

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

November 22, 2021
GWRC Conference Room

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Sili, Caroline County; Chris Yakabouski, Spotsylvania County & Tom Coen, Stafford County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: (Attending In-Person): Thomas Hastings, NSF Dahlgren/NSA South Potomac; Brent Hunsinger & Adam Lynch, Friends of the Rappahannock; (Attending Virtually): Paul Agnello, Spotsylvania County; Michael Aukamp, Dunham, Aukamp & Rhodes, PLC; Mary Jones; & Kimball Payne, Luke Peters & Jack Tuttle, Berkley Group

STAFF: (Attending In-Person): Chip Boyles, Michele Dooling, Kate Gibson, Anne Marie Kluempfen, & Sam Shoukas; (Attending Virtually): Jennifer Morgan

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

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING AGENDA – Meeting November 22, 2021

Upon motion made by Mr. Kelly & seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all concurring, the November 22nd GWRC meeting agenda was approved with the following amendments:

Under Old Business – Resolution 22-06 – Adoption of George Washington Region Resilience Plan – Per action from GWRC members from the October 25th meeting, it was requested this item be brought back for action at the upcoming January 24th GWRC meeting. Request was made by Mr. Kelly and endorsed by the committee for staff to provide brief updates on the Resilience Plan so GWRC will be prepared for adoption at the upcoming January 24th GWRC meeting

Under New Business, request was made by Mr. Kelly to add as a discussion item 10c – Waste Management.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a.) October 25, 2021 GWRC Meeting (Action Item)

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Ms. Binder, with all other members concurring, the minutes of the October 25th meeting were approved as submitted with request from Ms.

Bohmke that her status of participation to the October 25th meeting be listed as attending in-person.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:

Mr. Boyles advised a written public comment had been submitted to staff prior to tonight's meeting and this comment is included in tonight's agenda packet for member review.

Mr. Hastings with NSF Dahlgren was in attendance at tonight's meeting and provided public comment stating he assists the base with outside community interaction between base and non-base residents and activities. Mr. Hastings stated he has already developed a positive rapport between the base and the King George Board of Supervisors and hopes to see a relationship become more connected with GWRC as well.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

a.) GWRC FY21 Audit Report – Michael D. Aukamp, CPA, Dunham, Aukamp & Rhodes, PLC

Mr. Aukamp advised the financial audit for GWRC for FY2021 has been completed. Mr. Aukamp stated staff was responsive, helpful and accommodating during his two days of in-office audit preparation field work. Mr. Aukamp advised the audit review went smoothly resulting in the agency having the best controls it can have in place. Mr. Aukamp stated the audit review process resulted in zero discrepancies producing a clean report that required no changes or amendments.

Mr. Aukamp stated that for FY2021, GWRC was in receipt of more than \$750,000 in federal financial awards and when this occurs for an agency per GASB requirements, a Single Audit is required. Mr. Aukamp advised that GWRC was in compliance with federal requirements and received zero findings in this review as well.

Mr. Aukamp relayed the audit summary rated GWRC's threshold as Type A which indicates an agency has had a two-year consecutive rating with no risk findings resulting in no weaknesses or deficiencies. Mr. Aukamp advised summary and re-cap audit materials are included in tonight's agenda packet.

- i. Resolution 22-08: Accepting GWRC FY21 Audit Report (Action Item)

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all members concurring, Resolution 22-08 accepting the GWRC FY21 Audit report as presented was adopted.

b.) Monthly Financial Report (August, 2021; September, 2021; and Quarterly Reports from July to September, 2021) – Michele Dooling

Ms. Dooling advised all financial reports to include: Balance Sheet, Agency-wide Income Statement, Dashboard & Cash Flow statement for the month of October, 2021, are included in

tonight's agenda packet. Ms. Dooling relayed the monthly financial reports for October, 2021, are also included in tonight's agenda packet. There were no questions asked of Ms. Dooling from the GWRC committee members.

PRESENTATIONS:

a.) Draft GWRC Strategic Plan – Kimball Payne and Jack Tuttle, Berkley Group

Berkley Group advised the draft GWRC Strategic Plan is completed and is now ready to be submitted to Virginia Housing Authority and to each respective locality for review and feedback. Mr. Payne advised that if the draft plan is endorsed tonight, staff will then be able to advertise for a public hearing in January.

