

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

October 21, 2019
GWRC Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice-Chair – Ruby Brabo, **King George County**; Matt Kelly & Billy Withers, **City of Fredericksburg**; Jeff Black & Nancy Long, **Caroline County**; David Ross, **Spotsylvania County**; & Meg Bohmke & Tom Coen, **Stafford County**

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Jenkins, King George County & Tim McLaughlin, Spotsylvania County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Petrovitch, Spotsylvania County; Cindy Shelton, Stafford County; Dave McLaughlin, CTAC Chair, City of Fredericksburg; Clay Milhoulides, Leslie Martin, Chris Payton & Christian Zammass, CoC

STAFF: Linda Millsaps, Executive Director, GWRC; Paul Agnello, Stacey Feindt, Mark McCaskill, Leah Vigil, & Matthew Decatur, FAMPO; Leigh Anderson & Samantha Shoukas, GWRC

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Brabo 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 & seconded, with all concurring, the agenda for the October 21st meeting was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING MINUTES – September 16, 2019 - (Action Item)

Upon motion & seconded, with all concurring, the minutes from the September 16th meeting were adopted as submitted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT - None

FINANCIAL REPORT – Dr. Linda Millsaps

Dr. Millsaps advised the following reports were included in tonight's agenda packet which are: Income Statement/Budget Performance sheet; a Balance Sheet; the Monthly Financial report; & the Dashboard print-out. Currently, we have \$176,194.45 beginning Cash on Hand; \$253,208.36 Cash In; \$184,802.54, Cash Out; \$68,405.82 for Profit/Loss; & \$244,600.27 Ending Cash on Hand. There were no questions asked on any of the reports submitted for review at the October 21st GWRC meeting.

PRESENTATION: Unsheltered Homelessness Initiative Update – Leslie Martin, Clay Mihoulides, & Christian Zammass, CoC Board Members

Dr. Leslie Martin with the CoC advised a system is in place that completes the following four steps of the region's goal to end homelessness which are as follows:

1. Identify – Identifying all persons who are experiencing homelessness
2. Shelter – Providing immediate access to shelters
3. ReHouse – Ensuring opportunities for homeless residents to move back into permanent housing within 30 days
4. Prevent – Preventing new or re-occurring episodes of homelessness as often as possible

Dr. Martin advised that regionally approximately 5 people per 10,000 will become homeless which equates to the following number of households & percentages for Planning District 16: Caroline County – 29 households/6.5%; King George County – 25 households/5.6%; Spotsylvania County – 141 households/31.8%; Stafford County – 104 households/23.4%; & the City of Fredericksburg – 145 households/32.7%.

Dr. Martin stated that investing in housing has been shown to significantly reduce daily municipal costs per capita per night nation-wide. A comparison shows it cost \$20.00 per day to invest in re-housing when compared to \$30.00 a day for shelter care; \$68.00 a day for jail costs; \$718 a day for psychiatric state hospital stays; & \$1471 a day for emergency/hospital visits.

Dr. Martin relayed that there were 611 people who moved into their own home through an existing CoC program in FY2018 & 88% of these households have not returned back to a homelessness state for 2 years after their participation in a re-housing program has ended.

Dr. Martin stated the Unsheltered Homelessness Initiative Pilot program in the region was initially funded for FY19-FY20 from \$40,000 that was received from the City of Fredericksburg (\$20,000) & Mary Washington Healthcare (\$20,000). Dr. Martin stated the goal for use of the \$40,000 was to move households from the street to housing and resulted in 8 successful households at \$5,000 per household who were successfully placed into permanent homes & no longer living on the streets.

The question was asked if there was a greater number of families homeless than individuals. Ms. Shoukas relayed it was actually the reverse and the region has more individuals than families who are experiencing homelessness situations.

