

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

April 26, 2021  
GWRC Conference Room

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair, Cathy Binder (In-Person), **County of King George;** Jason Graham (Virtual) & Matt Kelly (In-Person), **City of Fredericksburg;** Jeff Black (In-Person) & Jeff Sili (Virtual), **Caroline County;** Annie Cupka (Virtual), **King George County;** Tim McLaughlin (In-Person) & Chris Yakabouski (Virtual), **Spotsylvania County** & Meg Bohmke (In-person) & Tom Coen (Virtual), **Stafford County**

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** (All attending virtually): Darren Coffey & Drew Williams, Berkley Group; Jamie Jackson & Aidan Quirke, FRED; Eric Gregory, Hefty Wiley & Gore; Bob Schneider, PRTC; Linda LaSut, VDOT; Christine Hoeffner, VRE; Paul Agnello, Spotsylvania County; Brandon Brown, Alex Owsiak & Jason Towery, Stafford County; Thomas Hastings, Dahlgren Naval Base; Chris Payton, Thurman Brisben Center; & Tammy Holt

**STAFF:** Kate Gibson & Ian Ollis (In-person), Leigh Anderson, Kari Barber, Natalie Beyer, Jordan Chandler, Michele Dooling, Adam Hager, Jennifer Morgan, (All attending virtually)

**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.

Ms. Binder read the Declaration in regard to the April 26th 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 April 26, 2021**

Upon motion made by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. Kelly, with all concurring, the April 26th GWRC meeting agenda was approved as submitted.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**a.) March 22, 2021 GWRC Meeting (Action Item)**

Ms. Bohmke noted there is a typographical error on page 3 and requested the minutes be updated after tonight's meeting. As edits were typographical in nature and not content-related, upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. Kelly, and all others concurring, the March 22nd minutes were approved with noted edits to be made accordingly.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:**

Ms. Binder read a letter to the committee from the Thurman Brisben Center expressing appreciation to GWRC for its past support provided to the agency with efforts to combat homelessness within the region. The letter also asked that continued support be considered from GWRC. Ms. Binder asked that Ms. Gibson forward a copy of the letter to all GWRC board members.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT:**

### **a.) Banking Services Update – Kate Gibson & Michele Dooling**

Ms. Gibson advised that all new/current signers have been finalized with Carter Bank and Trust for the new GWRC bank account as well as for the current Wells Fargo account.

### **b.) Monthly Financial Report (March, 2021) and Year-To-Date 2021 Reports – Michele Dooling**

Ms. Dooling advised all financial reports, including Balance Sheet, Agency-wide Income Statement, Dashboard and Cash Flow statement, are included in tonight's agenda packet. Ms. Dooling advised GWRC continues to move forward with project funding collections which helps maintain a positive cash flow. Ms. Dooling stated the year-to-date comparisons from 2021 to 2020 show a positive cash flow of \$429k which is \$152k better than this time last year. Both Ms. Binder and Ms. Bohmke expressed thanks to Ms. Dooling for her outstanding efforts in GWRC's accounting processes. There were no questions asked of Ms. Dooling from the GWRC committee members.

## **PRESENTATIONS:**

### **a.) GWRC Strategic Plan – Drew Williams & Darren Coffey, Berkley Group**

Berkley Group representatives stated they have held a long-standing and positive working relationship with the PDC and are looking forward to begin work on a Strategic Plan for GWRC. Consulting work should begin in early May and be completed in late August and will be designed to serve as a road-map for GWRC's next Executive Director. The scope of the plan will be facilitation with GWRC to update both regional and jurisdictional goals, action items, financial analysis, etc. The development of a new Strategic Plan is to provide realistic and achievable goals for the Board to review, consider and implement. Berkley Group advised the stakeholders would be the GWRC board members. The Board requested that the stakeholders also include the City Manager and County Administrators from each of the five GWRC jurisdictions and that upcoming presentations and updates be made not only to GWRC but to the respective Boards of Supervisors and City Council as well.

