

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

September 19, 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:** Billy Withers; **Caroline County:** Nancy Long; **King George County:** Ruby Brabo & Jim Howard; **Spotsylvania County:** Greg Benton; and **Stafford County:** Meg Bohmke

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: David Jackson, Cambridge Systematics; Susan Gardner and Marcie Parker, VDOT; Tim Baroody, City of Fredericksburg; and Randy Comer, Citizen

STAFF: Tim Ware, Executive Director; Paul Agnello, Marti Donley, Nick Quint, Daniel Reese and Lloyd Robinson, FAMPO; Kate Gibson, CoC; and Diana Utz & Leigh Anderson, 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. Brabo and seconded by Mr. Howard, with all in consensus, the agenda for the September 19th meeting was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES (July 18, 2016) - (Action Item)

Upon motion by Ms. Brabo and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all in consensus, the minutes from the July 18th meeting were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT - None

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Ware advised that the Financial Report is included in tonight's agenda packet. Mr. Ware advised that the balance sheet indicates there is \$523,779.89 in assets and \$246,925.81 in liabilities for the month of August, 2016. Mr. Ware relayed that the year-to-date revenues received are \$396,901.77 versus \$294,925.81 in expenses.

Mr. Ware advised that the negatives shown on the balance sheet are for receivables that are outstanding; however, will be rectified once the State disperses the region's allocated funding. Mr. Ware stated that the funds are expected to be received in October.

Ms. Bohmke commented that since the balance sheet is essentially a snap shot of what is happening at that point in time, how critical is it really for the Commission's financial report as it changes as soon as the report has been printed. Ms. Bohmke stated that in reality, the revenues and expenses are really what are being focused on. Mr. Ware advised that the balance sheet gives a project outline at the bottom so you can always see where the Commission is project-wise.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ware advised that in tonight's agenda packet there is a hand-out under the yellow tab regarding GWRC leased parking spaces. Mr. Ware stated that this year we are going to do something a little different. Usually, we ask the Commission to approve a Resolution, but ultimately this results in requesting approval twice. Mr. Ware stated that the Commission approves the budget in June and the items in the Resolution are already included within the budget request anyway. This year, we are providing you with the list of what they are and if there are any questions we will be happy to answer them.

Regarding the leased park and ride spaces, all of the leased spaces being utilized by GWRideConnect with the exception of those in Caroline County are paid for through CMAQ funds. The leased spaces in Caroline County are paid from the GWRC DRPT grant.

Mr. Black asked regarding the leased spaces in Caroline, is the number of utilized spaces available still adequate or are additional spaces needed at this time? Ms. Utz stated that currently we lease 25 spaces and these spaces are currently leased by permit parking only. Currently we have more permits available than utilized spaces. Ms. Utz relayed that the commuting in Caroline County fluctuates daily – some days we have 15 commuters utilizing the spaces and other days we have 10 commuters utilizing them. Ms. Utz stated that right now the number of spaces needed is not being exceeded. Ms. Utz stated that also in Caroline County we have the VDOT Park & Ride lot at Carmel Church below Ladysmith which is virtually empty. It is being monitored regularly but now parking options in Caroline County are not a critical area of concern for GWRideConnect.

Ms. Utz stated that the other leased parking areas within the region also still have available spaces as well so we are getting ready to put these available lots on our commuter lot maps so we can generate more interest in the available spaces. Ms. Utz stated that all of the leased spaces on the handout are still needed and we do not want to lose any of the sites.

Ms. Utz relayed that currently all property owners are also pleased and satisfied with the lease agreements in place and all have indicated that they wish to see this option remain in force. Ms. Utz stated that all lease holders wish to renew their current lease agreements.

Mr. Black asked if the availability of these leased spaces is also put on an individual locality web-site. Ms. Utz stated that if a commuter calls GWRideConnect, they are told about the leased spaces and if they express an interest in utilizing them then they need to speak with her and then the parking permit passes are issued accordingly. Ms. Utz stated that we are trying to keep an accurate count on the utilization so we do not run into a situation whereby we have more commuters than we have spaces allocated for. Ms. Utz stated that she did not have a problem with an individual locality

placing this information on their web-sites; however but still request that if commuters are interested that they still need to come through GWRideConnect in order to obtain an assigned parking permit.

