

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

September 26, 2022
GWRC Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: All Attending In-Person: **Chair**, Jason Graham, **City of Fredericksburg** Jeff Black, **Caroline County**; Matt Kelly, **City of Fredericksburg**; Cathy Binder & Annie Cupka, **King George County**; Tim McLaughlin & Chris Yakabouski, **Spotsylvania County**; Meg Bohmke & Darrell English, **Stafford County**; Attending Virtually: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Sili, **Caroline County**; Lori Hayes & David Ross (Alternates), **Spotsylvania County**; Crystal Vanuch & Pamela Yeung (Alternates), **Stafford County**

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Attending In-Person: Jon Gerlach (Alternate), **City of Fredericksburg**; Attending Virtually: David Cooper & Meghann Cotter

STAFF: (Attending In-Person): Chip Boyles, Leigh Anderson, Michele Dooling, Erica Dutcher, Ian Ginger; & Sarah Oldaker

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Graham called the GWRC meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with a quorum present. Pledge of Allegiance followed.

APPROVAL OF GWRC MEETING AGENDA – September 26, 2022 (Action Item)

Upon motion made by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Ms. Binder, with all concurring, the September 26, 2022 GWRC meeting agenda was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a.) August 22, 2022 GWRC Meeting (Action Item)

Upon motion by Ms. Cupka and seconded by Ms. Binder, with Ms. Bohmke abstaining and all other members concurring, the minutes of the August 22, 2022 meeting were approved as submitted.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

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

Ms. Dooling advised all financial reports to include: Balance Sheet, Agency-wide Income Statement, Dashboard & Cash Flow statement for the month of July, 2022 is included in tonight's 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 verbal comments provided at the September 26th GWRC meeting. Mr. Boyles advised that included in tonight's agenda packet, is a written comment provided to staff prior to the September 26th GWRC meeting. The written comments are from the Healthy Generations office and includes for informational purposes only, the Virginia Transit Equity and Modernization study and final report as included in the September 26th agenda packet.

PRESENTATIONS - None

OLD BUSINESS:

a.) FY22 GWRC Annual Report (Action Item)– Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised that a draft FY22 GWRC Annual Report was presented to the Commission in August. Staff updated the draft with several new photos and recommendations provided by the Commission. The revised draft is presented for consideration of endorsement by the Commission.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Bohmke, with all other members concurring, the FY22 GWRC Annual Report was endorsed by the GWRC committee at the September 26th meeting.

Ms. Bohmke stated the annual report is a very informative document provided by staff. Ms. Bohmke stated the annual report is neither a required document for staff nor a document that requires committee approval; however, is a valuable document created by staff and she personally appreciates the information included within it.

NEW BUSINESS:

a.) GWRC US Housing and Urban Development Applications)– Erica Dutcher

i. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Application

ii. Continuum of Care Planning Application

iii. Unsheltered Continuum of Care Planning Application

Ms. Dutcher provide the background and application information for the three grant applications noted above. The September 26th GWRC meeting materials are for informational purposes only.

Ms. Dutcher relayed both the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) application and the Continuum of Care Planning Application are annual unsheltered grants submitted by GWRC on behalf of the local entities. Mr. Boyles stated the third application for Unsheltered Continuum of Care Planning application is a one-time supplemental grant application request.

Mr. Kelly asked for general conversation discussions at an upcoming GWRC meeting to include how the region is to move forward including all local jurisdictions with a regional homeless grant application process. Staff will work with regional local government staff to prepare and present an update of a proposed process.

Mr. Kelly also asked if Community Development Block Grant funds could be used for these type activities and whether our area could qualify for a regional consortium for CDBG funding. Mr. Boyles stated that it is his understanding HUD has not approved regional consortiums in a number of years; however, there is a process for this. Mr. Boyles advised that staff will check with HUD and get updated information on an application process, requirements, etc. and present this to the GWRC committee at an upcoming meeting for continued discussion.

b.) Resolution 22-29: FY24 Dues Structure (Action Item) – Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles apologized to the committee because the FY24 dues structure request is being submitted to the commission tonight for the first time and unfortunately needs endorsement at tonight's meeting. Mr. Boyles stated the local governmental jurisdictions moved up the due date to October 21st and the October Commission meeting date will be after the application deadline.

