

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

March 19, 2018

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

MEMBERS PRESENT AND VOTING: Chair – Matt Kelly, **Fredericksburg;** **Caroline County:** Jeff Black & Nancy Long; **King George County:** Ruby Brabo & John Jenkins & **Spotsylvania County:** Greg Benton (in at 6:12); Meg Bohmke & Cindy Shelton, **Stafford County**

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chris Yakabouski, Spotsylvania County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Susanna Finn, City Planning Department; Tim Baroody, Fredericksburg City Manager (In at 6:21)

STAFF: Diana Utz (Presiding for Tim Ware); Paul Agnello & Nick Quint; FAMPO; Kate Gibson & Sam Shoukas, CoC; & JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Kelly 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 motion made by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Ms. Brabo, with all concurring, the agenda for the March 19th meeting was accepted as presented.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES (February 26, 2018) - (Action Item)

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Ms. Brabo, and all others in concurrence, the minutes from the February 26th meeting were approved as submitted, with typographical error noted by Ms. Bohmke to be made after conclusion of tonight's meeting.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT - None

DRAFT FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Utz advised the draft financial report is included in tonight's agenda packet and per comments from Mr. Ware; the report speaks for itself, with nothing new or alarming. Ms. Utz stated that if there are questions/concerns with the Draft Financial Report to please notify Mr. Ware who will be back in the office on Wednesday.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – No Report

OLD BUSINESS

a.) Executive Director Search – Mr. Matt Kelly

Mr. Kelly advised the members of the Executive Director Search committee are: Mr. Benton, Ms. Bohmke, Ms. Brabo, Mr. Kelly & Ms. Long. Mr. Kelly advised the search committee has met and received ratings from the search group consultants.

Mr. Kelly advised approximately 10-12 applications have been received and the closing date for submitting applications has now ended. Mr. Kelly stated the search committee will be meeting at FRA on March 22nd at 2:00 p.m. to discuss the next steps and make determination on how many applicants will be interviewed.

Ms. Bohmke stated the search committee also needs to determine which County Administrator/City Manager should be asked to be involved in the process. Mr. Kelly stated it was also recommended that Mr. Curry Roberts with the Fredericksburg Regional Alliance be asked to serve on the search committee as well. Mr. Kelly stated that both Mr. Foley (Stafford County Administrator) & Mr. Baroody (Fredericksburg City Manager) have both volunteered to serve on the search committee. Ms. Bohmke stated she did not see any reason why both of them should not serve as it would bring different perspectives from different localities to the search committee. Ms. Brabo stated she felt the extra individuals mentioned above should only be involved in the interview process and not be involved in the preliminary work being done by the search committee. This recommendation was endorsed by the search committee.

Mr. Kelly stated that with the Commission in the process of hiring a new Executive Director, he feels it is also time for the Commission to re-focus. Mr. Kelly stated that over the years numerous discussions have occurred on supporting a regional concept for dealing with issues such as: homelessness, emergency command systems, trash composting, waste management, broadband, affordable housing, etc. to mention a few. Mr. Kelly stated there is consent from the members to pursue these issues regionally; however, when a cost for these issues is presented, the issues seem to subside.

Ms. Brabo stated that while she as an individual member is in favor of sharing resources regionally; however, when the concern/issue is brought before her respective Board, they often times do vote to not participate.

Mr. Kelly stated he understands this occurs; however, feels the Commission needs for the start/stop process that has been ongoing for years to end. Regionally, if a commitment is made then we need to follow through. Mr. Kelly stated that the Commission needs to set 4-5 specific goals they want to pursue and establish deadlines on when the issue will become attainable.

Ms. Long stated the heart of an issue is not the problem. However, the structural process, the expense & the procedures for an item to materialize needs to be in place early in the year – before localities adopt their budgets for the upcoming year. Ms. Long stated having a detailed item with

cost estimates, benefits, etc. early in the year will be helpful as each locality begins its budget process.

Mr. Benton stated he too feels the Commission has bounced all over the place and we need better communication and on-going communication from all agencies in a more timely manner. Mr. Black stated he feels at times the Commission is its own worst enemy. Mr. Black stated 2 years ago the Commission established its top 5 regional goals; however, last year it was decided the top goal would be to jump to increasing awareness on the legislative agendas. Mr. Black stated we need to get away from the “flavor of the month” idea and set 3-5 regional goals that are going to be pursued and accomplished.

Mr. Black also stated that he feels the new executive director should be visible at board meetings within each jurisdiction, at least twice a year. Mr. Black stated the presence from the executive director at board meetings would enhance the Commission’s visibility; allow the director to have interaction with board members; develop a rapport; and when issues are presented for consideration and have already been explained by the executive director, they likely stand a better chance of getting approved.