Ms.Bohmke asked for more clarification on the leased lots in Stafford County. In Chatham, where are the assigned parking spaces located as that is a large parking area. Ms. Utz advised that the leased spaces at Chatham are to the far right of the lot and are labeled with green dots on the assigned parking spaces.

Ms. Utz stated that there is also additional parking at Claiborne Run going up the hill by the CVS that is on the left and the restaurant that is on the right. Ms. Bohmke asked if Hugh Cosner owns these facilities as well. Ms. Utz stated that GWRideConnect does not lease from Mr. Cosner.

Ms. Bohmke asked where specifically the lot is located at in Claiborne Run. Ms. Utz stated that directly across the street from the Chatham Heights traffic light, you cross over to Claiborn and go past the CVS. You go up the hill to the real estate office and the commuter lot is in the real estate office site. Ms. Utz stated that there are 15 spaces available in this lot and this is an interesting lot. Ms. Utz stated that the Schooler properties off of Butler Road own the lot and Stafford County covers this lot under the county's insurance plan. Ms. Utz stated that this lot is the only leased lot that is covered under an insurance plan.

Ms. Bohmke asked what the cost per space is. Ms. Utz stated that the spaces cost \$1.00 per space, per day and the lease agreements only cover parking from Monday-Friday. The lease agreement also requires that the property owners keep the lots clean, clear and marked and they also must allow a van pool operator to park a van in the lot overnight.

Mr. Ware advised at the last meeting there was discussion regarding a regional waste program and he was charged with bringing together the public works directors and facility directors. Mr. Ware stated that a meeting was held the first part of August and we did have representation from each locality in attendance at the meeting.

Mr. Ware stated it was a lukewarm reception so the decision was made to talk with Dr. Ficklestein at the University of Mary Washington to see if he could provide a waste assessment in order to keep the discussion ongoing. Mr. Ware stated that it appears as of now that there is very little appetite in moving forward. Mr. Ware stated that sometime in the spring of 2017 the committee will possibly put together a regional waste forum to determine what new technology is available, etc.

Mr. Withers stated that he thinks this is an idea for a long-term solution and not necessarily a short-term goal and will guide the Commission on providing insight on how we can do what we are now doing better.

Lastly, Mr. Ware advised that the annual elected official's dinner will be held on October 19th from 6-8:00 p.m. and will be hosted by Spotsylvania County. Mr. Ware stated that invitations and more specifics will be forthcoming.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS:

a.) Go Virginia Update – Mr. Tim Ware, GWRC

Mr. Ware stated that he wanted to give an update on where we are and exactly what “Go Virginia” is. Mr. Ware advised that basically it is a public/private partnership to bring in economic development to all regions within the Commonwealth.

Mr. Ware stated that there are three components to the funding which are Capacity Building, Regional Allocated funding; and Competitive Allocated funding. Mr. Ware stated that at this time it appears there will be 9-12 regional councils and will not be 21 regional councils that coincide with the 21 PDC’s. Mr. Ware stated that there will be \$500,000 per region allocated for strategic planning purposes and this funding will be awarded as soon as the State Board is up and running, probably early in 2017.

Mr. Ware stated that the regional allocated funding is based on population and a \$1.45 per capita, per year allocation will become available. Mr. Ware advised that the competitive allocated funding amounts are still not finalized to date and currently have not been approved by the Virginia General Assembly.

Mr. Ware advised that the funding for the first year beginning in 2017 with \$5.5 million dollars allocated to each region allocated for capacity building. In the second year, an additional \$3.5 million dollars will be allocated for capacity building and a \$12.2 million dollar funding source to each region which will be allocated on a per capita formula. Finally, \$14.3 million will be available for competition grants.

