

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GEORGE WASHINGTON REGIONAL COMMISSION

October 19, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair, Cathy Binder, County of King George; Jason Graham & Matt Kelly, City of Fredericksburg; Jeff Black & Nancy Long (In at 6:20), Caroline County; Annie Cupka, King George County; Tim McLaughlin & Chris Yakabowski, Spotsylvania County & Meg Bohmke & Cindy Shelton (Alternate), Stafford County

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Coen, Stafford County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Denise Nelson, Berkley Group; Jonathan Knopf & Eric Mai, Housing Forward Virginia; Todd Horsley, DRPT; Jamie Jackson, FRED; Bob Schneider, PRTC; Christine Hoeffner, VRE; Tim Baroody, City of Fredericksburg; Paul Agnello, Spotsylvania County; Brandon Brown & Jason Towery, Stafford County; & Ted Schubel, WFVA Radio

STAFF: Linda Millsaps; Leigh Anderson, Aisha Balogun, Kari Barber, Natalie Beyer, Maggie Campbell, Jordan Chandler, Michele Dooling, Stacey Feindt, Kate Gibson, Adam Hager, Matthew Lehane, Jennifer Morgan, & Samantha Shoukas, GWRC

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Binder called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. with a quorum present; which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Millsaps read the Declaration in regard to the October 19th meeting being held in a virtual and remote setting.

*** Due to the nature of the Declaration of a State of Emergency due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pursuant to Code 2.2-3708.2, this meeting is to be held by electronic communications, via the web platform GoToMeeting. The catastrophic nature of this declared emergency makes it impossible and unsafe to assemble a quorum in a single location and the purpose of this meeting is to discuss or transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the public body.*

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING AGENDA - Meeting October 19, 2020

Upon motion made by Mr. Kelly & seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all concurring, the October 19th GWRC meeting agenda was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a.) September 21, 2020 GWRC Meeting (Action Item)

Ms. Bohmke advised that on page 2 of the September 21st minutes there was a typographical error only and not content-related error that requires editing.

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. Kelly, and all others concurring, the September 21st GWRC minutes were approved as submitted with typographical error to be made after conclusion of tonight's meeting.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: None

FINANCIAL REPORT: Michele Dooling, Director of Finance & Personnel

a.) Monthly Financial Report (September 2020)

Ms. Dooling provided updates to the Monthly Financial Report for September, 2020. Ms. Dooling advised the current balance sheet; the income statements; the dashboard; & the cash flow statements are included in tonight's agenda packet. Ms. Bohmke asked for an update on how many outstanding payrolls are currently owed to Stafford County. Ms. Dooling advised that there are currently two payrolls outstanding and the number has remained at two for the last consecutive five months. There were no additional questions asked of Ms. Dooling from the GWRC committee members on any of the above-referenced reports provided.

b.) FY20 Year-End Balance Report – Dr. Millsaps, Kate Gibson & Michele Dooling

Dr. Millsaps reviewed the FY20 Year-End Balance report that shows monies spent and/or carried over from respective grants/programs. Dr. Millsaps advised GWRC operates on an accrual basis and not a cash basis. Dr. Millsaps also relayed that many GWRC grants are pass-through grants and these grants run on a two-year cycle and the balance report only reflects actions through June 30th. Dr. Millsaps stated that some of the GWRC grants are also on an annual basis and do not coincide with fiscal year budget deadlines.

c.) Audit Update

Ms. Dooling advised that the FY2020 audit has been completed from a GWRC perspective. Ms. Dooling relayed the auditors were on site to complete the auditing process. The auditors are currently in receipt of all required documents and signatures requested from GWRC. Ms. Dooling relayed there is another final wrap-up audit date to be scheduled over the next several weeks. To date, the feedback received, is that overall, everything looks good and all records/documents are in place. Ms. Dooling advised the final re-cap day will result in some minor updates; however, auditor has advised there is nothing significant to be concerned about at this time.

PRESENTATIONS:

a.) Housing Affordability Study and Action Plan – Jonathan Knopf & Eric Mai, Housing Forward Virginia

Dr. Millsaps advised that GWRC was given approval a year ago to move forward with a Housing Affordability Study and Action Plan. Dr. Millsaps advised Mr. Knopf & Mr. Mai are here tonight to update the Commission on the study results.

i. Presentation

Mr. Knopf advised Housing Forward Virginia has completed housing affordability studies across the State of Virginia. The studies completed have shown what has worked for Virginia and what has not worked. Mr. Knopf stated the study was coordinated with the experts from each locality within

the Fredericksburg region so was not just a study based on consultant thoughts but one that was integrated in with professionals with the expertise.

Mr. Knopf advised the two largest components of the study results show that the rental market in the Fredericksburg region is a critical concern. Currently, 50% of the renters are paying more than 30% of their gross income for housing costs.

Mr. Knopf stated the second largest concern for the Fredericksburg region is that high rental costs provide economic effects for the entire region. The region has very little reasonably priced rental housing available. Mr. Knopf advised that regionally, there are only 7% of homes built that result in lower monthly rental payments.

