

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

May 15, 2017

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

**MEMBERS PRESENT AND VOTING:** Chair – Jeff Black, **Caroline County;** **City of Fredericksburg:** Matt Kelly & Billy Withers; **Caroline County:** Nancy Long; **King George County:** Ruby Brabo & Jim Howard; **Spotsylvania County:** Greg Benton (In at 6:08 p.m.) & Paul Trampe; and **Stafford County:** Meg Bohmke & Laura Sellers

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Todd Horsley, DRPT; Bob Schneider & Chuck Steigerwald, PRTC; & Rupert Farley – CTAG (In at 6:13 p.m.)

**STAFF:** Tim Ware, Executive Director; Paul Agnello & Nick Quint, FAMPO; Kate Gibson & Samantha Shoukas, CoC; and Diana Utz, Leigh Anderson & JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. Black called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. with a quorum present; which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING AGENDA**

Upon request made by Mr. Black, item 10g (New Business category), was amended to include discussion of performance evaluation for Mr. Tim Ware, Executive Director. Mr. Black stated that Mr. Ware's performance evaluation for FY2016 occurred in the fall. Mr. Black requested that Ms. Bohmke forward him a copy of the evaluation form used by Stafford County and Mr. Black will circulate a copy to all members. Mr. Black stated he was requesting the Commission to consider having Mr. Ware's evaluation be re-aligned to occur with the fiscal year calendar time frame.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Brabo, with all concurring, the agenda was approved as amended.

**APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES (April 17, 2017) - (Action Item)**

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Brabo, with Mr. Black abstaining, and all others in consensus, the minutes from the April 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 advised that GWRC has \$336,658.76 in assets and \$141,296.46 in liabilities. Mr. Ware relayed that the Commission is financially sound and positively moving forward.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Ware advised that next month the elections for GWRC will occur. Mr. Ware stated that the following localities are in line for the next succession: City of Fredericksburg – Chair; County of Stafford – First Vice-Chair; County of Spotsylvania – Second Vice-Chair; County of King George – Treasurer & County of Caroline – Secretary. Mr. Ware stated the succession of officers could remain as is or the Commission could amend accordingly. Upon motion by Mr. Withers and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all in consensus, the decision was made to move-up the succession for next year's appointments as it currently stands. Mr. Ware asked that the localities advise him by month end as to which commission member will be representing their specific jurisdiction.

Mr. Ware relayed that the upcoming June GWRC meeting will be focusing primarily on developing a legislative agenda to be submitted to the General Assembly. Mr. Ware advised that Mr. Eldon James, the region's legislative liaison, will be at the June meeting. Mr. Ware stated that Mr. James will be compiling a list of agenda items expressed from the Commission that will be communicated to the General Assembly.

Mr. Kelly stated that discussions were held last year and it is his recommendation that the Commission be more specific this year with requests to be submitted for consideration by the General Assembly.

Ms. Bohmke stated that she felt it is important for delegates to be fully apprised on the transportation issues that are facing the region. Ms. Bohmke stated other critical issues for consideration would be Gas Tax floors being implemented, regional opiate discussion, etc.

Ms. Bohmke advised that a regional commission meeting is scheduled for June 22<sup>nd</sup> in Louisa beginning at 5:30 p.m. Ms. Bohmke relayed that efforts are being made to coordinate a later start time since the meeting is occurring outside of the region. Ms. Bohmke advised the meeting is being held as a starting point in having issues that affect us state-wide and not just regionally be documented and forwarded to General Assembly for their consideration.

Mr. Withers stated that he serves on the VML commission and he too would be willing to compile a list of issues, requests, etc. to be submitted to this organization as well. Mr. Withers asked that if members have anything they would like to be addressed, to please forward this information to him by month-end.

Mr. Black stated that for Caroline County, transportation issues are not the highest concern or priority. Mr. Black stated that for their jurisdiction, internet and broadband enhancement opportunities are the most pressing concerns.

