

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

October 17, 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: Eldon James, Regional Legislative Liaison; Mark Stone, VDEM Region 2; & Rupert Farley (In at 6:17), CTAG

STAFF: Tim Ware, Executive Director; Paul Agnello, Marti Donley, Nick Quint, Daniel Reese and Lloyd Robinson, FAMPO; Kate Gibson, CoC; and Leigh Anderson & JoAnna Roberson, 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

Mr. Black advised that under category 10, New Business, that two new agenda items needed to be added and they are as follows: 10F – Evaluation Forms needed from Commission Members in regard to performance evaluation completed on Mr. Tim Ware from the September meeting & 10G – Closed Session for purpose of discussing a legal matter.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all in consensus, the amended agenda for the October 17th meeting was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES (September 19, 2016) - (Action Item)

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Ms. Long, with Ms. Sellers abstaining and all others in consensus, the minutes from the September 19th 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 relayed that the Commission still remains financially sound and the balance sheet, revenues and expenditures are included in tonight's agenda packet.

Mr. Withers asked if the 28% itemized line item regarding salaries listed on the October report balances out at year-end. Mr. Ware concurred that it would. Ms. Bohmke asked what the loan to Union Bank was used for and when it was expected to be paid back in full. Mr. Ware stated that this loan was obtained for the renovation of the building when GWRC initially occupied it and that it is anticipated being paid off in full by end of year in December 2018.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ware advised that he had three items to apprise the Commission of and these are as follows:

- 1.) the Port Royal Water Trail project has been completed – Mr. Ware advised that this project was funded with an application made to Coastal Zone Management;
- 2.) Wednesday, October 19th, from 6-8:00 p.m. is the annual elected official's dinner – Mr. Ware advised that Spotsylvania County is hosting the dinner this year and it will be held at Stephenson Ridge; and
- 3.) Mr. Ware advised that Mr. Daniel Reese was leaving the FAMPO staff and was re-locating back to his home town in Pennsylvania. Mr. Ware stated that Mr. Reese has been a great asset over his years of tenure here. The Commission members expressed appreciation to Mr. Reese for his service and wished him well on his new career endeavors

OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Brabo advised that a meeting was recently held with the Local Association of Counties. Ms. Brabo stated that unfortunately, after a four-hour meeting, that EPA's position remains the same on waste water management procedures to the local jurisdictions. Ms. Brabo stated that the State is expected to accept the local mandates. Ms. Brabo relayed that the State is pushing the issue back to EPA asking for flexibility. Ms. Brabo stated that the only positive item from the meeting is that each State will be allowed to define what "local" entails and this could be designated to a specific locality, to a region, to an mpo, etc.

Mr. James stated that until the elections are over in November that legislation is not expected to make any changes at this time to the existing policies. Mr. James stated that informal meetings have been held and the request is strongly being pushed that the EPA allocations use planning numbers and not regulatory numbers when making and implementing waste water regulations.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a.) **Regional Legislative Agenda**– Mr. Eldon James, Regional Legislative Liaison

Mr. James distributed a handout which listed the VACo Region 7 – North Central Virginia 2017 Legislative issues. Mr. James stated that the draft was released on October 7th and there are no significant changes from last year on the issues that will be presented in 2017.

Mr. James stated that the following issues will be presented this year: Tax reform and Local Revenues; Transportation; Broadband; Children's Services Act (this was formerly the Comprehensive Services Act bill); Chesapeake Bay Restoration; Storm water Management, Erosion & Sediment Control and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act; Alternative On-Site Septic Systems; Water Supply; State Funding for Local and Regional Jails; Education Funding; Economic and Workforce Development; and Local Land Use Authority.

Mr. James stated that the major issue of contention is the proffer issue. Mr. James advised that everyone got blind-sided with the recent changes and restrictions and that this also resulted in disagreements with the association.

Mr. James stated that the proffer changes resulted in a small percentage of the membership not being willing to compromise. Mr. James stated that as a result of the small percentage not compromising that some individual localities have out rightly appealed the new decisions. Mr. James stated that conditional zoning that helped the governing bodies is now gone. Mr. James stated that money and off-site proffers are essential in development. Mr. James stated that now the development communities will have major denials. Mr. James did state that no changes in the proffer bill are expected to be implemented this year and legislators do feel that a potential new solution will come to be.

Mr. James advised that inclusion of meal taxes is being supported this year; with more emphasis placed on road improvements and broadband opportunities in the rural areas also being moved up for consideration on the list of priorities.

Mr. Kelly stated that the City of Fredericksburg is not part of VACO #7; however, the issues that are again being submitted this year for consideration are from the same "wish" list that the region submitted twenty years ago. Mr. Kelly stated that he does not see anything different or positive from the report distributed tonight.

Ms. Brabo stated that each locality has its own list of specifics and these usually vary in importance from locality to locality so it is hard to have specific requests submitted. Mr. Kelly stated that he feels as a Commission, that a legislative committee focus group needs to be formulated much earlier in the year prior to the items being submitted for legislature reviews, so that the top three regional "wish" list items can be presented collectively from the entire region.