Mr. Boyles relayed the FY2024 dues structure is the same per capita rate that has been requested and approved over the last several budget years. Mr. Boyles stated that due to recent population increase data from the Weldon Cooper Center, several jurisdictions may notice an increase but reiterated the increase is not a GWRC per capita rate increase request but instead an increase based on the population growth numbers for a specific locality. Mr. Boyles also relayed that the FY24 request also includes appropriated funding for FAMPO for the "Safety for all" transportation study. Mr. Boyles stated that if the grant award is awarded, then the requested monies will be required from each jurisdiction. However, if the grant is not awarded, then there is the funding will not be requested from the localities.

Mr. Black stated Legislative Services is included in the FY24 budget request and he thought this line item had been terminated several years ago and questioned why it was included this year. Mr. McLaughlin concurred and stated each locality has its own legislative service representation and he too did not support it being included for consideration in the FY24 budget request process. Mr. McLaughlin asked if the legislative services budget request and the GWRC fund balance request could be removed from the FY24 budget request and have each of these items voted on separately.

Mr. Boyles stated if the legislative money is not needed or spent, then GWRC does not utilize the approved funding. However, by having it included in the FY24 budget request, it does give GWRC options should a legislative initiative be needed. This would allow the funding to already be in place, and again if not used remain in place as a designated line item and would not

require a request for special and additional locality funding designations to be discussed and endorsed at a later time throughout the year.

Mrs. Bohmke also asked for both the clarification of and the purpose for establishment of a GWR fund balance request. Mr. Boyles advised that several years ago the organization was experiencing cash flow problems. It was a recommendation from GWRC's auditing firm for GWRC to establish a reserve fund balance line item for monthly operating costs and expenses. Ideally, the auditor firm recommended an entity should have a six-month reserve balance on hand. Mr. Boyles stated GWRC is just initiating this request and certainly would not be asking for funding up front that would provide a six-month buffer; however, would like to request approval of continuing funding a fund balance account.

Mr. McLaughlin stated currently the agency is financially sound so he would not support an additional amount of monies being allocated for the continuation of a reserve fund balance line item. Mr. Kelly stated that every locality represented at tonight's meeting has a reserve fund balance in place and he thinks this would be a prudent and positive approach for GWRC to pursue. Mr. Boyles relayed that at the end of July 2022, GWRC's reserve fund balance would provide funding for eighty days of operational expenses. Mr. McLaughlin stated the jurisdictions should not be penalized for supporting an emergency fund balance annually when currently the agency is not in a financial crisis.

Mr. Black asked as the smaller jurisdictions do not pay as much as the larger jurisdictions within the region is there a way that GWRC staff time can be broken down by each specific locality? Mr. Black stated this could provide an additional tool for County Administrators and City Manager to review when additional funding requests are needed. Mr. Boyles stated that unfortunately this is not an option as the per capita match grants do not break out tasks by a specific locality. Mr. Boyles also advised the FAMPO match grants do not break down job tasks by specific jurisdiction either. Mr. Boyles stated, even though it may not always appear to work and be realistic; however, he does feel the per capita rate allocations are the fairest way to break down funding requests.

Mr. Boyles advised Resolution 22-29 is requesting approval of GWRC's FY24 Dues Structure.

Initially, a motion was made by Ms. Bohmke and seconded by Mr. Kelly to approve the FY24 Dues Structure request. After additional discussion, Ms. Bohmke withdrew her original motion to approve the FY24 Dues Structure as presented. Mr. McLaughlin motioned to approve the FY24 Dues Structure revised to remove the request for legislative services and fund balance funding. Mr. English seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kelly made a motion to approve the funding application request for the fund balance account as presented. Ms. Bohmke seconded that motion noting to review this request annually. This motion passed 8 to 1 with Mr. McLaughlin voting no.

Mr. Kelly motioned to approve the FY24 budget request for legislative services to be included. There was no second to this motion, so the motion was not considered. The amended FY24 Dues Structure request was approved as revised to include funding application requests to local member governments for per capita funding, safety for all, and fund balance growth at the September 26th GWRC meeting. The legislative funding application was not approved.

Mr. Boyles advised staff can work with the existing legislative services, balances and interaction with locality staff to determine if any regional issues come to light that could result in additional legislative assistance being needed. Mr. Yakabouski stated he felt this is something that needs further direction/guidance from the top locality officials and an entire Board of Supervisors/City Council recommendation.

c.) Introduction of Regional Housing Advisory Committee Framework – Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised the Regional Housing Advisory Committee framework has been discussed at previous GWRC meetings. Mr. Boyles stated discussions have occurred with the regional health department in its efforts to create a comprehensive Health Improvement Plan.

