

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

July 18, 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:** Ruby Brabo & Jim Howard; **Spotsylvania County:** Greg Benton & Paul Trampe and **Stafford County:** Meg Bohmke & Laura Sellers

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: David Swan, CTAG;

Gene Barbee, Robert Benson, Sr., Gerald Boynton, Ruth Boynton, Joyce Childress, Randy Comer, Renc'e Cornell, Tim Davis, Douglas Erin, Bonnie Garber, Tom Garber, David Johnston, Veronica Kelly, Penny Matter, Judy Pollock, Joe Sharrow, Sherry Sharrow, Victoria Tanenbaum, & Jim Van Camp - Citizens

STAFF: Tim Ware, Executive Director; Paul Agnello, Marti Donley, Daniel Reese, Lloyd Robinson & Nick Quint, FAMPO; Kate Gibson & Danielle O'Leary, 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 motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Long, with all in consensus, the agenda for the July 18th meeting was approved with the amendment requested by Mr. Howard for inclusion of item #11F – Personnel under the New Business category.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES (June 20, 2016) - (Action Item)

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, and all others in consensus, the minutes from the June 20th meeting were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The following citizens spoke in opposition to the Eastern By-Pass alternative being considered as part of the High-Speed Rail project.

Mr. Gerald Boynton, Spotsylvania County – Mr. Boynton stated that there were 200+ people who attended the meeting last week and no one in attendance is excited about an Eastern By-Pass

alternative. Mr. Boynton stated that he and other property owners received a vague letter from DRPT regarding the upcoming rail study. Mr. Boynton stated that from the map that was handed out at last week's meeting that the by-pass will run 300 yards from his house. Mr. Boynton stated that he, and many other neighbors, are very concerned about the increased noise, the property value declines, and safety issues. Mr. Boynton is asking that the Commission vote in opposition of the proposed Eastern By-Pass alternative.

Mr. Tim Davis – Spotsylvania County – Mr. Davis advised that his property is in the Woodford area of Spotsylvania County and borders on Caroline County as well. Mr. Davis stated that his in-laws reside in Ferry Farm in Stafford County. Mr. Davis stated that the by-pass alternative being considered is not taking into account the additional traffic congestion, the safety factors, and the noise levels from the freight trains, or the life style of property owners being displaced. Mr. Davis stated that as a result of a law passed in 2012 in regard to eminent domain, it states that properties cannot be taken if it is to assist a private entity. Mr. Davis stated that as clearly CSX will become the beneficiary, and will receive two additional rail lines for their use specifically, that he is asking the Commission to go on record in voicing opposition to the proposed Eastern By-Pass Study.

Ms. Bonnie Garber – Spotsylvania County – Ms. Garber stated that money should be used on infrastructure and not on building an Eastern By-Pass alternative. Ms. Garber stated that she was concerned with the well/septic system on her property as she has only one perk line on the property. Ms. Garber asked that the Commission go on record in opposition of the proposed Eastern By-Pass Alternative.

Mr. David Johnston – Stafford County – Mr. Johnston stated that he is a new resident to Stafford County but not a new resident to the region where he lived in King George County for 5 years and in the City of Fredericksburg for 4 years before re-locating to Stafford County. Mr. Johnston stated his home is in Argyle Heights where the rail lines are slated to run through. He is not looking forward to the increased traffic, congestion and safety concerns the By-Pass alternative would bring. Mr. Johnston is asking that the Commission reject the Eastern By-Pass option.

Ms. Judy Pollock – Spotsylvania County – Ms. Pollock stated that she had attended the meeting held last week. Ms. Pollock stated that Ms. Stock with DRPT stated that the Federal Railroad Administration will make the decision on which alternative is picked. Ms. Pollock wants to know what the chain of command for approving the project is. Ms. Pollock stated that most questions that were asked at last week's meeting were unanswered by Ms. Stock. Ms. Pollock stated that the train is at capacity and there are 3 options on the table for consideration, in addition to a no-build option. Ms. Pollock stated that the map that was provided at the meeting was a relic and wondered why it was even distributed. Ms. Pollock asked how this Commission will impact the By-Pass alternative option.

Mr. Joe Sharrow – Spotsylvania County – Mr. Sharrow stated that he is here tonight to state that he is strongly against the Eastern By-Pass alternative being presented and that frankly he is in opposition to any by-pass alternative being considered. Mr. Sharrow stated that he attended last week's meeting and found the meeting to be biased with a lot of sales talk and limited on actual facts. Mr. Sharrow advised that there are 4 questions that the region needs to get answered as quickly as possible & these are as follows: 1 – what special problem does an eastern by-pass

alternative solve; 2 – explanation of the 4th lane alternative; 3 – what are the cost associated with construction of a 4th track versus a 3rd lane, versus an Eastern By-Pass alternative; & 4 – will DRPT be including the cost estimated for the station improvements for the 3rd line because the project looks less expensive than the project will actually cost. Mr. Sharrow asked that the Commission go on record as being in opposition of the Eastern By-Pass alternative.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Ware advised that the Financial Report is included in tonight's agenda packet. Mr. Ware stated that currently the agency's balance is a positive figure in the amount of \$171,313.00. Mr. Ware advised that we started the year off with a \$100,000.00 balance and our audit is to begin in mid-August.