Upon motion by Ms. Cupka and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all members concurring, the Draft GWRC Strategic Plan was adopted with instructions for staff and consulting firm to move forward for scheduling of a public hearing at the up-coming January GWRC meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

a.) George Washington Region Resilience Plan Updates – Kate Gibson

Ms. Gibson advised the George Washington Resilience Plan was created for the flood preparedness program and is designed as a new regional plan that will be in compliance with the resilience plan grant requirements. Ms. Gibson relayed that if a locality desires to submit individual projects for consideration within the Resilience Plan, that in addition to the regional plan, an executive summary would also need to be included for potential grant approval by each respective locality.

Ms. Gibson advised the draft Resilience Plan has been approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency. Ms. Gibson stated that as rounds one and two of the available funding allocations deadline have already passed so the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation is requesting that no new changes be made to the draft plan already submitted. Ms. Gibson stated that round three of funding grants will be approved in January and funds will be released in April.

As this is an item that will require action from GWRC at the upcoming January meeting, Mr. Kelly asked if there are specific concerns from respective jurisdictions that need to be addressed before the Commission is asked to adopt the plan in January.

For Stafford County, Ms. Bohmke advised that to date, nothing has been brought to either her attention and/or the Stafford County Board of Supervisors in regard to reasons why the plan could not be endorsed.

For Caroline County, Mr. Black advised the county has concerns from stormwater run-off issues and asked if the County Administrators/City Manager have been included on the Resilience Plan update meetings. Ms. Gibson stated locality representatives have been in attendance at the Resilience Plan update meetings; however, the County Administrators/City Manager were not in attendance. Mr. Black stated he would meet with his respective locality representatives for further discussion prior to the upcoming January GWRC meeting.

Ms. Cupka stated some of the same concerns Caroline County is experiencing are also concerns for King George County. Ms. Cupka stated it is felt this issue is very vague at best currently; however, there is possibility that the new/upcoming legislation may address the concerns more specifically.

Mr. Graham asked Ms. Gibson why the region missed the deadline for the first two cycles for grant approval and allocations. Ms. Gibson advised staff made calls to all five GWRC localities prior to Round 2 deadline date asking for projects to be submitted that were ready to go. At that time, there were no projects within the region that were in a “ready-to-go” status or classification.

Mr. Black asked for staff to forward all existing information on the Resilience Plan to each respective County Administrator/City Manager; to Planning Departments; and to respective Board of Supervisors for final review prior to January GWRC meeting.

In regard to no changes being allowed for Round three, both Ms. Cupka and Mr. Graham advised there were typographical errors within the plan. Ms. Cupka stated on page 32, the bridge noted for King George County has recently been re-named. Mr. Graham relayed that “Motts Run” is a typo within existing plan. Ms. Gibson stated she would follow-up with Department of Conservation but felt there would be no resistance from Department of Conservation and Recreation in amending the current draft plan for typo-graphical issues only.

b.) AmeriCorps VISTA Opportunity – Sam Shoukas, Continuum of Care Director

Ms. Shoukas advised the AmeriCorps VISTA opportunity was presented at the October GWRC meeting. If GWRC is to be eligible for submission of applications for a VISTA program for FY2023, the applications are due by December 3rd. Ms. Shoukas was asking for GWRC “blessing” and not endorsement to continue moving forward with the process. There was

unanimous consent from GWRC for the VISTA opportunity program to continue to move forward.

NEW BUSINESS:

a.) Resolution 22-09: Signers for Carter Bank & Trust Accounts (Action Item) – Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised Resolution 22-09 is the request for the transition and finalization of the Carter Bank & Trust GWRC accounts. Upon motion by Ms. Cupka and seconded by Mr. Kelly, with all other members concurring, Resolution 22-09 was adopted by GWRC.

b.) Executive Director’s Report – Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised he is continuing attending meetings with stakeholders and respective locality representatives so he can get connected to the region. Mr. Boyles stated he will also be attending local Board of Supervisors/City Council meetings and that he continues to work with staff in his transition from the Thomas Jefferson PDC to becoming active with and involved with GWRC.

