

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

May 24, 2021
GWRC Conference Room

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Coen, Matt Kelly, & Jeff Sili

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: (All attending virtually except where indicated): Thomas Hastings, Dahlgren Naval Base; Paul Agnello & Rodney White, Spotsylvania County; Brandon Brown, Alex Owsiak & Jason Towery, Stafford County; Peter Stephenson; Pamela Yeung (In-person), Stafford County School Board

STAFF: Kate Gibson & Ian Ollis (In-person), Leigh Anderson, Michele Dooling, Stacey Feindt, Adam Hager, Jennifer Morgan, (All attending virtually)

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Binder called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. with a quorum present; which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Binder read the Declaration in regard to the May 24th 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 May 24, 2021

Upon motion made by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, with all concurring, the May 24th GWRC meeting agenda was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a.) April 26, 2021 GWRC Meeting (Action Item)

Ms. Bohmke requested edits to be made under Executive Director's report for specifics of Staffing and Program updates be added to the April 26th minutes and for this request to be included for all future meetings. Ms. Gibson advised these edits would be made after the conclusion of tonight's meeting.

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. Graham, with Ms. Shelton abstaining and all others concurring, the minutes of the April 26th meeting were approved with noted edits to be made after conclusion of tonight's meeting.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: None

FINANCIAL REPORT:

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

Ms. Gibson advised that all paperwork has been submitted to the State for updates to the banking information for the GWRC grants. Ms. Gibson stated one final bank reconciliation with Wells Fargo will be completed and also a final close-out with Atlantic Union is forthcoming.

b.) Monthly Financial Report (April, 2021) – Michele Dooling

Ms. Dooling advised all financial reports to include: Balance Sheet, Agency-wide Income Statement, Dashboard and Cash Flow statements are all 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 for GWRC cash flow from last year for Accounts Receivables is 61% compared to 27% last year. Ms. Dooling relayed Accounts Payables to date are 76% compared to 55% last year. Ms. Dooling advised there is currently only one outstanding payroll due to Stafford County. 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 Board members.

OLD BUSINESS:

a.) Census Letter (Action Item) – Ian Ollis, FAMPO

Mr. Ollis advised a request for GWRC to endorse the Census letter that is included in tonight's agenda packet is the same letter that has been submitted by FAMPO. Mr. Ollis stated the Census Bureau has provided acknowledgement of receipt of letter received and that comments would be published in the Census Bureau final report. Mr. Ollis relayed the time has actually passed for comments to be submitted to the Census; however, he feels GWRC should consider signing and submitting the letter as well. Mr. Ollis advised that if the proposed Census changes move forward, the changes will have negative impacts to the region.

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, with all members concurring, GWRC endorsed the letter provided in tonight's packet to be forwarded to the Census Bureau to express concern over proposed changes that could be implemented.

b.) Approval of Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA) between NSWCDD and GWRC (Action Item) – Jennifer Morgan, Economic Development Coordinator, GWRC

Ms. Morgan advised the Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA) between NSWCDD and GWRC was presented for discussion and review by GWRC at the April 26th meeting. Ms. Morgan stated the partnership agreement is to be with Dahlgren and GWRC and is to be the conversation starting point which hopefully will lead to a regional technical project being implemented by Go Virginia. Ms. Morgan relayed the agreement presented at the April GWRC meeting has been reviewed and modified to reduce the obligations to GWRC. Ms. Morgan stated the modified agreement has been reviewed and endorsed by herself, Ms. Gibson and Mr. Gregory, who is GWRC's attorney. Ms. Bohmke requested that GWRC be kept apprised of all efforts of how the project and partnership is progressing. Ms. Morgan advised she would be providing a quarterly report to Go Virginia and will also provide the same information and documents to GWRC.

Upon motion by Ms. Shelton and seconded by Mr. Black, with all members concurring, the Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA) was endorsed by GWRC at the May 24th meeting.

c.) Establishment of Executive Director Search Committee (Action Item) – Chair, Cathy Binder

Ms. Binder advised the contract with Berkley Group has been signed for the GWRC Executive Director search. Ms. Binder stated it was recommended by Berkley Group that an Executive Director search committee be formed from GWRC. Ms. Binder recommended one representative from each locality serve on the sub-committee. There was unanimous concurrence and the GWRC Executive Director sub-committee members will be: City of Fredericksburg - Mr. Graham; County of Caroline – Mr. Black; County of King George – Ms. Binder; County of Spotsylvania – Mr. McLaughlin; and County of Stafford – Ms. Bohmke.

Ms. Binder also stated that, as she is working with the Berkley Group for the County Administrator search for King George County, it was recommended that she remain as the Chair and point of contact for the GWRC Executive Director search, even after Mr. Black becomes the GWRC Chair in July.