Mr. Ware stated that this is the task that has been assigned to the Virginia Growth/Opportunity Board which is essentially the overseer committee for the entire state process. Mr. Ware stated that this committee will be comprised of 24 members to include 4 members from the House and 3 members from the Senate. Mr. Ware advised that all 7 members from the House/Senate have already been appointed. The remaining members will be non-legislative citizens who will be appointed by the Senate, the Speaker of the House, or the Governor.

Mr. Ware relayed that Mr. Joe Wilson from the GWRC region has been nominated by the Speaker of the House to serve on the committee so we do have a local connection serving as a representative.

Mr. Ware advised that the regional councils (9-12 of them) will be comprised of 11-21 board members. The membership has to be a majority from the private sector and then the required membership is mostly governmental agencies so at least one more private sector is needed to make up the majority.

Mr. Ware stated that the PDC's were involved in helping to write the legislation and to ensure that the PDC's would remain involved throughout the process. Mr. Ware stated that as soon as we saw the plans fall into place, the PDC's started creating their own maps. With only 9-12 councils, it was clear that not every PDC would have its own council so compromises came into play.

Mr. Ware referenced the map in tonight's power point presentation and stated that this region would, as of now, focus on Region #6. This is the currently planned region for GWRC and will also contain the Middle Peninsula and the Northern Neck PDC's. Mr. Ware stated in the original configuration, the Eastern Shore PDC was also included but due to its geographical locations that would have made attending meetings a two-day process, it was decided that aligning this PDC with us was not feasible. The Eastern Shore PDC ultimately requested to be assigned with the Hampton Roads PDC. Mr. Ware advised that Gloucester County is also aligning with Hampton Roads as they are actually already paying dues to both PDC's.

Mr. Ware stated that there has been a little controversy to date with the map alignments. Everyone in the State has agreed to work with the maps as detailed with the exception of our region. Mr. Ware advised that the Middle Peninsula PDC feels there should be a specific water peninsula region assigned as a Chesapeake Bay regional specification which would include the Northern Neck, the Middle Peninsula and the Eastern Shore.

However, the Eastern Shore has already agreed to go with the Hampton Roads PDC and the Northern Neck PDC has stated they want no part of being assigned to a Chesapeake Bay region. The GWRC stance is we will be happy with anyone that we are assigned to with the exception of being aligned with Northern Virginia.

Mr. Ware relayed that the GWRC Chairman received a call from a House member from King George County who indicated he was not in favor of the proposed alignment either. Mr. Ware stated that Delegate Hodges really wants to see this PDC's alignment to be associated with the Chesapeake Bay.

Ms. Long stated that she can understand King George's preference due to travel-wise and interest-wise concerns that the regions would be have a lot of similar issues to deal with. Mr. Black stated that he thinks the alignments have to also be based on populations whereby each district would become equally populated.

Ms. Brabo stated that if the Eastern Shore has already aligned with Hampton Roads and the Northern Neck wants no alignment with Hampton Roads, then how can Delegate Hodges mandate the alignments. Mr. Ware stated that the General Assembly should not be involved in the alignment process at all so the Speaker of the House is currently conducting conversations with Delegate Hodges.

Mr. Ware relayed that he is on the Rules Committee and this committee will be voting on the current map alignments, or a modified map alignment, within the next two weeks. Mr. Ware stated that right now, the general consensus is that the map presented tonight will be the one that is approved.

Ms. Brabo stated that as there is not another meeting before then, if anything changes on the map alignments would Mr. Ware send the GWRC members an updated email. Mr. Ware acknowledged that the GWRC members would be kept apprised.

Mr. Ware stated that even after the Rules Committee approves a map that the State Board has to be the one who ultimately approves each region so the alignments could still potentially change. Mr. Withers stated that with the budget restrictions and short falls in place do we think this is going to even more forward anyway. Mr. Ware stated that this was a great question and right now no answers are available. Mr. Ware stated though as this effort is primarily private industry led, this is a plus in it moving forward.

b.) 2018 GWRC Local Dues Structure – Mr. Tim Ware, GWRC

Mr. Ware advised that budget time is rolling around again. This is the time of the year that the Commission receives a request for dues for the upcoming year. The dues requested are based on the Weldon Cooper population estimates. Mr. Ware stated that GWRC is requesting that dues for FY2018 will remain the same as those approved this year. Mr. Ware advised that the dues to be requested will be 64.3 per capita and the increased will be approximately \$2,000 more in total dues.

