

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

February 26, 2018
The Robert C. Gibbons Conference Room
406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg Virginia

MEMBERS PRESENT AND VOTING: Vice-Chair – Meg Bohmke, Stafford; Caroline County: Jeff Black; King George County: Ruby Brabo & John Jenkins (in at 6:20) & Spotsylvania County: Greg Benton (in at 6:50) & Chris Yakabouski

MEMBERS ABSENT: Matt Kelly & Billy Withers, City of Fredericksburg; Nancy Long, Caroline County; & Cindy Shelton, Stafford County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Liz Povar, Riverlink Group; Susanna Finn, City Planning Department; Dave Cooper, Thurman Brisben; Randy Comer, Thrasher Group; Elaine Diepenbrock, Stafford County Citizen

STAFF: Tim Ware, Executive Director; Paul Agnello, Marti Donley & Nick Quint; FAMPO; Kate Gibson & Sam Shoukas, CoC; and Diana Utz & JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Bohmke called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m. with no quorum present; which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

(The Action items were delayed at the onset of the meeting; presentations were made; and action items were voted on later in the meeting once a quorum was present).

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING AGENDA: Upon motion made by Ms. Brabo and seconded by Mr. Black, with all concurring, the agenda for the February 26th meeting was accepted as presented.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES (January 22, 2018) - (Action Item)

Upon motion by Mr. Black and seconded by Ms. Brabo, and all others in concurrence, the minutes from the January 22nd meeting were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT - None

DRAFT FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Ware advised that the Financial Report is included in tonight's agenda packet. Mr. Ware advised that the Commission's total assets through February 26th are \$549,988.16 with total liabilities of \$104,037.79. Mr. Ware relayed agency balance for revenues and expenditures are \$445,950.34.

Upon motion by Mr. Black and seconded by Ms. Brabo, with all concurring, the draft financial report for February 26th was accepted as submitted.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ware advised that scheduling of the elected official's dinner is being finalized and will be held in early June and staff is looking for a locality to host the event. Mr. Ware relayed that a presentation from the Chesapeake Watershed organization will occur at the dinner. Mr. Yakabouski offered for Spotsylvania County to host the dinner. Mr. Ware advised that more specific information will be available regarding the date, time, & location at the upcoming March meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

a.) Executive Director Search – Mr. Matt Kelly

Mr. Kelly was not in attendance; however, Mr. Ware advised that the position and job description for the Executive Director's position for GWRC has been finalized. Mr. Ware stated the search committee has concluded meeting with consultant and job posting is listed on several different websites. To date, a few applications have been received for review but the application deadline is March 9th. Mr. Ware stated another search committee meeting is scheduled for March 22nd and it has been requested by the committee that a local CAO also serve on the committee to provide perspective in the interview process from a local government administrator. Mr. Ware asked the committee members to meet with their boards and if a Cao is willing to serve to notify GWRC. Mr. Ware stated this item would be addressed again at the March 19th meeting.

b.) GWRC Resolution No. 18-11, Issuing Support for Community Initiative to Address Unsheltered Homelessness in Planning District 16 – Ms. Kate Gibson, CoC

Ms. Gibson provided a brief update on the Unsheltered Homelessness initiative to the GWRC Commission. Since the last meeting, Ms. Gibson advised that presentations have now been made to the City Council and all 4 of the respective Board of Supervisors. Ms. Gibson relayed that included in tonight's agenda packet is also a proposal that has been adopted by the CoC should the initiative be implemented if fully funded.

Ms. Gibson stated the original proposal was requesting funding in year one for \$484,700 and \$416,200 in year two. Ms. Gibson stated the interest received from feedback at the local board presentations is that they would like to start the program smaller and consider a lesser amount of funding to continue the program.

Ms. Gibson advised the proposed reduced amount would be \$150,000 annually. This funding would be utilized to hire one rapid re-housing case manager; fund the associated financial assistance needed; fund housing location services; and administration costs to operate the program.

Ms. Gibson stated a rapid re-housing case manager would be expected to re-house 28 households over the course of a year. The average cost of \$2,500 per household equates to a total of \$70,000 for the re-housing of the 28 households. The requested reduced amount would also include \$5,000

that would be used to cover GWRC's administration of the program and would fund 7 work hours per month.

Ms. Brabo stated that King George County has already adopted its budget and for the last two years, they have not supported any non-profit funding requests. Ms. Brabo relayed that Ms. Gibson should reach out to the "Op Shop" which is a volunteer agency in their county that provides funding resources to non-profit agencies. Ms. Gibson relayed that staff also has a meeting scheduled for this Thursday to meet with Mr. Dave Coman who is the Director of Social Services in King George County.

Mr. Black stated that Caroline County has not approved its budget for this year to date and they take non-profit funding requests on a case by case basis. Mr. Yakabouski concurred this is the protocol for Spotsylvania County as well.

Ms. Bohmke stated that for Stafford County, they too fund non-profits on a case by case basis; however, her concern is that she feels her board was not involved in the initial process and thinks it will be hard to get approved funding when the county has not been on the process from the onset. Ms. Gibson stated the rapid re-housing program has been in place for 8 years and this is the first year local matches have been requested.

Ms. Gibson advised the City of Fredericksburg has endorsed the concept and they have approached both the hospital foundation and the jail to see if support from them is available as well. Ms. Gibson stated presentations have been made by the city to the two entities but to date no response has been received. Ms. Brabo stated that Spotsylvania Regional Hospital should also be approached for providing financial support.

Mr. Black asked how the program would work if several localities supported and provided financial support but other localities within the region did not. Ms. Gibson stated that as this is a program already in place that if less funding that is requested is received then the program goals would just be scaled back to accommodate the revenue to be received.