i. Office Space Update

Mr. Boyles advised staff has had several meetings with the broker selected and Request For Proposals from property owners have been submitted. Mr. Boyles stated the leadership team has looked at numerous office spaces for consideration. Mr. Boyles relayed several sites looked at have been turned down from further consideration whereas others are still being considered. Mr. Boyles stated contact has also been held with the existing property owner for a new and updated proposal to be considered for GWRC staying at its current site. Mr. Boyles advised the GWRC leadership team has asked for price comparisons from a lease agreement that stipulates the agency is responsible for building maintenance and up-keep to a full all-inclusive proposal that makes a new owner responsible for all up-keep. Mr. Boyles stated the leadership team hopes to have documentation available for presentation and review by GWRC at the upcoming January meeting.

ii. Staffing Updates

Mr. Boyles stated that the issue of loss of employees is affecting other agencies and is not exclusive to GWRC; however, we are currently experiencing the “great Resignation of Employees” concern. Mr. Boyles stated this is a trend as a result of COVID-19 job re-openings and new job opportunities becoming available. Mr. Boyles advised that GWRC has recently lost two full-time employees by resignation and there potentially is one more that may be

forthcoming. Mr. Boyles relayed that current GWRC projects are ongoing and daily work requirements are still being met and he hopes to fill the vacant positions as soon as possible.

Mr. McLaughlin asked for reasons on employee departures. Mr. Boyles stated that as a result of offices being closed and re-evaluated for over 15 months during COVID, that this region, and regions everywhere, are now competing with new job opportunities that have become available; employee concerns over higher cost of living trends; higher paying jobs being offered; and more offices offering remote work environments that are attractive benefits with today's job market opportunities making it easier to accept positions in the Northern Virginia/Washington, DC areas.

iii. Program Updates

GoVirginia:

Mr. Boyles advised a meeting has been held with GoVirginia and Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development on how to determine what projects will produce the most benefit to this region. Mr. Boyles stated this region is comprised of three separate regions, all of which has its own project "wish list" and financing endeavors, so finding the best project with the biggest financial gains are a challenge. Mr. Boyles relayed GoVirginia is continuing to move forward in project submissions. Mr. Boyles stated this region is the recent recipient of \$100,000 that has been awarded for entrepreneurship projects and that to-date, 18 entrepreneurs have been served.

COC:

For the CoC, Mr. Boyles advised a \$370,000 application was approved for homelessness services in helping to eliminate individuals/families in need of shelter care. These funds will be allocated for use among the region's partners. Ms. Bohmke asked if a break-down of financially how much money is allocated to Empower House, Micah, etc. and the percentages of citizens being re-housed from the monies allocated could be available for member distribution and review at the upcoming January meeting.

FAMPO:

For FAMPO, the Smart Scale Round Five process is underway. FAMPO staff has presented 10 intake applications for the first-round review process with VDOT. VDOT will review the ten applications/projects and make determination if it is a project that will move forward; if it is a

project that can be combined with another current project; if it is a project that at this time would not be eligible for funding, etc. Mr. Boyles stated FAMPO staff continues to work with locality representatives in compiling a project review process with VDOT.

GWRideConnect:

For GWRideConnect, Mr. Boyles stated commuting patterns are returning to more of a normal pattern and there has been a 183% increase in web site contacts compared to data available during COVID. Mr. Boyles also relayed there has been a 168% application increase from last year at the lowest point to now with jobs and companies re-opening.

c.) Waste Management Discussion

Mr. Kelly stated GWRC needs to have waste management discussions at an upcoming GWRC meeting. Mr. Kelly stated that each locality has its own waste management process in place; however, on a long-term basis the region cannot continue to bury trash as a permanent solution. Mr. Kelly stated this has now become a regional need and concern. Mr. Kelly stated he would like discussions to occur on what is currently working in each locality; what is not working; how can localities combine resources; etc. for discussions at future GWRC meetings.

CORRESPONDENCE: Included in tonight's agenda packet for board member information and review.

ADJOURN GWRC MEETING – The November 22nd George Washington Regional Commission meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m. The next scheduled GWRC meeting will be held on January 24, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Chip Boyles, Executive Director
(Draft Minutes prepared by JoAnna Roberson)