Ms. Long stated that the internet issue is one that the Commission voted on as being a top priority item that all jurisdictions were in support of moving forward in a regional manner. Ms. Brabo stated that for most localities internet plans are already completed so consolidation may not occur regionally until FY2018. Ms. Brabo stated that she felt it was important to have a specific organization designated to oversee and verify the services that are claimed to be provided are actually materializing.

Mr. Ware advised that the Local Emergency Planning Committee is not prepared to offer a budget at this time. Mr. Ware stated that the State/Federal representatives have not diligently participated in meetings that have been held. Mr. Ware relayed that the local representatives are participating and are still meeting regularly. Mr. Ware stated that Emergency Plan is to be approved in July.

Mr. Ware relayed that Mr. Robinson was in the hospital and has been released and is now doing well. Mr. Ware also advised that Ms. Kate Gibson has been promoted to Senior Planner and along with continuing with her CoC duties; she now will be serving as staff member to the Go Virginia program.

Mr. Ware stated that Samantha Shoukas has been hired and is GWRC's new Vista volunteer for the upcoming year. Mr. Ware also relayed that Mr. Quint has been promoted internally to Principal Planner and that FAMPO will be hiring two new part-time employees as well.

Mr. Ware distributed brochures on the Native Plants for Central Rappahannock Virginia. Mr. Ware relayed the brochures are nicely done and are informative and there is plenty of surplus on hand should any member need additional copies.

**OLD BUSINESS** – None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

a.) GWRC 2018 Preliminary Annual Budget – Mr. Tim Ware

Mr. Ware advised that the total budget for FY2018 will be \$2,958,005 which represents a \$343,952 increase from FY2017. Mr. Ware stated that local government contributions are budgeted at \$225,499 based on a per capita request of \$0.6433. Mr. Ware stated the per capita locality request has remained consistent over the last several years.

Mr. Ware stated that the total discretionary/local contributions equal \$302,059 and this figure comes from local dues and \$75,000 allocation from the State for the Commission being a PDC. Mr. Ware stated that after satisfying local match requirements and program support, the agency will realize of surplus of approximately \$82,199. Mr. Ware stated this is positive as five years ago; the Commission was \$105,000 in the red.

Mr. Ware relayed that staffing levels will be set at 12 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee. Mr. Ware stated this is an increase of 1 full-time equivalent that will be shared between FAMPO and Planning Services. Also, the Rideshare Coordinator's position will increase from part-time to full-time status. Mr. Ware advised that a 3% cost of living rate increase is requested for all employees.

Mr. Ware stated that GwRide Connect will realize a budget decrease of \$11,235. This decrease is a result of CMAQ allocations being lower. In addition, an increase of the DRPT grant will result in a 5% rate being submitted. Mr. Ware stated that FAMPO funding will increase by \$307,183 as a result in RSTP funding allocations increasing. Mr. Ware relayed that \$180,000 can be carried over to FY2019.

Mr. Ware advised that the Planning Services and Homeless Services revenues will increase by \$44,826 because of assumption of the Go Virginia Initiative. Mr. Ware stated that with the cost savings measures put in to place during FY2014 this department continues to be self-sustaining. Mr. Ware advised that end-of-year breakdowns by most departments will result in surpluses.

Mr. Ware advised that the fringe benefits will increase by approximately \$38,000 which is due to a modest increase in health insurance premiums and an increase in staffing levels. Mr. Ware state that GWRC participates in Stafford County's Health Insurance Plan and the overall fringe benefit rate is increasing by 0.49%.

Lastly, Mr. Ware stated that indirect cost will increase by approximately \$40,000 for FY2018. This increase is due to an increase in occupancy costs as well as inclusion of legal service now on retainer. Also, due to the age of building furniture and fixtures, \$15,000 will be budgeted to begin replacement of worn out items and the indirect cost rate is decreasing by 3.44%.