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, with all members concurring, both the Executive Director sub-committee representatives as noted above and for Ms. Binder to continue to serve as the Chair for the GWRC Executive Director search committee were approved by GWRC at the May 24th meeting.

d.) Vanpool Alliance Section 5307 Funding Update – Kate Gibson

Ms. Gibson advised that at the April GWRC meeting, there were four projects approved for 5307 funding allocations. The approved projects are as follows:

- FAMPO East/West Mobility Study
- FRED's radio project
- Improvements to the Brooke VRE station

- Improvements to the Leeland Road VRE station

Ms. Gibson stated there was no action required tonight on the 5307 Vanpool Alliance funding, but that more information on allocating CARES Act 5307 will be forthcoming at the upcoming June 21st GWRC meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

a.) FAMPO Community Engagement and Equity Plan Update – Stacey Feindt, FAMPO

Ms. Feindt advised FAMPO has just completed its Community Engagement and Equity Plan update. Ms. Feindt stated the new plan satisfied and exceeds all the federal regulations for the previous Title VI Public Participation Plan. The new plan now combines the public participation opportunities to all citizens and also serves as a resource for GWRC/FAMPO in specifying the roles that FAMPO staff should be completing; reviews non-discrimination laws; defines how FAMPO staff will comply with duties; what GWRC's role is to be as the fiscal agent for FAMPO; etc. Ms. Feindt stated that as this is draft only at this time, there is plenty of time to receive comments and feedback from GWRC members.

b.) Draft FY22 GWRC Budget – Kate Gibson & Michele Dooling

Ms. Gibson advised that included in tonight's agenda packet is the Draft FY22 GWRC budget. Ms. Gibson stated the FY22 budget will be presented for approval at the upcoming June GWRC meeting. Ms. Gibson stated there is a large increase over FY20-21 due to additional pass-through funding for Go Virginia. Ms. Gibson stated these increases do not impact the GWRC cash flow as Go Virginia reimburses GWRC before GWRC submits payments. Ms. Gibson stated that included in the FY2022 Draft Budget are expenses for a full-time project coordinator position for CoC and Go Virginia. Ms. Gibson advised the full-time position will replace an existing part-time CoC position. Ms. Gibson relayed that also included in this year's draft budget request is the break-down by locality of local dues contributed and a request for \$150,000 line of credit on a three-year term to be used should emergency financial issues occur. Ms. Gibson stated the indirect cost are lower than last year and the Legislative line item is included as a placeholder. Lastly, Ms. Gibson advised that the FY2022 budget includes a 5% COLA across the board to all employees. Ms. Gibson advised the requested 5% COLA increase is able to be met from the GWRC grants.

Mr. McLaughlin stated the 5% COLA request is higher than Spotsylvania County government employees received and Spotsylvania County representatives would not approve a raise higher than what was awarded to its own employees. Ms. Bohmke advised Stafford County did in fact give a 5% combination of step increases and a COLA to all Stafford County government employees. As this will be an action item for the upcoming June meeting, it was requested that locality representatives go back to their respective boards to get COLA increases that were awarded to city/county government employees so a comparison across the region can be completed and reviewed at the upcoming June GWRC meeting.

c.) Executive Director's Report – Kate Gibson

i. Staffing Updates

Ms. Gibson advised a summer intern has been hired for the CoC program. Ms. Gibson relayed Natalie Beyer has resigned her position as a GWRideConnect staff member. FAMPO is currently interviewing for a full-time Transportation Planner's position. Lastly, Jennifer Morgan recently graduated from the Fredericksburg Leadership program.

ii. Program Updates

Ms. Gibson advised there is a potential new funding resource becoming available to the region. This resource opportunity is a Virginia Housing grant. The grant will be awarded to planning district commissions and will be a three-year grant with \$2 million dollars of funding to be available to GWRC. The grant is designed to develop 20 affordable houses within the region. If awarded, GWRC will work with developers for the actual construction of the homes. Ms. Gibson advised if planning district commissions are interested in pursuing the new funding opportunity, they must submit their desire to participate by June 4th.

Ms. Gibson advised Go Virginia is beginning work on its growth and diversification plan. On the environmental side, GWRC has worked with three VCU students for solutions to environmental challenges and has been working on flood plans and the Greenway project. Ms. Gibson stated CoC is collaborating with Fredericksburg Parks & Recreation department for families residing in the homeless shelters to receive free tickets to a Fred Nats baseball game. Ms. Gibson stated the CoC is also working with HUD on a new voucher program for housing allocations.

For GWRideConnect, staff partnered with FRED to promote "Bike to Work" week and has also assisted VDOT and other agencies with development of a regional multi-modal transportation program. GWRideConnect hosted a Fredericksburg summit that resulted in over 60 transit providers participating. The website for the AdVANtage self-insured vanpool insurance program has been updated to improve customer use.

FAMPO has updated its 2050 project methodology for the LRTP and has submitted an initial call for projects. The projects have been scored for CMAQ and STBG funding for DRPT consideration. In the rural areas, the Bike/Ped plan is underway and moving forward in the Ladysmith area of Caroline County. In King George County, the transit study is moving forward. Lastly, preparation has begun for the Smart Scale Round 5 application process. Mr. Ollis added this process will result in multiple phases with the initial pre-applications to be submitted in March of 2022. The final project list will be submitted in August of 2022. Mr. Ollis stated work is underway in determining projects; project names; preparing documents and paperwork, etc. that will be needed for each project submitted.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

ADJOURN GWRC MEETING – The May 24th George Washington Regional Commission meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m. The next scheduled GWRC meeting will be held on June 28, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

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