

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

June 27, 2022

GWRC Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: All Attending In-Person: **Chair**, Jeff Black & Jeff Sili, **Caroline County**; Jason Graham & Matt Kelly, **City of Fredericksburg**; Cathy Binder, **King George County**; David Ross, Alternate, & Chris Yakabouski, **Spotsylvania County**; Meg Bohmke & Darrell English, **Stafford County**; Attending Virtually: Annie Cupka, **King George County**; Pamela Yeung (Alternate), **Stafford County**

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jonathan Gerlach (Alternate), **City of Fredericksburg**; Lori Hayes (Alternate) & Tim McLaughlin **Spotsylvania County**; Crystal Vanuch (Alternate), **Stafford County**:

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Attending In-Person: Virginia Christina, Stafford County Citizen; Jack McGovern, Fredericksburg Fire Department; Margaret & Willis Mock, Stafford County Citizens; Bob Schneider, OmniRide (PRTC); & Jason Tickle & Mac Williams, Caroline County Habitat for Humanity; Attending Virtually: Paul Agnello, Spotsylvania County & Colin Burch, VPRA

STAFF: (Attending In-Person): Chip Boyles, Michele Dooling, Kate Gibson, Ian Ollis, Kari Barber, Anne Marie Kluempfen, Sam Shoukas, & Colie Touzel

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Black called the GWRC 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 – Meeting June 27, 2022

Upon motion made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Binder, with all concurring, the June 27th GWRC meeting agenda was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a.) May 23, 2022, GWRC Meeting (Action Item)

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. Kelly, with all other members concurring, the minutes of the May 23rd meeting were approved as submitted.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

a.) Monthly Financial Report (May 2022) – Michele Dooling

Ms. Dooling provided financial reports to include: Balance Sheet, Agency-wide Income Statement, Dashboard & Cash Flow statement for the month of May, 2022 as included in the

agenda packet. There were no questions asked of Ms. Dooling from the GWRC committee members that required further reporting from staff.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: There were no written comments provided prior to tonight's meeting. There were two public comments presented from two Stafford County residents. Comments were received from Ms. Ginny Christina and Ms. Margaret Mock. Both citizens spoke in support of a re-consideration for completion of the Belmont Ferry Farm Walking Trail project. Both citizens are from the north Ferry Farm subdivision and currently utilize daily the local trails within the region to include; the trails in the City of Fredericksburg; the Canal Trail; the Rappahannock River Heritage Trail and the Virginia Central Railway Trail. Ms. Mock stated that with Fredericksburg and adjoining Stafford County neighborhoods' current population of 50,000 people, she feels the Belmont Ferry Farm Trail would be well utilized. Ms. Mock stated there had been concerns that trash on the trail may become an issue as well as trails abutting to neighborhoods which may cause concern for residents in a neighborhood. Ms. Mock stated they have not experienced trash on the existing trails nor have they heard negative feedback from residents in neighborhoods for walkers who utilize the existing walking trails. Ms. Christina stated completion of the Belmont Ferry Farm Trail would be beneficial also to the region's museums, historical attractions and would result in an enjoyable and educational trail opportunity that could potentially result in additional revenues being brought into Stafford County if minimal trail fees were implemented. Ms. Mock stated that currently when they walk within Ferry Farms, the walking paths are very dangerous as there are no sidewalks or designated walking trails. Ms. Mock stated they regularly share their walk on the road-way with cars, trucks, school buses and garbage trucks. Ms. Mock stated for many years they had looked forward to the Chatham Bridge project being completed that would have initially connected to the Belmont Ferry Farm Trail but to find out when the bridge project was recently completed, the proposed trail project would now end at the Chatham Bridge. Lastly, Ms. Mock stated a new pedestrian crossing that was completed with walk and don't walk signals opened across King's Highway that connects Ferry Road with George Washington Way. Ms. Mock stated this new project has allowed walkers access from the Ferry Farm Shopping Center to access Ferry Farm at the end of the trail. Ms. Mock stated there are already approximately 50 parking spaces in two lots at George Washington's Boyhood Home that could be utilized for citizens who desire to drive to the location and then begin their walks. Both Ms. Christina and Ms. Mock asked that FAMPO, GWRC, VDOT, etc. re-consider the decision made for not completing the Belmont Ferry Farm Trail project.