Mr. James stated that his desire is to receive more specific requests; however, he needs help from those here. Mr. James relayed that emails were sent out in July asking for feedback, etc. and unfortunately very few comments were submitted. Mr. James stated that the draft process needs to begin sooner in the year as well. Mr. James concurred with Mr. Kelly's comment on GWRC forming a legislative committee focus group that could begin working together with him directly in the May/June time frames would only be a positive step for everyone. There was consensus from the Commission members that a focus group would be implemented early in 2017 and will plan to meet regularly with Mr. James so that maybe the top three regional priorities can be presented and hopefully awarded.

b.) **Virginia Department of Emergency Management**– Mr. Mark Stone, VDEM Region 2

Mr. Mark Stone with VDEM stated that last year a strategic review of the agency was conducted and in the re-organizing findings that in order to be prepared for the wide range of challenges in today's dynamic risk environments that VDEM must adjust the way the mission is carried out.

Mr. Stone stated that the new re-organization will better enable VDEM to serve its stakeholders by having enhanced collaboration efforts occurring between local and state emergency managers, first responders, federal, private and non-private partners, and the residents of the State of Virginia. Mr. Stone state that the re-organization will also allow VDEM to better focus on its mission and provide a better span of control for the leadership.

Mr. Stone advised that in order to promote a more resilient Commonwealth that Governor McAuliffe has laid out a vision for emergency management that includes the following:

- Building regional capacity
- Improving professional development
- Ensuring quick and integrated responses
- Implementing better strategic and sustainable programs

Mr. Stone advised that with the new re-alignments that the Fredericksburg region is now a member of Region 2 which encompasses from Winchester to King George. Mr. Stone stated that the region comprises most every area locally; however, avoids the Northern Virginia region. Mr. Stone relayed that Stafford County is actually aligned with the Northern Virginia region; however, due to quicker response times and local needs, Northern Virginia has transferred the management of Stafford County to be overseen by Region 2.

Mr. Stone stated that he completes a lot of work from home; however, his actual office is based in Culpeper as it gave a closer proximity to the Winchester region. Mr. Stone relayed that he wanted to just introduce himself to the Commission tonight and let them know that he is available should needs or issues arise. Mr. Stone stated that he looks forward to developing an on-going working relationship with the Commission.

c.) **Approval of Resolution No. 17-05, Endorsement of 2015 Base Year Population and Employment Control Totals for the George Washington Region for Use in the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan**– Mr. Daniel Reese, FAMPO

Mr. Reese stated that Resolution No. 17-05 is asking endorsement from the Commission to utilize the 2015 base year population and employment control totals for the region to be incorporated into the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Mr. Withers stated that it seems that the growth rate has been slightly less than what was predicted from the 2010 census and he is sure that a lot of this was directly related to the recession; however, asked if there is any indication that this trend will continue. Mr. Reese advised that the 2015 projections have factored in the trends and feels the 2015 predictions are now more accurate.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Sellers, with all in consent, Resolution No. 17-05 was endorsed by the George Washington Regional Commission.

d.) **High Speed Rail Update** – Mr. Paul Agnello FAMPO

Mr. Agnello advised that an informational presentation was given to the CTB at their meeting held last month. Mr. Agnello stated that the next steps with the DC2RVA project are as follows: to finalize costs in the model; to schedule pre-public hearings and briefings to the localities, to the elected officials, to the CTB, etc.; to obtain an FRA DEIS review; to have a Draft EIS release made available in November; to schedule draft EIS public hearings in December; to provide a 45-day public comment period; compilation of the public comments; a CTB review; finalization of a service development plan, the preliminary engineering, and any additional analysis; with a final EIS recommendation being submitted to FRA who will then make a public record of decision.

Mr. Kelly advised that Fredericksburg City Council is holding a public informational meeting, basically for the citizens of Fredericksburg, but is certainly open to any citizen, official, etc. who would like to participate. Mr. Kelly stated that the meeting will be held in the Council Chamber room on October 27th. Mr. Kelly stated that DRPT will actually be leading the meeting and a presentation will be given to the CTB from them.

Ms. Bohmke stated that if the meeting is occurring next week, what new information is expected to be revealed. Mr. Kelly stated that he did not know if any new information was going to be available by next week or not, but that again it was specifically designed as an informational meeting for the citizens of Fredericksburg. Ms. Bohmke stated that this item has resulted in a lot of controversy across the region and that she did not feel a 45-day public hearing comment time frame is sufficient. Mr. Agnello advised that the 45-day public hearing comment period is stipulated and enforced by the NEPA requirements.

Mr. Agnello advised that included in tonight's agenda packet are two editorials that have been submitted to the Free Lance Star. Mr. Agnello stated that staff is not endorsing either letter; however, the letters are expressing opposite comments – one is adamantly opposed to the eastern by-pass alternative; whereas, the other is in favor. Mr. Agnello stated they were included in tonight's agenda packet simply for Commission member review if desired.

e.) **Other New Business** (if any) - None

f.) **Performance Evaluation Forms**

Mr. Black advised that as a result of the performance evaluation completed on Mr. Ware at the September meeting that each Commission member needs to complete a written evaluation form. Mr. Black stated that the forms distributed tonight were actually designed for another agency and that once everyone completes their evaluation, the form will be revised to reflect action from the George Washington Regional Commission and include commission members comments. Mr. Black stated that a final copy will be distributed to the members at the October meeting.

CLOSED SESSION (Closed Session)

Mr. Howard moved, and it was seconded by Mr. Withers, with all in consent, that GWRC go into closed session for the purpose of discussing a legal matter.

Mr. Kelly moved, and it was seconded by Mr. Withers, with all in consent, that GWRC come back into regular session.

All members certified that only legal matters were discussed in closed session.

ADJOURN

Upon motion by Mr. Howard and seconded by Ms. Long, the October 17th meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m. The next meeting will be held on November 21, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

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