Ms. Bohmke asked what has been the five-year historical average for the dues structure. Mr. Ware stated that GWRC has requested 64.3 for a long time; however, the approved amount has not always been paid in full to GWRC. Mr. Ware stated that two years ago, since he has been employed here, was the first time that total funding was paid to the agency.

Ms. Bohmke commented with that statement then does this mean in the past that some localities were not paying their total share. Mr. Ware concurred and stated that hopefully this issue is now behind us and thinks it was partially attributed to the recession and the agency simply had to do make do with the budgeted shortfalls.

Mr. Ware stated that the reason the dues are so important is that approximately 90% of the dues received goes to pay the local matches for the transportation related programs, the Continuum Care program and the GWRideConnect program and very little is being applied to our general funds.

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. Howard, with all in consensus, the FY2018 dues request was approved as presented.

Mr. Agnello advised that the following two Resolutions are Smart Scale Resolutions that FAMPO is asking for endorsement from GWRC.

c.) Approval of Resolution No. 17-02, Approving Support for King George and Caroline County 2016 Smart Scale Project Applications to State for FY18-23 SYIP Funding Consideration – Mr. Paul Agnello, FAMPO

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution No. 17-02 is seeking approval for King George and Caroline counties 2016 Smart Scale project applications to be submitted to the State for the FY18-23 SYIP funding consideration. Mr. Agnello relayed that this includes three projects; two being submitted by King George County and one from Caroline County.

Upon motion by Mr. Howard and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all in consensus, Resolution No. 17-02 was adopted by GWRC.

d.) Approval of Resolution No. 17-03, Approving Support of George Washington Regional Commission Smart Scale priority Projects – Mr. Paul Agnello FAMPO

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution No. 17-03 is requesting approval and support for the three projects being submitted on behalf of GWRC for Smart Scale project consideration. Mr. Agnello stated that the three projects being submitted are: improvements to the VRE Brooke/Leland stations; construction of a new Park & Ride lot on the Route 3 East corridor; and a bicycle/pedestrian project along Lafayette Boulevard.

Upon motion by Ms. Brabo and seconded by Ms. Long, with all in consensus, Resolution No. 17-03 was adopted by GWRC.

e.) Approval of Resolution No. 17-04, Endorsing the George Washington Region Transportation Opportunities for Regional Economic Growth Report – Mr. David Jackson Agnello, Cambridge Systematics

Mr. Nick Quint advised that Resolution No. 17-04 is the result of a task staff was assigned that began in March. A draft update was provided to the Commission in June. Mr. Quint advised that Mr. David Jackson with Cambridge Systematics would be providing an update at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Jackson advised that the initial purpose was to create a regional economic development strategy that analyzes the relationship between transportation and economic development to allow a region's projects to be possibly scored higher within the Smart Scale project process.

Mr. Agnello advised that this process has resulted in a lot of staff and consultant time over the last six months and no other MPO has pursued implementing an economic development plan other than the Hampton Roads MPO. Mr. Agnello stated that Hampton Roads submitted their plan with the first round of HB2/Smart Scale applications and their projects did appear to score higher than areas who did not submit an economic development plan. Mr. Agnello stated that it is staff's intent to also submit an economic development plan for round 2 of the Smart Scale application process.

Mr. Jackson stated that there was a connection between economic development and project funding decisions. In the first round it appears that the region may have lost opportunities as the projects submitted did not have that connection. Mr. Jackson stated that the initial reason for the report was to strive for a stronger connection between the two.

Mr. Jackson stated though as the study evolved, it became clear that there is more involved with transportation investments and economic development strategies. Mr. Jackson stated that the

purpose of the study was for considering vulnerabilities, review challenges and focus on an intended outcome.