Mr. Knopf stated home ownership within the region has increased by 20% over the last five years; however, the lower income based rental families do not compete adequately with citizens who have previously owned a home. Mr. Knopf stated this trend is not unique to just the Fredericksburg region; however, is acute in Planning District 16. Mr. Knopf stated that home buyers are looking for smaller starter homes with approximately 2000 square feet and the majority of the homes being built here are 3000 square feet or larger.

Mr. Knopf advised that other regional concerns that were realized as a result of the study are lack of broadband access which was a major issue at hand in each of the localities within the Fredericksburg region. There also showed a senior housing trend to continue to result in larger demands that are currently available in the Fredericksburg region.

ii. Plan

Mr. Mai advised the study resulted in 42 solutions overall with findings included for each solution. Mr. Mai stated the report to GWRC would include all of the solutions/findings for locality and regional review.

Dr. Millsaps stated the next steps will be to forward the study and findings to each locality planning department and to stakeholders for input and feedback. Dr. Millsaps advised a meeting has been scheduled for November 13th with those listed above.

b.) Environmental Strategic Plan – Denise Nelson, Berkley Group

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, with all members concurring, Agenda Item 8b was deferred to the November 16th GWRC meeting.

- i. Presentation
- ii. Plan
- iii. Resolution 21-06: Adopting GWRC 2020 Environmental Strategic Plan (Action Item)

c.) 2050 Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan – Kari Barber

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, with all members concurring, Agenda Item 8c was deferred to the November 16th GWRC meeting.

- i. Presentation
- ii. Plan

OLD BUSINESS:

- a.) Resolution 21-07: Approving GWRC FY22 Dues Structure (Action Item) – Dr. Linda Millsaps

A motion was made by Mr. McLaughlin and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, requesting that Item 9a be deferred for approval until the upcoming November 16th meeting.

A substitute motion made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Black asked for Resolution 21-07 be voted on tonight and with Agenda items 9b & 9c be deferred for action until the November 16th GWRC meeting.

The substitute motion carried with votes of 6 yes and 4 no (members voting yes: Mr. Black, Ms. Binder, Ms. Cupka, Mr. Graham, Mr. Kelly & Ms. Long; no votes were cast by: Ms. Bohmke, Mr. McLaughlin, Ms. Shelton & Mr. Yakabouski).

Dr. Millsaps advised the requested dues per capita being requested for FY2021 is the same amount that has been requested for the last eight years and is a .643 per capita rate. Dr. Millsaps stated this per capita rate was based on population totals provided from Weldon Cooper.

Mr. McLaughlin stated the FY2020 budget has already been approved so he did not see where a rush to take approval on this item tonight was needed. Dr. Millsaps relayed that even though locality budgets are not approved until later next year; however, GWRC is required per locality designations and regulations, to provide the preliminary per capita budget request to each GWRC locality by November 7th.

- b.) Approval of FY20 GWRC Annual Report (Action Item)

With request to make edit on page 12 where Smart Scale Round 4 is noted, this should actually reflect Smart Scale Round 3, upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Long, with all members concurring, the GWRC FY20 Annual Report was approved at the October 19th GWRC meeting.

- c.) 5307 Update

Ms. Bohmke stated that three options had been presented to GWRC for consideration at previous meetings. Upon motion made by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, it was recommended that Option 2 be adopted.

This motion resulted in 4 yes votes to approve Option 2 & the votes cast were from: Ms. Bohmke, Mr. McLaughlin, Ms. Shelton & Mr. Yakabouski. There were 4 no votes cast from: Ms. Binder, Mr. Black, Ms. Cupka & Ms. Long. The vote counts resulted in a tie so the motion to approve Option 2 failed.

NEW BUSINESS:

a.) How to Conduct Future Meetings

Dr. Millsaps advised the Commission needed to discuss how to conduct future GWRC meetings. The meeting options would be to remain virtual; to go to a hybrid meeting setting; and/or for a combination of both virtual/hybrid.

Dr. Millsaps advised that the conference room at GWRC would not be large enough to accommodate everyone attending in person in keeping with the 6' safety requirements. Dr. Millsaps relayed that locality space is available in the respective jurisdictions where a virtual meeting could occur in a safe manner.

There was consent from commission members to have a combo meeting setting for the upcoming November 16th meeting whereby the meeting will be held in the GWRC conference room. However, a representative from each district will attend the in-office meeting and a second member from each jurisdiction will still participate remotely.

There was also a motion made by Mr. McLaughlin and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with Ms. Binder voting no, and all other members concurring, to have GWRC chair forward a letter to the City of Fredericksburg in regard to member representatives being absent from the scheduled meetings for GWRC/FAMPO. It was requested the letter go out before week-end and that it be addressed to the Mayor, the City Manager, to City Council, to VDOT & to FHWA.

b.) Executive Director's Report – Dr. Linda Millsaps

Dr. Millsaps advised the Executive Director's report could be deferred until the November 16th GWRC meeting.

- i. Grants Update
- ii. Staffing Update

CORRESPONDENCE:

Included in October 19th agenda packet for member review – required no action from the committee.

ADJOURN GWRC MEETING – The October 19th George Washington Regional Commission meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m. The next scheduled GWRC meeting will be held on November 16th at 6:00 p.m.

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