Ms. Bohmke asked how the 3% cost of living increases compares to the individual localities. Mr. Black and Ms. Brabo stated that for Caroline and King George counties, their budgets are not approved yet. Mr. Kelly stated the City of Fredericksburg's budget is approved and completed a 6% rate for correction coming from a city-wide compensation study for an additional 1.58 COLA. Mr. Trampe advised that Spotsylvania's rate equaled 2.8% with salary studies being implemented as well. Ms. Sellers asked if salary studies were done here. Mr. Ware stated that it is hard to do salary studies for a PDC because they only comparison available is with other PDC's.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Sellers, with all concurring, the FY2017 GWRC regional budget was approved.

b.) Approval of Resolution No. 17-10, Approving Lease Agreement at 406 Princess Anne Street – Mr. Tim Ware

Mr. Ware advised that the existing lease on the office space housed at 406 Princess Anne Street expires on June 30, 2017. Mr. Ware stated that both the Commission and the land owners desire to renew the lease for an additional 5-year period. Mr. Ware relayed that a 3% lease increase will be included but all other terms of original lease will remain in place.

Upon motion by Ms. Brabo and seconded by Ms. Sellers, with all concurring, Resolution No. 17-10 was adopted by the George Washington Regional Commission at the May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

c.) Vanpool Alliance Update – Mr. Charles Steigerwald, Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)

Mr. Chuck Steigerwald with PRTC introduced PRTC's new director, Mr. Bob Schneider. Mr. Steigerwald stated that Mr. Schneider was looking forward to meeting members from the respective organizations and that PRTC is glad to have him on board.

Mr. Steigerwald provided a presentation on the Vanpool Alliance program. Mr. Steigerwald stated this program is a partnership between GWRC, Northern Virginia Transit Commission (NVTC) and Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC). Mr. Steigerwald stated that PRTC serves as the administrative home site.

Mr. Steigerwald stated the purpose of the program is to capture and report vanpool data to the National Transit Database which results in additional federal formula funds being allocated to the region. Mr. Steigerwald relayed that this region is the first to develop a comprehensive dataset for vanpool operations.

Mr. Steigerwald stated that since the program's inception, participants have logged 1.6 billion passenger miles and over 3.5 million individual passenger trips since the data began being compiled over a year ago.

Mr. Steigerwald relayed that the program began with 200 vanpools initially enrolled and currently we have 622 enrolled vanpools. Mr. Steigerwald stated there have been 740 applications submitted to the data base. Ms. Bohmke asked for the top 3 reasons why a van pool application was denied.

Mr. Steigerwald stated that in order to apply, van pools need to be operating within specific regions along the I-95 corridor. For van pools leaving from Fredericksburg going to Dahlgren, this would be a region that would not be applicable because it does not cover the I-95 corridor on the daily commute.

Mr. Steigerwald relayed that due to the age and mileage of some of the van pools in the region that this also eliminates them from being eligible to be part of the program. Lastly, van pool ridership has to be in compliance with active insurance requirements and needs to be at least 50% capacity ridership full.

Mr. Steigerwald stated that van pools come from everywhere across the state with even one leaving from Newport News, Virginia going daily into the District. Mr. Steigerwald advised that 14% come from NVTC; 17% from PRTC; 21% from Culpeper/Warren counties; & 48% from the GWRC region.

Mr. Steigerwald stated that another reason the program has been successful here is that we have over 48 vendors and vendors make the program unique. Other agencies that have a van pool NTD program in place have 1-2 vendors.

Mr. Steigerwald stated that the van pool alliance program generates earnings for both GWRC & PRTC in the amount of \$1 m annually & NVTC earning \$2 m annually. Mr. Steigerwald advised that the program is a matched funding revenue source but matches can be eligible from “soft matches” that do not specifically require cash matches.

Ms. Sellers asked if this region has the largest percentage of van pools participating then why does NVTC receive double the revenues. Mr. Kelly answered by giving an overview of the program start-up funding. There was a feasibility study done at a cost of \$200,000. The cost of this study was paid for by both GWRC & NVTC (\$100,000 per entity). The study was managed by PRTC. The initial start-up fees for the Vanpool Alliance program were supplied by a grant from DRPT. However, there was a monetary shortfall in the DRPT grant which was fronted by both NVTC & PRTC, with an interest-free loan to cover GWRC’s portion of the shortfall. The shortfall deficit for GWRC was provided by NVTC & PRTC, with the understanding that once the revenues began coming back to the region, that both NVTC & PRTC would be reimbursed before GWRC has use of the generated revenues. It was estimated that after the first two years of the program being implemented and NVTC/PRTC being reimbursed, this region would begin to receive the additional annual revenues in FY2018.