Mr. Black asked regarding the Line Item Revenues and Expenditures report about why the REV-Federal Contracts/Fees line item has a budgeted percent of \$118.23%. Mr. Ware advised that this figure represents unbudgeted expenses such as FAMPO fees, jurisdictional reimbursements, etc. all of which have no exact date on when they are received and when they are disbursed.

Ms. Bohmke asked if funds at the end of the year exceed \$100,000.00, do the excess funds get designated to something specific. Mr. Ware stated that the funding in excess of \$100,000.00 remains in the general GWRC account unless there is a specific designation indicating otherwise.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ware advised that the housing field trip for Monday, July 25th in Charlottesville has a few open slots if anyone here tonight has not already signed up but would still like to participate. Ms. Gibson with CoC stated the field trip is to learn about how Charlottesville has dealt with their homeless populations; what programs they have implemented; etc.

Mr. Ware stated that he was following-up with a request made from the Commission in scheduling a regional public management meeting. Mr. Ware relayed that the first meeting will be held at GWRC on August 15th at 10:00 a.m. and that anyone on the Commission is welcome to attend. Mr. Ware relayed that the response from the surrounding localities has been positive.

Mr. Ware advised that in response to the letter submitted by the Commission, to the State of Maryland regarding the Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge, GWRC is in receipt of a reply. The reply is dated June 23, 2016 and is from Pete Rahn, Chairman of the Maryland Department of Transportation. Mr. Ware advised that the letter indicates that the Nice Bridge is indeed a high priority item for the current Maryland Administration and claims to the contrary are untrue. Ms. Brabo asked if Mr. Ware would forward a copy of this letter to the Commission members and Mr. Ware advised that he would.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS:

a.) **Approval of Resolution No. 17-01, Approving Support of George Washington Regional Commission Smart Scale Priority Projects** – Mr. Paul Agnello, FAMPO

Mr. Agnello advised that the Smart Scale Priority projects that will be applied for have been discussed with the Commission at previous meetings and the project list has not changed. Mr. Agnello relayed that Resolution 17-01 is asking for adoption of these projects. Upon motion by Ms. Sellers and seconded by Mr. Kelly, with all in consensus, Resolution No. 17-01 was adopted by the George Washington Regional Commission at its July 18th meeting.

b.) **Point-in-Time Count** – Ms. Kate Gibson, CoC

Ms. Gibson advised that the Continuum of Care (CoC) is a network of organizations that work together to prevent homelessness and to end homelessness. Ms. Gibson stated that the CoC works together in a given region through a strategic planning process. Ms. Gibson advised that GWRC is the lead agency for Planning District 16 and they provide the local staffing and day-to-day program administration. Ms. Gibson stated that homelessness is defined as those citizens who are either veterans, disabled or living either in shelters, on the street, or in a vehicle.

Mr. Trampe stated that he was surprised to hear that the definition of homelessness in the State specifically designates those citizens who are disabled. Ms. Long asked if there are also other programs in the region and state that are designed to help someone who becomes homeless that is not being reflected as those citizens with disabilities. Ms. Gibson advised that there are programs within Planning District 16 that are geared to providing assistance to the entire homeless population. As citizens move through the system, Ms. Gibson stated that the ultimate goal is for a citizen to be mainstreamed with permanent housing and a support system in a short time frame.

Ms. Gibson stated that the CoC participated in the Point-In-Time survey that was held this past January. Ms. Gibson stated that the survey is completed once a year and surveys the homeless population within its region that are either sheltered or unsheltered. Ms. Gibson advised that the point-in-time contact for January, 2016 for this region was a total of 152; (118 households affecting 209 persons).

Ms. Gibson advised that a five-year point-in-time survey showed that the total number of homeless people within PD16 decreased; however, over the last five years, the figure has gone up and down. Ms. Gibson relayed that the state-wide total of homelessness is 7,001 and PD16's residents make up 3.10% of the total state percentage.

Ms. Gibson advised that the federal 10-year plan intends to end homelessness in ten years. Ms. Gibson stated that the Goals of Opening Doors goals are as follows: prevention of homelessness among veterans – completed in 2015; complete the job of ending chronic homelessness in 2017; preventing and ending homelessness for families with children by 2020; and to set a path to ultimately ending all types of homelessness.