PRESENTATIONS:

- i. **Regional HAZMAT & Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear & Explosives Online Information System for First Responders** – Battalion Chief Jack McGovern, Fredericksburg Fire Department

Chief McGovern stated the region is a recipient of a grant funded program whereby GWRC serves as the fiscal agent. Chief McGovern stated he is currently the chair of the GWRC Local Emergency Planning Committee and this sub-committee has representatives serving from each of the regional jurisdictions, as well as other stakeholders; however, currently the City of Fredericksburg serves as the lead within the grant processes. Chief McGovern stated the first grant awarded was a Tier 4 grant request for the establishment of a regional hazmat reporting facility system. Chief McGovern advised the requirements for Tier 4 are completed, functional and operational. Chief McGovern stated the presentation, software installation and policy implementations were reviewed by all local partners before being submitted for approval. The Tier 4 now provides for digital on-line data input which previously was captured via paper format. The new digital system implemented has provided for easier locality interface, access, detailed specific hazmat chemical components, etc. Chief McGovern stated the grant requests would continue on a regular basis and the region will be re-applying in FY2024 for the next Tier approval to continue to enhance the regional hazmat system to better assist the first responders within the jurisdictions.

- ii. **Rivere Ecological Center** – Mikel Ann Manchester, Rivere Executive Director – Presentation will be re-scheduled for a future GWRC meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a.) **Resolution 22-18: GWRC Smart Scale Application Consideration** (Action Item)– Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised GWRC will need to select the final four projects for the current round of Smart Scale applications. Mr. Boyles stated currently there are five projects being considered but the maximum GWRC can submit on a regional behalf is four projects. Mr. Boyles stated Kari Barber will finalize the presentation. Ms. Barber reviewed the five existing projects. Ms. Bohmke stated that after conversations with Stafford County staff, and with approval from the Stafford Board of Supervisors, that the project for Warrenton Road improvements is being requested to be removed from this round of Smart Scale projects to be submitted by GWRC.

Upon motion by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. Kelly, with all GWRC members concurring, Resolution 22-18 for selection of GWRC Smart Scale Application project considerations include the following four projects: Project 1 – US1 & Layhill Road in Stafford County (this project was previously submitted for consideration in an earlier Smart Scale application process); Project 2 - US1 & American Legion Road in Stafford County; Project 4 – Dixon Street in the City of Fredericksburg; and Project 5 – Lafayette Boulevard in both the City of Fredericksburg and the County of Spotsylvania were endorsed by GWRC at the June 27th meeting.

- b.) **Planning District Affordable Housing Grant Recommendation** (Action Item) – Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised the Affordable Housing Grant recommendations have been previously presented to GWRC for review. Mr. Boyles advised as a result of summary at previous meetings, non-profit applicants have been notified those applications could be submitted for potential consideration as grantee recipients. Mr. Boyles stated GWRC received two grant application requests, both which were similar and one was from the City of Fredericksburg and the other from Caroline County. Mr. Boyles stated after review and recommendation from the housing application advisory committee with staff's concurrence, GWRC is recommending the Affordable Housing Grant be awarded to Caroline County Habitat for Humanity. The factor for selection of Caroline over Fredericksburg is that the Caroline County project is further along in the project development. Mr. Boyles relayed approval of this recommendation tonight only allows GWRC to move forward with the next step process of funding agreement development. Mr. Boyles stated a completed funding grant agreement will be compiled for final GWRC review and consideration at an upcoming GWRC meeting in August or September.

Upon motion by Mr. Sili and seconded by Mr. Graham, with all GWRC members concurring, approval was awarded to GWRC staff to proceed with the agreement process with Caroline Habitat for Humanity.

c.) Resolution 22-19: Financial Auditing Services for FY22, FY23, and FY24
(Action Item) – Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised that GWRC submitted RFP's for Financial Auditing services for FY22, FY23, & FY24. Mr. Boyles stated the reason for the search for auditing services for FY2022 is not a result whatsoever of a negative audit review from the existing firm. Mr. Boyles stated it is just sound financial protocol to consider selecting either a new auditing firm or staying with the existing firm; however, utilizing another auditor within the firm to complete an auditing process. Mr. Boyles relayed our current auditor has been utilized for the last 12 years but the general standard is to change firms every five years. The current auditing contract expired with the FY21 audit. Mr. Boyles advised the RFP was issued state-wide and two proposals were received; one from the existing firm and one from a new firm. Mr. Boyles stated the new firm being recommended to GWRC for approval is: Robinson, Farmer, Cox. Mr. Boyles stated the firm being recommended is slightly higher in cost; however, they now have an office in Fredericksburg. The previous firm's office was in Chantilly. Mr. Boyles stated the new firm is specialized with indirect cost rates, grants, etc. which could be additional assets to the organization. Mr. Boyles relayed Robinson Farmer & Cox has previously worked with GWRC providing annual audits, so they are not technically brand new to the organization. Mr. Boyles stated the RFP request is for an annual three-year contract, with an option to re-new for an additional two years.

Upon motion by Matt Kelly and seconded by Cathy Binder, with all GWRC members concurring, approval was received at the June 27th GWRC meeting to hire Robinson, Farmer, Cox as GWRC's auditing firm for FY22-FY24.