Mr. Agnello asked when the best guess of when FY2018 funding would become available. Mr. Steigerwald stated probably not until year end of June 2018. Mr. Steigerwald stated the program implemented here ranks in the State of Virginia as in the top 5 in the top ten agencies nation-wide.

Mr. Steigerwald stated that accompanying the presentation is a request for adoption of Resolution No. 17-11. Mr. Steigerwald advised that the Resolution provides technical amendments to the original MOU of the understanding for forming a vanpool alliance. Mr. Steigerwald stated that both NVTC and PRTC have already adopted their revised Resolution and are asking that GWRC do the same.

d.) Approval of Resolution No. 17-11, to Adopt Technical Amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Forming the Vanpool Alliance – Mr. Tim Ware

Upon motion by Ms. Brabo and seconded by Ms. Sellers, with all in consensus, Resolution No. 17-11 was adopted by the George Washington Regional Commission at the May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

e.) Opioid Forum Update – Ms. Laura Sellers

Ms. Sellers stated she attended the recent opioid forum held in Fredericksburg. Ms. Sellers stated that it is critical to define the epidemic and get information out to the community. Ms. Sellers relayed that the forum leaders are looking for a management entity to oversee and guide the members in a positive direction for moving forward. Ms. Sellers stated this is an item that the commission agreed on as one of regional significance and importance and is the interest there for GWRC to be the lead entity?

Ms. Brabo asked for Mr. Ware to meet with the committee and determine what their mission is and to determine what they would want a lead entity to do and be responsible for. Ms. Brabo stated that it appears the committee wants elected officials to now be involved; however, elected officials were not invited to be a part of the forum. Ms. Brabo stated that Social Service directors and those in the medical fields as part of their “day” jobs were invited to participate in the forum.

Mr. Kelly concurred that the mission needs to be clarified but does think GWRC is the organization that should be steering the committee. Mr. Withers stated that not only determining the mission but the funding needed should also be clarified. Ms. Sellers stated that both federal and state funding would be allocated to the committee but she did not know what, if any, local funds would be needed at this time.

Ms. Bohmke stated that she participated in the evening forum and she feels it is essential to have the medical expertise from the community to be involved. Ms. Bohmke stated this is an issue that continues to grow regionally and is one that we cannot walk away from and ignore the needs.

Ms. Sellers stated the biggest thing we can do regionally is focus on what can be changed state-wide or federally to be a voice for the medical profession. Ms. Long stated that moving forward with a regional drug court was also one of the Commission’s goals so she too does not think the issue can be ignored.

Mr. Black asked if the committee was engaging the local school boards and school systems because this is the first place information should be dispensed from. Mr. Withers concurred with Ms. Brabo’s point of having staff to do further research. Mr. Withers asked that Mr. Ware determine expectations, funding needs, mission, etc. and the matter could be re-addressed at the June meeting.

f.) Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) Discussion – Mr. Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello stated that the RTA discussion was going to be held in more depth at the FAMPO meeting but wanted to apprise GWRC as well. Mr. Agnello stated that as Smart Scale projects continue to become more competitive, with lesser funding dollars available, that regions need to look for alternative funding options. Mr. Agnello stated that Smart Scale applications are scored higher if leveraged funding to a project is available.

Mr. Agnello stated that currently only the NOVA and Hampton Roads areas have additional revenue sources in place that the rest of the State does not have available. Mr. Agnello stated that the State has advised that localities need to provide more leveraged funding to major projects in order for them to be considered in future rounds of the Smart Scale process. Mr. Agnello stated that the Chamber of Commerce is also in favor of the region forming a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). Mr. Agnello advised the Chamber is conducting a forum on this topic on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Agnello stated there are several potential sources for creating additional transportation revenues. The three main options are as follows:

Legislatively updating the 1986 District Grant formula for Smart Scale to be less focused on city/town populations within the district

Mr. Agnello stated the assumption of \$500 m in statewide District Grant funds are available, this could generate an additional \$5 m per Smart Scale cycle for the Fredericksburg District. Mr. Agnello advised that the way this program is set-up, only is beneficial to the City of Fredericksburg and the town of Colonial Beach. Mr. Agnello stated that other localities may have the population requirements but because they are not a city or town, they are not eligible. If the focus is geared to a region just based on population, other regions may qualify.

