

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

January 26, 2015

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

MEMBERS PRESENT AND VOTING: Chair – Chris Yakabouski, **Spotsylvania County;**
City of Fredericksburg: Matthew Kelly & Billy Withers; **Caroline County:** Jeff Black; **King**
George County: Jim Howard; **Spotsylvania County:** Paul Trampe; **Stafford County:** Laura Sellers

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Sili – Caroline County; Dale Sisson – King George County; & Gary Snellings – Stafford County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Claude Dunn - TAG

STAFF: Tim Ware, Executive Director; Andy Waple, FAMPO; Marti Donley, FAMPO; Teiji Epling, GWRC; & JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Yakabouski 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 Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Howard, with all in consensus, the agenda for the January 26th meeting was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES (November 17, 2014) - (Action Item)

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Howard, with Mr. Black abstaining, and all others in consensus, the minutes from the November 17th meeting were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT - None

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Ware relayed that the Financial Report is included in tonight's agenda packet & that overall the agency is in fairly good shape. Mr. Ware stated that the Financial Report is pretty self-explanatory and that currently GWRC has \$44,020.78 in the bank. Mr. Withers did ask for clarification that the accounting information is from Union Bank & no longer Stellar One and Mr. Ware concurred.

On the balance sheet, Mr. Ware advised that under the project listing category that there are 10 items that reflect a negative amount. Mr. Ware relayed that all of these are projects that are on-going & whereby GWRC is awaiting payment and reimbursement from outside agencies. Mr. Ware stated that the last page of the Financial Report shows a complete agency-wide line item revenue and expenditure re-cap.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ware advised that a few bills are being considered from the General Assembly that relate to PDC's. One is Senate Bill 1392 which concerns the composition of membership boards for PDC's. Mr. Ware stated that GWRC has 10 elected officials and Senate Bill 1392 defines what a "regionally significant partner" might be for allowable membership. Mr. Ware stated that a lot of PDC's are under the Economic Development Administration so are therefore required to have both public & private members on their board. Mr. Ware stated that this bill is now under review and no decision to date has been made.

Secondly in regard to allocated State funding, Fredericksburg and most other PDC's have in the past each received \$75,000. Mr. Ware advised that Richmond, Hampton Roads & Northern Virginia typically receive a higher amount. Mr. Ware stated that this year Northern Virginia is asking for an additional \$300 thousand dollars. Mr. Ware relayed that again this is still under review and to date no decision has been made on how much funding will be allocated to the four regions.

Lastly, Mr. Ware advised that a bill has been introduced to purchase the Dahlgren Heritage Trail through DCR. Mr. Ware gave Mr. Howard the letter detailing this intended purchase. Mr. Ware also stated that GWRC has worked with Caroline County to obtain DCR grants to assist the town of Port Royal for a \$40,000 grant for the completion of a new pier.

Mr. Kelly stated that in regard to available funding, that this region never seems to submit grant applications for eligible projects within the region. Mr. Ware stated that the DCR Storm water group is kept apprised of regional needs and that the total amount of state-wide funding that is available is \$140,000.

Mr. Ware stated that he met with DCR last month regarding the Virginia Outdoor Drive and Planning District 16's executive summary, plan descriptions, & handouts were presented at the December meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Kelly advised that GWRC has spent a lot of time in potentially developing a regional emergency management process and he would like an update on how this progressed. Mr. Ware relayed that the goals and committee make-up are in place and that he will forward to the committee all the paperwork for their review.

NEW BUSINESS:

a.) Continuum of Care (CoC) – Mr. Teiji Epling

Mr. Ware introduced Mr. Epling to the Commission members and advised that Mr. Epling is a GWRC staff member who is responsible for the Continuum of Care program and is the HMIS Coordinator.

Mr. Epling advised that this coming Wednesday the CoC is conducting one of its largest projects which is the Point In Time count. Mr. Epling stated that the Point In Time count is done annually across the State of Virginia. The count is taken to survey the homeless individuals to obtain true data on the actual number of homeless people who reside in an area.

