussion now to review the current data sets that are available. Ms. McClellan relayed that George Mason University has compiled a data base source which could be helpful to the Fredericksburg region.

Ms. McClellan stated that the Task Force committee wants to determine the following: where we are currently; where do we see the region heading; and whether there is community interest in pursuing these issues.

Mr. Black stated that he felt this was something of value to the region but also recommended that the Task Force committee talk to county staff in each of the local jurisdictions to obtain their input as well.

Mr. Kelly stated that developing base-line data and building from that data is a good approach as the housing market data does not provide the data and statistics that are needed. Mr. Kelly stated that specifically for the City of Fredericksburg, that police officers, fire fighters, school teachers, etc. work in the city; however, do not live in the city because the housing market is not competitive with the neighboring counties. Mr. Kelly stated that the economic base should indicate that if a community buys in to the pending trends that are forthcoming that the housing market needs to encourage residents to live and work in the same area.

Mr. Withers stated that the current trend of the millennial population is that now they enjoy living in an apartment in the commercial sections of the City for the entertainment and recreational opportunities; however, in five years when these millennials are ready to settle down had have a family, they will then be re-locating out of city apartments and moving to neighboring houses where they can purchase the house with the fenced-in yard. Mr. Withers stated that he did not feel the Task Force committee could study millennials without also studying the behavior patterns of the baby boomers as well.

Ms. Bohmke stated that she would like to see the Task Force address the following concerns and stated that she agrees with what has been previously said. Ms. Bohmke stated that retirement homes, especially in Stafford County, are quite expensive so is there any data that shows where the largest population of millennials are currently residing. Ms. Bohmke stated that the areas in Houston/Dallas seem to have a good handle on the millennial populations so what are they doing differently than what has been looked at here.

Ms. McClellan stated that having connectivity among neighborhoods is the key. Ms. Sellers stated that having connectivity among the neighborhoods and having the neighborhoods be basically self-sufficient with medical facilities, retail facilities, etc. and one-level housing needs for those senior citizens who are still self-sufficient but are now in the phase of their lifestyle where they are looking to downsize is also a population category that should be studied and included in the Task Force committee.

Mr. Benton stated that he would like to see an extensive and comprehensive study completed as well that addresses all age groups and the population/employment ratios for the region. Mr. Black stated that incorporating the population data with the economic base and including all population demographics is also a topic the Task Force committee may consider addressing at the upcoming December meeting.

Ms. McClellan stated that she appreciated having the opportunity to address the Commission tonight and that the upcoming meeting on December 9th would be an open-dialogue format and that if members have more specific comments to please forward them to her prior to December 9th. Ms. McClellan stated that feedback from the December 9th meeting will be provided to Mr. Ware so that he can in turn distribute the meeting discussion, etc. to the Commission Members.

c.) **Drug (Opiate) Task Force**– Ms. Laura Sellers

Ms. Sellers stated that she and Ms. Bohmke attended the VACO meeting last month and feels there is a need for the region to consider forming a Drug Task Force, specifically for opiate overdose, for the region. Ms. Sellers stated that in the County of Stafford alone, that there were eleven deaths as a result of opiate drug overdose. Ms. Bohmke stated that the statistics showed that there are seventy-eight juveniles and young adults who die every day from opiate overdose nation-wide. Ms. Sellers stated that heroin overdoses usually begin with a legitimate prescription drug thus leading to heroin being laced that eliminates it being noted in a person's blood stream. Ms. Sellers stated that Warren County is already pro-active and has created its own task force system. Ms. Sellers asked if there is interest in developing a task force committee in this region.

Mr. Benton stated that the biggest problem is that the small fish in the picture are being used as informants so convictions are not being put in place to the large fish. Mr. Ware distributed a copy of a press release submitted from Governor Terry McAuliffe to the commission members. Mr. Kelly asked for Ms. Sellers to obtain a copy of the task force from Warren County so this Commission could review it. Mr. Kelly also asked Mr. Ware if he would be able to attain information from the local jails that depicts the number of jail dates, the number of overdoses, the number of heroin charges per month, per locality, etc. so that this information could also be reviewed by the Commission at the January meeting.

d.) **Approval of Resolution No. 17-06, Procurement of GWRC Legal Services – Mr. Tim Ware**

Mr. Ware advised that Resolution No. 17-06 is requesting endorsement for the Commission to procure legal services. Mr. Ware stated that from time to time the Commission has the need for legal services and currently do not have access to legal counsel. Mr. Ware stated that in the past the attorney representing Stafford County has supplied needs for legal counsel as they arose; however, due to their increased schedules, that the Commission cannot continue to expect this department to be in a position to help the George Washington Regional Commission when legal matters arise for the commission. Mr. Ware stated that the Commission has located the firm of Hefty Wiley & Gore out of Richmond to provide representation for all general council legal matters that may arise. Mr. Ware stated that the attorney who works for King George County is the representative from hefty Wiley & Gore who would be selected to serve as the legal counsel for GWRC. Mr. Ware stated that the fees will be \$1,000 a month to the Commission and will cover everything involved in any issue up to taking a case to court.