Regional Motor Fuels Tax Floor (VRE Gas Tax Floor in FAMPO)

Mr. Agnello stated that if tax floors were implemented, the City of Fredericksburg and the Counties of Spotsylvania and Stafford could generate an additional \$5.5 m per year for the FAMPO jurisdictions. This estimated additional revenue would be approximately \$158 m between allocated between FY2018 and the horizon years of FY2045.

Creating a Regional Transportation Authority

Mr. Agnello stated this is the option being utilized by NOVA and Hampton Roads and the largest category whereby additional funding is generated is with an increase in sales tax revenues. Mr. Agnello stated the State of Virginia has a 5.3% tax base. By establishing a RTA, both NOVA and Hampton Roads have a 6% sales tax base. By creating an RTA, the region could generate an additional \$35 m per year, beginning in FY2018. The estimated additional revenue that could be generated between FY2019 and VY2045 could be \$1.3 b. Mr. Agnello stated that for an RTA to be established within the region, the entire region does not have to be in support. Mr. Agnello stated that RTA requires two adjacent jurisdictions to be in support of an RTA being established. Mr. Agnello stated that the jurisdictions have to be adjacent in order to be eligible so therefore the City



of Fredericksburg and Caroline County could not form an RTA because they are not adjacent. However, the City could form one with either Spotsylvania or Stafford counties. Mr. Agnello stated that due to the fact that the region does not have a floor set from revenues received from the VRE gas tax, the FAMPO region lost \$10,871,862 revenue dollars this year and the projected loss from FY2017 to FY-2045 would be \$157,643,000.

Mr. Agnello stated that an RTA receives additional revenues from Transient Occupancy taxes of 2% as well. Mr. Agnello stated these revenues come from hotel occupancy within a region. Mr. Agnello stated the tax generated from this option is relatively small but still another avenue to consider. Mr. Agnello stated the largest revenue source is the 0.7% regional sales tax classification.

In closing, Mr. Agnello stated that extra transportation revenues could be used as leveraged revenue in the Smart Scale process; could help get larger regional projects funded; and could help in getting local District Grant projects funded.

Mr. Agnello stated that the Chamber of Commerce is hosting a community conversation forum on our transportation crisis. The forum is scheduled for June 1<sup>st</sup> from 8:30- 10:30 a.m. The meeting will be held at Life care Medical Transports at 1170 International Parkway, Fredericksburg, VA. 22406.

Mr. Agnello stated that all GWRC jurisdictions have been invited and asked to send a representative. Ms. Bravo asked if an authority is approved how are funds applied. Mr. Agnello stated that funding is 70% standard and 30% excess.

Ms. Bohmke asked for staff to provide historical data from the 2014 legislature that discusses regional transportation authorities and details the type of projects that can be created with RTA monies.

g.) Other New Business – Performance Evaluation, Mr. Tim Ware – Mr. Jeff Black

Mr. Black stated that Mr. Ware's performance evaluation last year was completed in the fall. He is requesting that this year it be done to coincide with the yearly fiscal calendar schedule so that it can be an annual time for review. Mr. Black asked if Ms. Bohmke would forward him a copy of the performance evaluation that Stafford County uses and Ms. Bohmke stated she would get a copy to Mr. Black. Mr. Black stated that once he is in receipt, he will forward a copy to each member and the commission can plan to conduct the performance evaluation review for Mr. Ware at the June meeting.

**ADJOURN GWRC MEETING** - The May 15<sup>th</sup> GWRC meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m. The next meeting will be held on June 19, 2017.

Respectfully Submitted,

Timothy Ware, Executive Director  
(Draft Minutes prepared by JoAnna Roberson)