Mr. Withers concurred that it seems the Commission has constantly changed its priorities and that the top five goals need to be established and pursued. Mr. Withers stated he feels it will be important for the new executive director to stay on task with these goals and to keep the Commission members on task as well.

Both Mr. Kelly & Ms. Brabo stated that while establishing 3-5 top priorities, that staying involved with the legislative agendas is critical. Both relayed this should not come to an “either/or” decision by the commission but instead should be two on-going issues at all times (legislative agenda & top regional projects).

Ms. Bohmke stated she will take the list of the many issues that have been addressed by the Commission for regional approaches back to her respective Board in Stafford County and get them to prioritize as well. She will bring their feedback to the April meeting and encouraged the other localities to do the same. At least this will give a fresh start to developing regional priorities and determine like needs/interests regionally. Ms. Bohmke also concurred that commissions/committees that meet from within GWRC need to constantly keep the GWRC committee updated and apprised on its endeavors.

There was committee concurrence to take these issues back to the respective Boards and for this item to be included on the April agenda for further and more in-depth conversation/discussion.

b.) GWRC Resolution No. 18-12, Approving the Selection of Audit for the George Washington Regional Commission for FY2018-2021 Under an On-Call Contract – Ms. Diana Utz, GWRC

Ms. Utz advised the above-referenced resolution is asking for approval of selecting Dunham, Aukamp & Rhodes to serve GWRC for FY2018-2021 as Audit under an on-call contract. Ms. Utz advised staff was authorized on January 22nd to solicit proposals for an on-call financial auditing service to be consistent with the approved GWRC Procurement Policy.

Ms. Utz stated two bids were received and a selection committee comprised of GWRC staff reviewed and rated both proposals. Ms. Utz advised all three of the committee members independently rated the two proposals and selected Aukamp & Rhodes as being the best for GWRC. Ms. Utz advised this firm has been the Commission's auditor for the last several years and have been pleased and satisfied with the work they have performed in the past. Ms. Utz also advised that effective June 30th, the Commission will have vacant employment positions in both the Executive Director's position and the Bookkeeper's positions and this may not be a time to consider pursuing a new auditor firm.

Ms. Utz advised the on-call contract requires four annual financial audits to be conducted beginning in FY2018 and ending in FY2021 with fees not to exceed \$48,925 over the life of the contract. Ms. Utz stated the resolution also includes a provision for Dunham, Aukamp & Rhodes to provide additional accounting services as needed beyond the \$48,925 stated price above. Ms. Utz stated this additional provision would not exceed \$4,000 per year (total of \$16,000 for the 4-year time period). Ms. Utz stated this provision has been included in previous contracts and to date, has never been needed.

Upon motion by Ms. Brabo and seconded by Ms. Long, with all members concurring, Resolution No. 18-12 was adopted by the George Washington Regional Commission at its March 19th meeting.

c.) Other Old Business - None

NEW BUSINESS

a.) Fredericksburg Affordable Housing Plan – Ms. Susanna Fin, Fredericksburg Planning Department

Ms. Fin advised she is tasked with developing a regional housing and homeless plan. Ms. Fin stated this plan is not designed to replace the on-going efforts by the CoC but is an effort to work with stakeholders and GWRC on establishing a regional housing and homeless plan.

Ms. Fin relayed the establishment of the regional work group will include GWRC representation and non-profit stakeholders to work with FAAR to undertake and develop a housing stock assessment. Ms. Fin stated the target populations will be defined and a two-tiered process developed that will include a regional housing plan effort to serve no income/low income families as well as workforce households.

Ms. Fin stated options/solutions will be compared to other successful best practices implemented in other jurisdictions outside of PD16 and that funding sources will also be identified. Ms. Fin stated after plans are identified organizations will be engaged to implement and manage the proposed programs.

Ms. Fin stated there will be categories defined which are having regional affordable units that include LIHTC, project based and other affordable housing financing that would establish a standard affordable amount of rent; and establish project based housing rents that are based strictly on a resident's household income. Ms. Fin advised that regionally 31% of households are paying too much rent in compared to their incomes.

Ms. Bohmke stated she understands the math in regard to family incomes and appreciates the education on the regional endeavor; however, would like to know how this region is different from all other areas nation-wide and how does it directly affect GWRC.

Ms. Fin stated that GWRC last worked on this issue in 2008 and currently the General Assembly is discussing mandates that could be imposed region-wide so PD16 needs to begin establishing new procedures.