The vulnerabilities focused on the fluctuations in Federal expenditures and priorities; the unreliable I-95 interstate system; and the increasingly congested transportation system. The challenges resulted in a local, diverse and professional economic base for a constrained transportation mobility and access. The intended outcome was to lay the groundwork for linking transportation investments more strongly to the desired economic future for the region to be more relevant for Smart Scale scoring, FAST Act provisions, grant programs, etc.

Mr. Jackson stated that the study developed a regional economic profile which showed where we have been; where we are today; and where we are going. We have continued to be one of the fastest growing regions in the Commonwealth. Today we have 37% of the workforce commuting outside of the region with more than 50% spending an hour or more commuting each day in each direction. The region continues to grow and by 2040 the population is expected to more than double and employment increases to rise to 70%.

Mr. Jackson advised that the economic development goals all have federal, state, regional, and local connections. Five regional goals were developed which are as follows:

- 1.) Cultivate a diverse economy that will attract new businesses and support business retentions;
- 2.) Accelerate and enhance access and amenities that would serve employment, freight, or activity centers;
- 3.) Promote tourism as a key driver for regional economic development and quality of life opportunities;
- 4.) Revitalize downtown and riverfront areas to initiate commercial development; and
- 5.) Leverage strategic location and existing transportation assets that will continue to promote re-investments as well as new developments

Mr. Jackson stated that the economic growth factors highlighted the regional attributes that the skilled workforce will continue to grow in the region given the high quality of life, the high quality of education, recreational and social opportunities. The region's location is an asset given its proximity to Washington, DC. This also leaves the transportation system as a key variable for continued growth and the attraction for future jobs. Mr. Jackson relayed that based on a 2015 survey that was part of the VTrans 2040 development over 85% of employers rated the highway access system as important or very important for making future site selections. The surveys by industry also showed a common theme that the critical importance of an efficient and adjacent transportation system that provides access to multiple modes of transit is a high priority site selection component.

Mr. Jackson stated that the economic development model shows that if you create a great place first; people will come; allowing jobs to follow; and resulting in a community that thrives. Mr. Jackson stated that FAMPO staff assessed the level of support for the five regional economic development goals and found that the goals connected to 28 regionally significant projects within the region's LRTP and TIP.

Mr. Jackson stated that the regionally significant projects that were reviewed were based on the support of the five goals and each project reviewed received a score of high, medium or low. Every project reviewed received at least one high score. Thirteen projects received two or more high scores. Mr. Jackson advised that a high score to a project means that the project provides a direct and positive impact toward the region's goals. Mr. Jackson stated that even though a high, medium, or low score was not assigned, there was a statement of support included for over 240 additional projects.

Ms. Brabo asked if the highlighted four projects were the top four rated projects. Mr. Jackson stated no they were not the top four highest rated projects but were projects that showed and depicted diversity. In regard to Slide #9, Ms. Brabo asked for clarification on what the parenthesis on the highlighted projects referred too. Mr. Jackson relayed that the numbers in the parenthesis indicate the number of goals each selected project supports.

In closing, Mr. Jackson stated that he next steps will be an ongoing implementation of the SYIP; continued efforts to show connection between applications and regional economic development goals within the Smart Scale application process; to continue to take advantage of federal grant opportunities as they become available; to focus on planning and consensus building that will identify solutions that will address major risks to economic growth; and finally to set the stage for regional goal setting and prioritization for the 2045 LRTP.

Upon motion by Ms. Brabo and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all in consensus, Resolution No. 17-04 was adopted by GWRC.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Howard moved, and it was seconded by Mr. Withers, that GWRC go into closed session pursuant to State Code Section 2.2-3711(A)1, for the purpose of discussing issues related to personnel.

It was moved by Mr. Howard and seconded by Ms. Long that GWRC return to public session and certify that only public business matters lawfully exempt from public meeting requirements by Virginia Law, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion concerning the closed session were heard, discussed or considered.

Upon return to public session, Mr. Howard moved, and it was seconded by Mr. Withers, to award Mr. Ware a salary increase of 5% retroactive to July 1, 2016.

ADJOURN

The September 19th meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m. The next meeting will be held on October 17, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

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