Mr. Boyles stated if approved, GWRC would be submitting a grant application request with Mary Washington Health Services Foundation. The grant would be for the creation of a framework that would create a housing advisory committee. The advisory committee would incorporate by-laws, mission statement, etc. Mr. McLaughlin asked what exactly is the purpose of forming an advisory committee?

Mr. Boyles relayed an advisory committee would allow for a regional approach and perspective in providing more information on housing and homelessness needs within the entire region. This would also allow for discussions as to what is affordable housing and to provide strategies that would be applicable and specific to each locality. Mr. Boyles stated this would also be an opportunity for increased communication with builders and developers. Mr. McLaughlin stated he felt an advisory committee is not necessary as these items could already be coordinated with the already established builder's association.

Mr. Yakabouski asked why or how are affordable housing issues more relevant or different to this region than to any other region. Is an advisory committee needed because currently work that needs to be completed is something that GWRC staff cannot or has not done. Mr. Boyles stated every locality is different with its zoning plans, comp plans, definitions of what affordable housing is; etc. Mr. Yakabouski concurred with Mr. McLaughlin in that establishment of an additional advisory committee for discussion of regional housing concerns is not necessary at

this time. Other committee members expressed comments as well. Mr. Graham stated there would be upcoming GWRC meetings where discussions could continue and as there is no vote needed for action tonight, he was deferring to the next agenda item.

d.) Resolution 22-30: Authorization to Apply for Housing Planning Grant (Action Item) – Chip Boyles

Mr. Boyles advised that Resolution 22-30 is asking for endorsement for GWRC to apply for a grant for Housing Planning. Mr. Boyles stated if approved, GWRC would receive a grant in the amount of approximately \$50,000 from the Mary Washington Healthcare System Foundation. This grant would require a zero local match and the \$50,000 would cover the entire cost of the project which includes all staff time, implementation, etc. Mr. Boyles stated the process would need to move forward in early October for the on-set of the application process.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Cupka, with Mr. McLaughlin voting no and all other GWRC members concurring with a yes vote, Resolution 22-30 was adopted at the September 26th GWRC committee meeting.

e.) GO Virginia Region 6 Capacity Building Contract – Ian Ginger

Mr. Ginger advised the Go Virginia Capacity Building Contracts are included in tonight's agenda packet for member review. Mr. Ginger asked for member comments/feedback within the next week as the Capacity contracts will be adopted in October. Mr. McLaughlin asked if this is an annual request and where does the money go. Mr. Boyles stated it is a \$250,000 contract that covers all staffing needs, regional meeting sessions, program needs, etc. Mr. Boyles relayed the grant comes from the state DHCD office. Ms. Bohmke stated this request has been approved in the past and asked what the previous amounts requested were before. Mr. Boyles stated \$250,000 is the same amount that has been requested in previous years.

f.) Executive Director's Report – Chip Boyles

i. Staffing Updates

Mr. Boyles advised his Executive Director's report is included in tonight's agenda packet. However, he high-lighted the following points of interest:

Mr. Boyles stated he has recently attended Board of Supervisor meetings in both King George & Stafford counties. Mr. Boyles advised that FAMPO has recently hired a new full-time transportation planner who will be starting over the next several weeks. Mr. Boyles also relayed GWRC has held interviews to fill the position for a full-time Environmental Planner's position. Mr. Boyles stated this interview session resulted in numerous qualified candidates expressing interest.

i. Program Updates

Mr. Boyles advised staff will begin including updates to both GWRideConnect ridership participation and rail data participation in upcoming Executive Director reports but did advise that both transit options have shown an increase in participation is beginning to increase after COVID.

Mr. Boyles advised the next GWRC Committee meeting will be held on October 24th at 6:00 p.m. The meeting following will be held on November 28th at 6:00 p.m. and there will be no December meeting scheduled to occur.

Ms. Bohmke asked for an update on the City of Fredericksburg's "Downtown Green" project and asked if the contract has in fact been finalized. Both Mr. Graham and Mr. Kelly advised the project continues to move forward but at this time the contract has not been officially finalized. Mr. Boyles stated the Braehead Farm property has been acquired; the contract is in place; however, limited funds to date have been obtained to pay for the contract.

g.) Correspondence – either included in tonight's agenda packet for member review and/or posted on GWRC's website

ADJOURN GWRC MEETING – The September 26th George Washington Regional Commission meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m. The next scheduled GWRC meeting will be held on October 24, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

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