Ms. Gibson relayed that the current permanent supportive housing funding in PD16 is funded by 50% from the federal government; 25% from private donors and foundations; 17% from rental income from the citizens in the program (everyone enrolled in the programs pays 30% of their income to the Federal Housing administration); and 18% from local churches.

Ms. Gibson state that the benefits to ending chronic homelessness in PD16 are as follows:

to provide an increase quality of life for the chronically homeless citizens

the ability to then focus existing resources on the non-chronic ensuring that they do not become homeless

a positive public relations for the community and local governments

an ultimate cost savings in the reduction of more expensive types of interventions

Ms. Gibson stated that the estimated annual cost savings are listed below:

Permanent Supportive Housing Costs - \$9,000 (per person)
Total for 25 persons = \$225,000

Cost savings for reduction in services - \$12,000-\$16,000 (per person)
Total for 25 persons = \$300,000 to \$400,000

Net Community Savings - \$3,000-\$7,000 (per person)
Total for 25 persons = \$75,000-\$175,000

c.) **Preliminary Expectations for the Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans** – Ms. Ruby Brabo, King George County

Ms. Brabo stated that two years ago she was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Chesapeake Bay EPA Watershed Commission. Ms. Brabo stated that they were recently advised that the Phase 3 planning expectations that were previously stated would take a year to implement; however, recent meetings of being three months into the process, the direction is that the implantations will be fast-tracked and everyone better get on board.

Ms. Brabo stated that EPA is seeking to tighten the watershed water quality standards on all localities within the Chesapeake Bay watershed area which in fact will have implications on other counties across the nation.

Ms. Brabo stated that NACo opposes any efforts being made by EPA to institute numeric water quality-based effluent limitations, or localized area pollution targets. Ms. Brabo stated that NACo opposes any provisions of any watershed-wide strategy that will penalize local governments by withdrawing current forms of financial assistance or imposing monitoring, management or other

similar requirements to the localities without providing sufficient resources allocated for a locality to achieve water quality objectives.

Mr. Trampe stated that he too is a member of the committee and a resolution has already been presented from the committee. Mr. Trampe advised that a policy is in place; however, EPA is overruling the policy.

Ms. Brabo stated that the rural, agricultural, and urban counties and cities in the large watersheds will be severely impacted by the increased compliance costs, the economic development impacts and the negative impacts on federal funding if EPA is in fact successful in imposing watershed-wide water quality standards. Ms. Brabo stated that she was asking the Commission to also endorse a resolution in opposition to EPA overruling the existing policy.

Upon motion by Mr. Howard and seconded by Mr. Trampe, with all in concurrence, GWRC will draft a resolution in opposition for Ms. Brabo to present at the upcoming meeting on Friday. Ms. Brabo advised that contact has also been made with each of the localities in PD16 asking that they submit a resolution of opposition as well.

d.) **DC2RVA High Speed Rail Update** – Mr. Tim Roseboom, DRPT

Mr. Roseboom was delayed and not at the meeting when the item above was discussed. Mr. Agnello advised that he would update the Commission. Mr. Agnello stated that DRPT and FRA are working to improve passenger rail service between Washington, DC & Richmond. They are in the process of evaluating potential environmental impacts and benefits that could occur if changes are made to CSX's rail line which runs parallel to I-95. Mr. Agnello stated that DRPT is the state lead with the EIS study and if money is allocated to the project it will still need both state and federal endorsements.

Mr. Agnello stated that the project will provide the link between Amtrak's Northeast Corridor and the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor which would enhance connectivity between Washington, DC & Richmond.

Mr. Agnello advised that the project will be evaluated in a Tier II EIS study that will describe actions needed to expand the rail capacity network and document whether the actions would affect the natural environment.

Ms. Bohmke stated that she is opposed to the Eastern By-Pass alternative being considered. Ms. Bohmke stated that there is no matrix presented to show the specifics of the EIS but that the process is moving full steam ahead with a draft to be released in late fall.

Ms. Long concurred with Ms. Bohmke's statement that no matrix of the project has been presented for review and no information provided on how/where the lines would go. Mr. Black advised that Caroline County has already endorsed a resolution of opposition to the Eastern By-Pass alternative option.

Mr. Agnello advised that staff would get with DRPT and get answers to questions raised tonight and have them brought back for additional discussion at the September meeting.

e.) **Other New Business** – None

There was a brief recess for the George Washington Regional Commission to discuss a personnel related topic.

f.) **Personnel Item** – Mr. Howard concluded the personnel item at 7:17 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE – None

ADJOURN

The July 18th meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. The next meeting will be held on September 19, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

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