### **b.) Census 2020 Policy Changes – Ian Ollis, FAMPO**

Mr. Ollis advised that as a result of the 2020 Census data there are proposed changes of methodology to the existing classifications of what is or is not going to be a rural or urban area. Mr. Ollis stated that future funding allocations to the FAMPO/GWRC region could be affected as the density requirements could change. Mr. Ollis stated that every ten years when the Census is completed that the policy gets reviewed automatically. Mr. Ollis stated that as populations continue

to grow, it is the feeling that low density areas should still count. Mr. Ollis provided the following example: Impact – if an area has a 7% growth rate, if the new changes/calculations are approved, then the rural/urbanized areas may only show a 5% growth rate. Mr. Ollis stated if these changes are implemented, then the larger urbanized areas in the State will receive more funding but the smaller urbanized areas could receive reduced funding. Mr. Ollis stated the rulings for urban/rural areas will not change; however, the boundary areas would change. Mr. Ollis stated that FAMPO is submitting a letter to Congress expressing the potential changes not to be accepted. Mr. Ollis relayed it may also be beneficial if GWRC, as well as each individual locality, also submits a letter as well. Mr. Ollis stated he will forward a copy of FAMPO’s letter to the GWRC board members for review. Mr. Ollis also advised he would forward a copy of his presentation reviewed at tonight’s meeting to all GWRC board members as well.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **a.) Vanpool Alliance Section 5307 Funding Discussion – Kate Gibson**

Ms. Gibson advised PRTC representatives gave a presentation on Vanpool Alliance Section 5307 funding at the March GWRC meeting. Ms. Gibson stated the presentation included the types of projects eligible for 5307 funding allocations, the agencies/entities who are eligible to receive funding; etc.

#### **i. Prioritized Project Lists & PRTC Eligibility Determinations**

Ms. Gibson advised that, in March, staff recommended that 5307 funding be dispersed in two phases. Phase 1 would be to allocate current funding now to FRED, VRE and FAMPO for priority projects. Phase 2 would result in developing an objective process for distributing future funds. Ms. Gibson advised that, per Board direction, staff requested that localities and other entities submit eligible project lists for consideration by GWRC. Ms. Gibson advised that project lists were reviewed by PRTC, and though PRTC had feedback on some of the projects submitted for review/acceptance that all of the projects submitted were eligible projects and would qualify for funding allocations to be utilized. Ms. Gibson relayed all projects and project costs are included in tonight’s agenda packet and the GWRC Board will be asked to endorse the projects at the upcoming May meeting. There was committee consent that adoption of the approved projects could occur at tonight’s meeting and did not need to wait until the May meeting for approval. Ms. Gibson relayed that each locality/entity that submitted a project had in fact prioritized them with the submission to GWRC staff.

There was a motion made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Bohmke to allocate 5307 funding to the following three projects in Phase 1, which are the VRE Leeland Rd. Station Improvements; FRED Radio and Emergency Management System; and FAMPO East-West Mobility Study. There was a substitute motion made by Mr. McLaughlin and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with Mr. Graham voting no and all other members concurring, to include the three projects as previously stated and to apply remaining available funding to the VRE Brooke Station Improvements.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**a.) FY22 Rural Transportation Planning Work Program – Ian Ollis & Kari Barber**

**i. Draft FY22 Rural Transportation Planning Work Program**

Mr. Ollis and Ms. Barber with FAMPO advised that included in tonight's agenda packet is the proposed rural work plan for GWRC. Ms. Barber advised the draft plan has been reviewed with both the transportation planners in Caroline and King George counties for determination of their respective transportation policies and for concurrence of the plan. GWRC is being asked to endorse the Draft FY22 Rural Transportation Planning Work Program that is presented tonight.

**ii. Resolution 21-17: Endorsing the FY22 Rural Transportation Planning Work Program (Action Item)**

Upon motion by Mr. Black and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, with all members concurring, Resolution 21-17 was adopted by GWRC at the April 26, 2021 meeting.

**b.) Approval of Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA) between NSWCDD and GWRC (Action Item) – Jennifer Morgan & Kate Gibson**

Ms. Morgan advised that included in tonight's agenda packet is an agreement with GWRC and Dahlgren. Dahlgren has requested the agreement to be endorsed by GWRC. This item was originally listed as an Action Item; however, now it is informational only with a request to adopt at an upcoming GWRC meeting. Ms. Morgan stated that after review of the agreement by GWRC staff, changes were requested to be made to the agreement presented for endorsement. Ms. Bohmke asked if a previous agreement has been signed/endorsed with Dahlgren. Ms. Morgan stated to date, one had not; however, since being in receipt of the current agreement, that she has met with officials from both King George and Stafford counties and has received support from both for GWRC to pursue. Mr. McLaughlin asked why both FRA and GWRC were involved and if this is a duplication of work for GWRC if FRA is already involved with the request. Mr. Gregory advised that GWRC has recently been asked to serve in an advisory capacity and to facilitate meeting discussion that occur at the meetings with all entities. Mr. Gregory advised that FRA has a similar agreement with Dahlgren. Mr. Gregory stated GWRC was asked to be an advisory affiliate to protect the information that is shared between the entities.