Ms. Bohmke asked if other localities have member representation on the rapid re-housing board. Ms. Gibson stated the members are made up from CoC board members and do not have appointed representation from each of the local jurisdictions.

Resolution No. 18-11 was deferred for action to be taken at the April GWRC meeting as localities need to bring the request back before their respective boards at their upcoming March board meetings.

c.) Other Old Business - None

NEW BUSINESS

a.) GO Virginia – Ms. Kate Gibson, CoC & Ms. Liz Povar, The Riverlink Group

Ms. Gibson advised that GO Virginia is a statewide economic development initiative that has been created to obtain more higher-paying jobs across the state through business-led regional collaborations.

Ms. Gibson stated the State is divided into 9 GO Virginia regions and each has its own Regional Council. Ms. Gibson relayed the Regional Council is the entity certified by the State Board who will propose projects and ensure accountability for the utilization of GO Virginia funds. Ms. Gibson relayed the Regional Councils are business led and membership is comprised of individuals from a variety of sectors that include: education, government, civic leaders, economic and work force professionals, local government officials, regional planning entities and nonprofits.

Ms. Gibson advised PD16 is in region 6 which is the fourth smallest region across the State. Its membership is the GWRC region, the Northern Neck region & the Middle Peninsula area. The Regional Council will ask for projects to be submitted to them and will be reviewed by the Council to ensure the eligibility requirements have been met and then will be forwarded to the Council Board. This board will ultimately approve the project; disapprove it, or return it back to the submitting agency for further action. For Region 6, the council is the Mary Ball Washington Council and GWRC serves as the fiscal agent.

Ms. Gibson relayed that in September of 2017 an economic growth and diversification plan was completed and resulted in six priority clusters that could include applications from any of the following economic sources: Seafood Processing; Forestry/Wood products; Manufacturing; Logistics; Technical Scientific services & Information/data centers.

Ms. Gibson advised there are two types of grants: 1 – enhanced capacity building project grant which has a \$50,000 maximum grant allocation and are essentially utilized for planning grant requests; 2 – collaborative grant projects that have a \$300,000 maximum allocation.

In order for a grant application to qualify, it must align with at least one of the six priority clusters; it must contribute directly or indirectly to the creation of higher paying jobs within the region (higher-paying indicates jobs that provide more than a minimum wage pay scale); must have collaboration from at least 2 localities within its planning district; requires a one to one match from non-state appropriated sources that can be either cash or in-kind contributions; and must be a project that will be completed within two years.

Ms. Gibson advised the application process is as follows; application submittal period posted and advertised; letters of intent & interest are submitted to the Regional Council; interested applicants

will then meet with staff from their council; & applications are then submitted to the Regional Council for review. Ms. Gibson stated the staff reviews the applications and applicants have an interview panel meeting with council. If the project is selected to move forward, then separate applications are due to be submitted to DHCD for state review and approval.

Ms. Bohmke asked how many people usually attend a regional council meeting. Ms. Gibson stated usually about 15 and mostly those who attend are board members, PDC directors, etc. Ms. Gibson stated the meetings are usually held monthly and are held in different areas within the region. Ms. Gibson stated this year that Region 6 received 6 applications; 4 of which were returned back to more data & 2 of which were submitted to the State for review and approval.

Ms. Povar advised the two selected project applications for Region 6 for FY2018 are as follows:

1 – Pamunkey/Net Business plan – the Middle Peninsula Alliance will receive a \$50,000 GO Virginia Enhanced Capacity Building Grant to create a new business enterprise owned by the Pamunkey Indian Tribe to deliver high-speed broadband to the underserved areas of Region 6.

Ms. Povar stated the Pamunkey/Net application came about because there are limited to no established broadband systems in place and operational throughout the middle peninsula. The Pamunkey Indian tribe is homebased in King William County. They are a federally recognized Indian tribe with financial stability. Even though the tribe is small in size, they wanted to help businesses in overcoming the last mile barrier for providing efficient broad band services throughout the region.

Ms. Povar advised the Pamunkey tribe has a sustainable business plan and model in place and they have assessed what we already have; what is still needed; & where services are lacking. Ms. Povar stated the next steps are review the contract submitted and determine what the next steps will be in order to move forward. The contract will be a two-year time frame and will be working with the Technical Advisory team. Each locality participating has made up to a \$5,000 investment match. Depending on how many regions participate, the cost will ultimately be less because the more locality participation, the less the cost will be.

Ms. Brabo stated if it will take two years before fruition that the efforts will be way too late. Ms. Brabo stated the last tower is being installed now in King George County that will provide broadband services to King George, Stafford and even to Spotsylvania so this immediate region will now have new internet/broadband opportunities.

Ms. Povar stated that regardless of whether PD16 participates, the grant application for the Northern Neck region would have been submitted regardless. Ms. Povar stated it was good to hear that King George County now has a system soon to be implemented and she hoped that they would be able to share ideas of what has worked; what obstacles needed to be overcome; etc. so the northern neck proposal can benefit from “lessons learned” from the King George County initiative.

2 – Flexible Office Space Due Diligence – Westmoreland County will receive a \$50,000 GO Virginia Enhanced Capacity Building Grant to complete due diligence for a new 20,000 square foot flexible, multi-tenant office building in Montross, Virginia.

The second application listed above will ultimately provide appropriate office space in Montross, Virginia that will then be able to attract new businesses from the professional, technical, or scientific services clusters.

b.) Other New Business - None

ADJOURN GWRC MEETING – The February 26th GWRC meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m. The next meeting will be held on March 19, 2018.

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

DRAFT