Dr. Martin stated the results of the 2-year Pilot program are as follows:

Year One – FY2019

- 4 households (6 people) were re-housed
- 3 of these 6 people were homeless for longer than a year
- 6 people have a disability
- 4 people have increased their income since being re-housed
- 4 people have assumed full financial responsibility for all of their housing expenses

Year Two – FY2020 (to date)

- 5 households (5 people) have been re-housed
- 5 people were homeless for longer than a year
- 5 people have a disability
- 4 people have been matched with roommates to help assist
- 2 individuals for each house to assist with housing expenses

Dr. Martin stated that presentations to each local Board of Supervisors/City Council will be made for funding considerations above the \$40,000 for FY2021 will be made with a requested allocation consideration to be \$5,000 per locality in Caroline & King George counties & a \$10,000 request from the City of Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania/Stafford counties.

Ms. Bohmke stated that some citizens want to live on the streets so where are the chronic homeless residents residing. Ms. Bohmke stated that a lot of the chronic homeless residents have been homeless for at least a year and also have additional issues that include medical, emotional, drug/alcohol issues, etc. that will likely result in these citizens becoming homeless again.

Dr. Martin stated the point-in-time counts revealed the number of chronic homeless residents has remained steady from FY2018 to FY2019. Ms. Shoukas stated she would provide additional data to the GWRC members before the next GWRC meeting in November. However, Ms. Shoukas did relay that out of 221 residents identified last year as being homeless, 36 of these residents were classified as chronic.

Ms. Bohmke stated that in order to present a funding request to her Board, she needs more detailed data & reporting to accommodate the request. Ms. Bohmke asked would the best way of obtaining additional information to begin attending CoC meetings, etc. Mr. Ross asked what type of housing is available within the region that results in a \$20.00 per day cost. Dr. Martin stated this cost is based on citizens in housing with roommates. Mr. Withers asked where are most of the residents housed? Ms. Shoukas stated that most are housed in the City of Fredericksburg due to having access to bus routes, etc. however, some are located in other localities such as Project Faith in King George County. Ms. Shoukas stated the CoC has a housing locator who works with local realtors to obtain lower-income based housing opportunities. Ms. Shoukas relayed the 9 citizens who have been assisted were from the following locations: 5 from the City of Fredericksburg; 1 from King George County; 2 from Spotsylvania County; & 1 from another area in the state who re-located to be closer to family.

Mr. Milhoulides with Chrismarr Properties advised he currently has 5 rental properties that are being rented by previous homeless residents. Mr. Milhoulides stated he believes in the program and has found it to be a great asset to both the citizens and to the community. Mr. Zammis stated that he personally was a resident of the Thurman Brisben Shelter in March of 2017 and has now successfully opened his own business and is self-sufficient as a result of the program opportunities. Ms. Bohmke stated she would like to see a business plan to become better educated with how the program works from start to finish. Mr. Kelly recommended a set-up process meeting be held & presented at an upcoming GWRC meeting that depicts the step by step process so that more information can be made available for each respective board member to take back to their Board for feedback and comments.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Legislative Services Discussion – Dr. Linda Millsaps

Dr. Millsaps stated discussion occurred at the September GWRC meeting in regard to the existing fees associated to Eldon James & Associates for legislative services. First, there was a request that this funding designation be amended to state “Legislative” Services and to remove a specific reference to Eldon James & Associates. Dr. Millsaps advised this change has been made and is reflective on the handouts presented tonight.

Dr. Millsaps stated additional board member questions included the following concerns: what is the region doing with the funding being allocated; how is the region benefiting from the funding allocations; when has this issue last been reviewed; etc.

Dr. Millsaps relayed the current legislative agreement goes back to 1996 and that Mr. James advised that at least 2 of her predecessors were advised to pursue an RFP before his or a new contract was re-negotiated each year and for whatever reason, both predecessors chose not to pursue this option.

Dr. Millsaps stated that Mr. James currently is the legislative liaison for the 5 FAMPO jurisdictions as well as five localities in the Rappahannock district & also the Town of Orange. Dr. Millsaps relayed that all 11 entities have been billed for this year. Dr. Millsaps stated it is staff recommendation that the existing agreement remain as it is for the \$35,000 paid from the 11 localities to Mr. James remain as is with the understanding that an RFP and/or other options will be re-negotiated next spring before the legislative process resumes again in June.

Dr. Millsaps also stated that the second part of the staff recommendation is to implement a strategic planning process for GWRC to determine how it wants to proceed – does it want to continue with having a regional entity who represents the region on a state level; does the region want to do its own lobbying; etc.