Ms. Brabo stated the hardest obstacle is instilling in builders that the needs are for housing that accommodates lower income families, seniors, etc. Ms. Brabo stated the builders have the mindset that they want to only build 20 \$600,000 custom-made homes rather than building 60 \$200,000 rambler homes that the average populations within the region could afford.

Mr. Kelly stated that regional land use is part of the problem. Ms. Long asked what type of information is being relayed to developers in regard to the housing needs that exist within the region. Ms. Long stated builder/developer workshops need to be held so needs can clearly be explained and builders can then comply.

Ms. Fin stated regionally, the housing burden is greater than 30% of a family's income and is broken down by the following jurisdictions: Fredericksburg = 63%; Stafford = 50%; Spotsylvania = 47%; King George = 43%; & Caroline = 42% (i.e. 63% of homes available in Fredericksburg exceed a greater than 30% ratio of a family income that is designated for rent/mortgage). Ms. Fin stated that even though rentals are higher region-wide, the owners have more choices – i.e. they could agree to purchase a higher-priced home in Spotsylvania, knowing that the mortgage exceeds more than 30% of their monthly income or they could consider purchasing in either Caroline/King George and then driving 30+ miles to work sites, commercial developments, etc.

Ms. Fin stated that for the City of Fredericksburg, the median family household income is \$53,980 so the housing affordability ratio should be \$1,350 a month (this includes \$350 a month in utilities & actual rent for \$1,000 a month). Ms. Fin stated there are limited available rentals in the City that rent for \$1,000 a month. Ms. Fin stated there are 4,800 households under the median income and rental units under \$1,000 are 2,750 which presents a 2,050 gap of housing units.

Ms. Fin stated that since 1993 other regions state-wide to include: Alexandria (1993); Arlington (1998); Charlottesville (2007); & Fairfax/Norfolk (2015) implemented a local housing trust fund. Ms. Fin advised a Local Housing Trust fund is both a federal/state money generated option that allows regions to contribute to a trust fund that provides more resources to assist the populations. Mr. Withers asked if the current State funding service equates to \$6m and if this is an annual amount of funding available. Ms. Fin concurred.

Ms. Fin stated a Local Housing Trust fund allows for a region to be flexible in funding mechanisms for housing related projects. It is a program that can be funded by specific revenue sources from portions of real estate revenue or fees through other CIP dedications. Ms. Fin stated that on an average, there is \$6 leveraged for every Housing Trust fund dollar that is invested.

Ms. Fin stated that Affordable Dwelling Unit policy mandates are in effect in Albemarle, Alexandria, Fairfax & Loudoun. Ms. Fin advised these plans are offered to developers as incentives for increased densities requiring a percentage of an increase. Ms. Fin stated if these are approved by State legislature, it can then be mandated as a percentage of all by right developments. Ms. Fin stated it can also be set-up; to include a scaled fee to fund the necessary affordable developments through use of other mechanisms.

b.) Fiscal Year 2019 Rural Transportation Work Program (RTWP) – Mr. Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is the planning tool utilized for determining needs and projects for the urban areas within the region that includes the City of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania/Stafford counties. The Rural Transportation Work Program (RTWP) is the planning tool used for the rural areas within a locality. For GWRC, this includes Caroline and King George Counties.

Mr. Agnello advised the RTWP is an annual State grant to the PDC's that is used for performing transportation planning in the rural areas. Mr. Agnello relayed the FY2019 RTWP funding is \$72,500 which includes \$58,000 State/VDOT contributions and a GWRC match of 20% which equals \$14,500. Mr. Agnello stated the 20% GWRC match is paid by the locality dues paid to the MPO. Mr. Agnello stated that FAMPO performs the transportation planning for GWRC which includes development of the long-range plan; studies; and Smart Scale assistance. Mr. Agnello stated the FY2019 application grant deadline date is April 13th.

Mr. Agnello stated that some planned major FY2019 activities for the RTWP include the following:

- Round 3 – Smart Scale assistance
- On-going study/data for the US301/Rt. 207 planning efforts
- Development of a 2050 LRTP (this will include all updates from 301/207 studies, Smart Scale Round 3 results, &

updates per new federal requirements)

Mr. Agnello advised FAMPO is looking for endorsement tonight from GWRC for approval of Resolution No. 18-13 that endorses the FY2019 RTWP.

- i. GWRC Resolution No. 18-13, Endorsing the Fiscal Year
2019 Rural Transportation Planning Work Program – Paul Agnello

Upon motion by Mr. Black and seconded by Ms. Brabo, with all concurring, Resolution No. 18-13 was approved by GWRC at the March 19th meeting.

c.) Other New Business – None

ADJOURN GWRC MEETING – The March 19th GWRC meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held on April 16, 2018.

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