Mr. Epling stated that in 2014, within PD16, there were 201 true homeless people who currently were living in a place that was not considered appropriate for habitation. Mr. Epling advised that there are also less restrictive definitions for homelessness and this classification revealed that there were 972 homeless people within PD16.

Mr. Epling relayed that the Point In Time counts are completed one day each year for a full twenty-four hour time period. Mr. Epling stated that it is the goal for PD16 that this year's data will reflect a decrease in the region's homeless population. Mr. Epling stated that even though the State is not there yet; however, it is a goal to perform the Point In Time counts twice a year – once in the winter & once in the summer.

Mr. Kelly asked if the survey report that is given to each person is still the same 4-page form that has been used consistently in the past. Mr. Epling relayed that even though the form has been updated by him this year & even a few more questions were in fact included but unfortunately the form is still a 4-page document.

Mr. Withers asked if the draft numbers of the data collected would be available for review by the Commission at the upcoming February meeting. Mr. Kelly stated that he thought that both HUD and Department of Education were working together to develop one combined definition of what homelessness entails. Mr. Epling stated that as of now, two different definitions are in place. Mr. Kelly stated that he has volunteered for the last several years to assist with collecting the counts and asked Mr. Epling if he could receive one of the CoC surveys after the meeting so that he could familiarize himself with the questions to be asked. Mr. Epling relayed that a survey would be provided and that as soon as a report was available that the data would be provided to the Commission members.

Mr. Epling relayed that GWRC is partnering with Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH) in regard to getting a paid volunteer for the AmeriCorps Vista Program. Mr. Epling stated that the employee will be starting at GWRC in March and will work for a year's term of service. Mr. Epling stated that the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) is providing a \$10,000 grant to cover the required match.

Mr. Epling advised that the grant renewals with the Virginia Homeless Solutions Program (VHSP) are underway and for this region portions of it are used for staff salaries & services for GWRC & other agencies to include: Micah Ministries, Hope House, FAHASS, etc. Mr. Epling stated that the renewal application for this region will also include system performance measures. Mr. Epling stated that next year's full renewal application will also include data on turn-over rates, cost of housing an individual on a daily basis, homeless housing rates; etc.

Mr. Epling stated that the Mayors across the nation are in a challenge to end veteran homelessness by the year 2016. Mr. Epling stated that Mr. Hunter Snellings of the City Planning Department has met with Mayor Greenlaw and that based on 2014 Point In Time (PIT) numbers, there are less than 20 homeless veterans residing in the City that qualify under the true HUD definition of homelessness. Mr. Epling stated that the CoC is working to ensure that the veterans are in fact receiving the proper services and the goal is to have them all placed into permanent housing within the next two years.

Ms. Sellars asked regionally how is permanent housing defined. Mr. Epling stated that a homeless person needed to be classified as homeless for at least two years. Mr. Kelly stated that he thought it would be helpful to the commission members if a member list of all CoC agencies & contacts could be distributed. Mr. Epling advised that he would be happy to ensure this was circulated to the commission members and that currently the listing is being re-vamped but the agencies are all taking the first step. Mr. Ware stated that the new by-laws for the CoC were approved several months ago and this could be forwarded to the commission members as well.

b.) George Washington Planning District Regional Strategic Plan Update –Mr. Tim Ware

Mr. Ware distributed a handout of the George Washington Planning District Regional Strategic Plan. Mr. Ware advised that the last strategic plan was updated seven years ago and there has been no activity on-going since 2012. Mr. Ware stated that plans to revise and update are moving forward. Mr. Ware asked if the commission members wanted to discuss this further at an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Kelly stated that this plan was going to involve more than a 30-minute time slot so should be scheduled for discussion at a separate meeting day & time from the monthly GWRC Commission meetings.

There was commission consensus for Mr. Ware to schedule a meeting for discussion of the strategic plan updates at a meeting time in the upcoming future so that members would have a chance to review and comment on the existing plan update. Mr. Ware stated that this item would be added to the February GWRC agenda for continued discussion.

Adjourn The GWRC meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m. The next GWRC meeting is February 23, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

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