Ms. Brabo stated that each locality has its own lobbyist in place so this may be something that GWRC no longer needs to support. Ms. Long stated that not every locality has its own legislative staff and even though she concurs that procedural practices need to be re-defined; however, the Caroline County Board of Supervisors has expressed consent on supporting a regional legislative representative. Ms. Long stated that GWRC does need to re-define its goals, expectations, etc.

Mr. Withers stated he has been affiliated with the legislative blocks for many years and presentation by a regional entity has been a strong and positive force and has been more effective than having individual localities submit its own agendas.

Mr. Ross stated he feels the Commission would have just as much impact & receive more benefits if our regional CTB member consistently participates and attends GWRC meetings and he sees no point in GWRC continuing to fund monies to be allocated to a legislative liaison.

Ms. Brabo stated that it appears the majority of the localities are in favor of continuing the existing contract with Mr. James for the remainder of this year & asked that each member take the issue back to its respective Board to get a determination on whether GWRC wants to continue with a designated legislative representative that will be selected based on the RFP results or whether

GWRC wants to become its own lobbyist and to bring these results back for additional discussion at the upcoming November GWRC meeting.

b. Annual Dues Discussion (Action Item) Dr. Linda Millsaps

Dr. Millsaps provided an annual allocation schedule for each locality for the FY20-21 year. Dr. Millsaps relayed the dues remain the same amount as has been requested for the last several years which equates to \$0.6344 per capita per jurisdiction.

c. Procurement Manual Update (Action Item) – Dr. Linda Millsaps

Dr. Millsaps advised a draft copy of the revised procurement policy is included in tonight's agenda packet. Dr. Millsaps relayed the GWRC procurement policy has not been updated or revised in 12 years and resulted in significant re-writes. Dr. Millsaps advised the draft copy in tonight's agenda packet includes staff revisions as well as edits provided from legal review with Mr. Gregory.

Dr. Millsaps stated approval of the manual as submitted is required at tonight's meeting because it affects moving forward with the \$100,000 Affordable Housing Grant that has been awarded to the region.

A motion was made and seconded, with all members concurring, to adopt the revised Procurement Policy/Manual that was presented at the October 21st GWRC meeting.

d. 5307 Funding Update – Dr. Linda Millsaps

Dr. Millsaps provided a hand-out at tonight's meeting in regard to the 5307 Funding updates. Dr. Millsaps stated staff has met with PRTC who oversees the funding that is generated through the collection of van pool data. This grant program provides approximately \$1.24m in funding sources to the region. Dr. Millsaps stated the funding received for the current year has been allocated to FRED. However, there are additional eligible activities the 5307 funding can be used for and the GWRC Commission needs to make decision on how future 5307 funding sources could be utilized. Dr. Millsaps asked that commission members review the handout with their respective Boards and provide feedback at an upcoming GWRC meeting.

e. Executive Director's Report – Dr. Linda Millsaps

Dr. Millsaps distributed the Executive Director's report for member review.

i. Grants Update

Dr. Millsaps advised that no new information has been received since the last GWRC meeting and there is nothing new to report at the October 21st meeting.

ii. Staffing Update

Dr. Millsaps advised all FAMPO positions have now been filled & Mr. Agnello will update the Commission on these new hires later in tonight's meeting. Dr. Millsaps stated the only un-filled position remaining at this time is the 20-hour part-time administrative assistant position for GWRC which currently is on hold and not moving forward at this time.

Mr. Agnello advised FAMPO has 2 new hires. Ms. Fendt is in attendance tonight and has been hired as the new Title VI Coordinator. Mr. Adam Hager has been hired to replace Mr. John Bentley and will be coming on board on October 28th.

NEW BUSINESS - None

ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF INTEREST - None

CLOSED SESSION

The regular GWRC meeting was adjourned from staff/public participation for the purpose of discussing a personnel issue. The closed session was held and concluded.

ADJOURN GWRC MEETING – The October 21, 2019 meeting adjourned. The next GWRC meeting will be held on November 18, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted, Dr. Linda Millsaps, Executive Director
(Draft Minutes prepared by JoAnna Roberson)