**c.) Review of GWRC VHSP Application – Kate Gibson**

Ms. Gibson advised that GWRC is submitting its annual grant application for the Virginia Homeless Solutions Program (VHSP), and that the cover letter requires signature of the GWRC chair. Ms. Gibson stated GWRC is the fiscal agency for VHSP. Mr. McLaughlin asked whose salaries are covered under this request. Ms. Gibson stated that this grant contributes toward salaries and fringe benefits for multiple GWRC staff members.

**d.) Executive Director's Report – Kate Gibson**

- i. Staffing Updates - None**
- ii. Program Updates**

Ms. Gibson stated Go Virginia is initiating its updates to its Growth and Diversification Plan for Region 6. This plan makes decision on what projects to support. Ms. Gibson stated Go Virginia is encouraging GWRC members to participate in the upcoming stakeholder sessions.

Ms. Gibson advised projects within the region include the following:

- Industry Cluster project – completed
- Stafford EDA Cyber/Smart Technology project – three work study project sessions have been completed
- UMW Cyber Security project underway – to date, 23 students have been trained and this project has been extended until January of 2022
- Regional Industrial Facility Authority – document has been drafted and submitted for legal review
- Germanna Technical project – project underway and should go through the summer

On the Environmental aspect, Ms. Gibson stated the Greenway Study Committee had its kick-off meeting, and staff and local representatives have been invited to participate in these sessions. Ms. Gibson relayed the Coastal Zone and WIP III projects are ongoing, and the region will be participating in solar facility tours with Dominion Power for assistance and expertise in regard to zoning implications, compliance regulations, etc.

Ms. Gibson stated for CoC, Sam Shoukas and her husband have welcomed their second daughter, and Ms. Shoukas will be out on maternity leave until July. Ms. Gibson advised a part-time summer intern has been hired and advertisement for the upcoming VISTA employee will begin soon. The current VISTA employee's contract will end August. Ms. Gibson relayed the CoC is working on a system-wide implementation and monitoring plan for homeless services to be in conformity with state-wide plans.

For GWRideConnect, Ms. Gibson stated the three grants for the maintenance of this program have been submitted to DRPT for review and approval and is included in the SYIP. It is anticipated the three grants will be approved by the CTB without changes required. Ms. Gibson relayed the Martz bus company somewhat abruptly discontinued all of the commuter bus service previously available to the Fredericksburg region. GWRideConnect has been working with commuters who utilized this mode of transit in providing them with vanpool, carpool, VRE information, etc. Ms. Gibson stated GWRideConnect worked on a co-branding campaign effort with FRED on the campaign for promoting "Bike to Work" week which is May 17<sup>th</sup> – May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Ms. Gibson stated the Rural Transportation Work program/plan has been completed and submitted for review. In King George County, staff continues to work on the King George/FRED feasibility study. In Caroline County, work continues to move forward on the Bike/Ped plan and needs for Ladysmith.

For FAMPO, Ms. Gibson advised the Policy Committee at its last meeting approved the roadway project scoring measures for the upcoming LRTP. Ms. Gibson stated there are currently four documents out for public comment which include the following:

- FY2022 Work Plan
- 2045 LRTP amendment
- Transportation Improvement Plan
- Public Participation and Equity Plan

Ms. Gibson relayed FAMPO is ready to post its RFP for hiring of new on-call consultants. Lastly, Ms. Gibson advised Mr. Ollis has been asked to serve on a panel at MIT as a result of his expertise in interpreting rural transportation needs.

**ENTER CLOSED SESSION (Action Item)**

Upon motion from Mr. Black and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all members concurring, the GWRC committee moved to enter into closed session.

**CLOSED SESSION**

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION & CERTIFY DISCUSSION IN CLOSED SESSION (Action Item)**

Upon motion from Mr. Black and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all other members certifying, with the exception of Mr. Coen and Mr. Yakabouski who had left the virtual call, certified by roll call vote that only public business matters that were identified in the motion convening the Closed Meeting and lawfully exempted from FOIA's open meeting requirements were heard, discussed, or considered during the Closed Meeting.

Upon motion from Mr. McLaughlin and seconded by Mr. Black, with all other members concurring, the Board voted for GWRC to contract with the Berkley Group for a full Executive Director search, to include advertising, application review, application screening, recommendations for applicant interviews, background checks, etc., and that the price not exceed \$27,500.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence is included in tonight's agenda packet for board member information and review.

**ADJOURN GWRC MEETING** – The April 26th George Washington Regional Commission meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m. The next scheduled GWRC meeting will be held on May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Kate Gibson, Interim Executive Director  
(Draft Minutes prepared by JoAnna Roberson)