NEW BUSINESS:

a.) Resolution 22-20: Support for King George County Smart Scale Application (Action Item)– Kari Barber

Ms. Barber stated King George County is submitting four projects for Smart Scale consideration. Ms. Barber advised the King George County Board of Supervisors has also endorsed the recommended projects. Resolution 22-20 is a request for GWRC, as a regional board, to also endorse King George County's requests.

Upon motion by Mr. Graham and seconded by Mr. Ross, with all GWRC members concurring, Resolution 22-20 was adopted at the June 27th GWRC meeting.

b.) Resolution 22-21: GWRC Records Retention Policy (Action Item) – Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised staff is revising and amending the GWRC Record Retention policy which is well over-due for necessary updates. Mr. Boyles stated staff is seeking approval from the Commission to approve the recommended policy. Mr. Boyles relayed staff made edits that are in compliance with both the state and federal regulations and have also reviewed retention policies from other entities. Mr. Boyles relayed staff worked with the Virginia Library in developing the policy. Staff is working on internal procedures for implementation of the adopted policy. The internal procedures do not have to be approved by the Commission. Mr. Boyles stated staff will continue to modify other policies in need of updating and development and bring to the Commission for review and ultimate approval.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. English, with all GWRC members concurring, Resolution 22-21 was approved at the June 27th GWRC meeting.

c.) Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan 2022 Update – Kate Gibson

Ms. Gibson advised the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is required to be updated every five years. Ms. Gibson stated this will be the fourth update for GWRC. Ms. Gibson advised some new additions will be included with this update. MS. Gibson stated there is a tight timeline for the completion of this year's plan. Ms. Gibson relayed FEMA may be awarding grants shortly which will require the local boards to update/adopt their respective plans. Ms. Gibson stated the current draft plan has been reviewed by staff and locality representatives. Ms. Gibson stated a public survey will be completed by the Berkley Group in July. Ms. Gibson stated the survey results and staff/locality recommendations will be submitted to GWRC for final review in July or August. Once approved here, the revised Regional Hazard mitigation Plan updates will be submitted to FEMA for review and approval before being submitted to each regional local government for adoption.

d.) Resolution 22-22: Election of Officers (Action Item) – Chip Boyles

Chair – City of Fredericksburg – Mr. Jason Graham

First Vice-Chair – Stafford County – Mr. Darrell English

Second Vice-Chair – Spotsylvania County – Mr. Chris Yakabouski

Treasurer – King George County – Ms. Cathy Binder

Secretary – Caroline County – Mr. Jeff Black

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all GWRC members concurring, the slate of offices listed above for FY2023 was approved as submitted at the June 27th GWRC meeting.

e.) Executive Director’s Report – Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised staff is working with the Rappahannock Area Health District and Mary Washington Health System on the comprehensive health improvement plan (CHIP). The plan has identified regional affordable housing, mental health, and access to healthcare as the region’s three priority health needs. GWRC has agreed to facilitate the Regional Housing Organizing Committee to implement strategies to further promote access to improved housing. GWRC will apply for funding from the Mary Washington Health Foundation to fund this effort.

GWRC is reviewing grants for septic tank pumping/healthy water supplies to the lower-income citizens within the region. Mr. Boyles relayed grant applications will be reviewed over the next several months to determine whether the cost/risk ratios match so GWRC will at least break even for overseeing any projects. Mr. Boyles stated this will be presented to GWRC for recommendation at future GWRC meetings. Mr. Boyles stated the grant monies are currently available through VDH but has seen limited application requests from our region. Mr. Boyles stated local & regional grant application requests are due to VDH on both August 1st and November 1st. Mr. Boyles relayed a recommendation from staff will be presented to GWRC on whether the region should pursue seeking grant acceptance.

Mr. Boyles stated he and Kate Gibson recently completed a tour of King George County with Supervisor Binder and met with county staff to look at on-going projects, improvements, etc. Mr. Boyles stated they likely will be going to each of the four other localities to do the same thing. Mr. Boyles stated it was a good opportunity for GWRC staff, leadership teams & locality personnel to receive a one-on-one and hands-on observation and overview of current local government problem areas, project concerns, etc.

Staffing Updates – included in agenda packet for member review

Program Updates included in agenda packet for member review

f.) Correspondence – None

g.) Resolution 22-23: recognizing the Dedicated Service of Jeffrey Black (Action Item)

Upon motion by Mr. Graham and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with Mr. Black abstaining and all other members concurring, Resolution 22-23 was adopted by GWRC at the June 27th meeting.

ADJOURN GWRC MEETING – The June 27th George Washington Regional Commission meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m. The next scheduled GWRC meeting will be held on August 22, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

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