Upon motion by Mr. Howard and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all concurring, Resolution No. 17-06 was adopted by the George Washington Regional Commission.

e.) **Approval of Resolution No. 17-07, Endorsement of the George Washington Region Population and Employment Control Totals for Use in the 2045 FAMPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) – Mr. Paul Agnello**

Mr. Agnello advised that every five years the Long Range Transportation Plan is completed. The land use data is compiled by each jurisdiction and included within the LRTP. Mr. Agnello stated that the 2015 base year data was approved last month and this month staff is asking for approval to utilize the 2045 population and employment data projection. Mr. Agnello advised that the population growth for 2015 was not quite as high as projected due to a result of the recent recession. The population growth for 2015 was expected to be 350,000 for the region and actually was 300,000. Mr. Agnello stated that the projections still showed an 86% growth rate and that the region is still the second largest region of growth in the State.

Upon motion by Ms. Sellers and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all concurring, Resolution No. 17-07 was adopted by the George Washington Regional Commission.

f.) **GWRC Services Discussion** – Mr. Jeff Black

Mr. Black stated that he has talked with Mr. Ware in regard to what the Commission can actually accomplish by pursuing regional services. Mr. Black stated this discussion was held by the Commission in years past when Mr. Kelly was chair. Mr. Black stated that he felt it was time to bring this issue up again to obtain feedback from members on what types of services could be shared, and what types of programs GWRC could spearhead, etc.

Mr. Kelly stated that there has been mixed support over the years for moving forward with regional services. Mr. Kelly stated that politically, jurisdictions from time to time have not been in favor of giving up control over having a regional point of contact as each of the localities already has a specific county staff position in place. Mr. Kelly stated that back to the RADCO era, the topic of regional services was discussed and basically nothing was ever done and nothing moved forward. When RADCO became GWRC, the idea was more receptive; however still never moved forward because it was the mindset that GWRC was already doing too much. Mr. Kelly stated that he is still in favor of a shared regional service program and is something that would be of great benefit to the City. However, he thinks members need to watch usage and work on two-three specific areas initially rather than trying to incorporate a large number of regional services at one time. Mr. Kelly stated that in order for a regional service program to be effective, and then all political members in each jurisdiction need to be on board with the concept.

Mr. Black stated that maybe we need to obtain feedback from the committee members as to which services they feel could benefit from being a regional program and then agree on the initial services to move forward on.

Ms. Sellers stated that the Thurman Brisben shelter is in dire financial need and she thinks the first step is to have a list that shows the priority agencies that are currently being supported by each individual jurisdiction.

Ms. Bohmke stated that she thinks the assumption is that all regions participate now in all services and that may or may not be accurate. Ms. Bohmke stated that the Commission needs a break-down of what each jurisdiction currently supports and at what type of financial funding a service receives.

Mr. Kelly stated that in the past regional funding has been discussed and a previous study was completed on a regional Fire/EMS system for the region. Mr. Kelly stated that the discussion resulted in meeting with Spotsylvania representatives on providing service on joint corridors. Mr. Kelly stated however that instead of Spotsylvania being receptive to sharing services, they instead appeared not interested as they have just built and opened two new fire stations in the county. Mr. Kelly stated that again the hardest part of getting a regional service program established is initially getting staff from the jurisdictions on board and keeping the focus as the elected members change. Mr. Kelly stated that for the City of Fredericksburg, a regional service program is going to be a long-term survival need.

Mr. Howard stated that specifically for smaller rural areas like King George, they are not in the position to either obtain data and/or fund the data that will be needed to determine if a regional service program would work. Mr. Howard stated that even though King George would not complete a project like this solo; however, would be interested in pursuing the opportunities collectively with a regional perspective.

Mr. Black stated that not every service would work effectively anyway, especially for programs that occur at Parks & Recreational buildings, schools, etc. because the geographical logistics of getting students transported from Caroline/King George to the City would not prove to be financially prudent. Mr. Black stated that if a regional trade center type facility was obtained then looking at this concept may result in determining that multiple regional trade centers would be needed.

Mr. Black stated that recently Caroline County met with Spotsylvania officials in regard to partnering with them on EIS radios, etc. Mr. Black relayed that this did not work for Caroline because Spotsylvania wanted to be in control over the systems and that it was just financially cheaper for Caroline to obtain these services on their own.

Ms. Long stated that she is in favor of seeing the discussion continue; however, she does not feel that any jurisdiction tonight can pick an item that they feel regional service would apply. Ms. Long stated that protocol would first need to be determined and that another task force meeting held with staff in each jurisdiction with the purpose of educating or re-educating the administrators.

Mr. Kelly stated that he felt the first step is to look at existing regional agreements and build from that list as the starting point to re-introduce a regional service connection opportunity. Mr. Kelly stated that he knows there are regional agreements currently in place that include the jail, water, fire/rescue, etc.

Mr. Black asked if Mr. Ware would contact all of the jurisdictions and receive copies of each locality's existing agreements so GWRC can use these as starting points. Mr. Black stated that as the County Administrators/City Manager is already meeting monthly that if Mr. Ware has no objections that a regional service discussion is an item that can be added to these meeting agendas. Mr. Ware stated that this request could be accommodated. There was also consent from all members to have Mr. Ware obtain the current agreements that are in place and send these to the members so more in-depth discussion can occur on the topic at the upcoming January GWRC meeting.

g.) **Other New Business** - None

Upon motion by Mr. Withers and seconded by Ms. Sellers, the November 21st meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m. The next meeting will be held on January 23, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Timothy Ware, Executive Director
(Draft minutes prepared by JoAnna Roberson)

DRAFT