

GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL

Board Meeting

January 12, 2009

10:30 a.m.

Kent County Building
Commissioners Chambers

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. by Chairman Jim Buck.

Members Present:

Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Daryl Delabbio	Kent County
Randy DeBruine	City of Belding
Sharon DeLange	Village of Sparta
Brian Donovan	City of East Grand Rapids
Jason Eppler	City of Ionia
Cindy Fox	Cascade Township
Don Hilton, Sr.	Gaines Township
Denny Hoemke	Algoma Township
Jim Holtrop	Ottawa County
Jim LaPeer	Cannon Township
Elias Lumpkins, Jr.	City of Grand Rapids
Robert May	City of Hastings
George Meek	Plainfield Township
Jim Miedema	Jamestown Township
Lon Myers	Village of Middleville
David Pasquale	City of Lowell
Milt Rohwer	City of Grand Rapids
Rick Root	City of Kentwood
Carol Sheets	City of Wyoming
Ken Snow	City of Greenville
Al Vanderberg	Ottawa County
Rob VerHeulen	City of Walker
Bill VerHulst	City of Wyoming

Members Absent:

Dale Bergman	Sparta Township
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Pat Capek	City of Cedar Springs
Tom Fehsenfeld	At-Large Member
Brian Harrison	Caledonia Township
Doyle Hayes	At-Large Member
John Helmholdt	City of Grand Rapids

Pauline Luben	City of Hudsonville
Mick McGraw	At-large Member
Cy Moore	Treasurer
Roger Morgan	Kent County
Audrey Nevins	Byron Township
Deborah Nier	City of Wayland
Steven Patrick	City of Coopersville
Chuck Porter	Courtland Township
Michael Young	City of Rockford

Others Present:

Jerry Alkema	Allendale Township
Alex Arends	Alpine Township
Andy Bowman	Grand Valley Metro Council
David Czurak	Grand Rapids Business Journal
Abed Itani	Grand Valley Metro Council
Gayle McCrath	Grand Valley Metro Council
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council
Keith Van Beek	Ottawa County

2. Public Comment

None

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION – To Approve the Minutes of the December 2008 GVMC Board Meeting. MOVE – Meek. SUPPORT – Lumpkins. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Report on Audit 2007-2008

Peter Haefner of Verdeveld Haefner reported on the 2007-2008 financial statements and audit. He stated they had met with the Finance and Executive Committees and answered all questions at that time.

The opinion again was clean. “In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities and each major fund of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council as of September 30, 2008, and the respective changes in financial position, and the budgetary comparison for the general fund and the REGIS fund for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.”

He reviewed the Single Audit Report. He reported there were two findings.

2008-1 Conditions: Grand Valley Metropolitan Council does not have procedures in place to prepare financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles including procedures to record certain revenue and expenditure accruals and to present required financial statement disclosure. He reported this is very common and most of the time it is too expensive to remedy.

Management Response: Grand Valley Metropolitan Council maintains its financial records throughout the year on a modified accrual basis of accounting and has determined that any benefits derived from preparing annual accrual basis financial statements and required disclosures would exceed the costs to do so.

2008-2 Conditions: Grand Valley Metropolitan Council did not complete at least monthly documentation supporting time charged to a federal grant program for a specific employee.

Management Response: The Grand Valley Metropolitan Council maintains approved time sheets for each employee that is directly charged to federal programs except for the individual noted above. The Grand Valley Metropolitan Council is implementing a policy to assure that all time directly charged to federal programs is supported by appropriate documentation as required by current Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

Bill VerHulst reported the financials and audit were well explained in the Financial Committee, they did a good job and the reports should be accepted.

Peter Haefner added management was very helpful with the audit. Things were very straight forward and helpful which made it efficient and effective.

MOTION – To Accept the 2008-2007 Financial Statements and Audit. MOVE – May. SUPPORT – Sheets. MOTION CARRIED.

5. Legislative

Jim Buck reported on the Legislative Breakfast. It went very well and was well attended. There were eight members of the legislature and one representative-elect. IT went exceptionally well. Thank you to the Legislative Committee for their work.

Rick Root reported there was a robust turnout of our members which helped to validate the meeting. Thank you to everyone.

Don Stypula added there will be a Legislative Committee meeting this Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. We will discuss what worked and what we would like to do differently at the next breakfast.

Carol Sheets stated she thought the breakfast was tremendous and would like to do this more often. Maybe bi-annually. How about June? Issues we are concerned with could come up in the mean time. Some of this should be done more often.

Al Vanderberg reported in Ottawa County they might start inviting surrounding areas' delegations to their meetings to make sure everyone is well educated. We are looking at ways to be more effective. We start the meeting with an agenda and meet throughout the year with legislatures.

Don Stypula asked what issues they addressed.

Al Vanderberg stated Ottawa County was concerned with the State paying for mandated costs for healthcare. Currently they only pay about 33% in Ottawa C County.

Rob VerHeulen asked as the stimulus package is developed in Washington, things may get delegated to Lansing. How does it flow on to us? We need to do everything we can to influence these funds and the decision making process.

Don Stypula stated we have a process in place for transportation funding. It is very exhausting and efficient. We will also have additional discussions on the stimulus funding. The federal stimulus package is to be introduced tonight, 300 pages, and will send it out to everyone immediately. I have heard that drinking water treatment and delivery as well as wastewater treatment will be included. Michigan will possibly be the only state which takes the federal stimulus program grant and turns it into low interest loans. The process is overly bureaucratic. Hopefully it won't become a loan program. I think we can do it as a grant program.

Carol Sheets referenced the Grand Rapids Press article which stated how much transportation funding Michigan could lose. If these funds become available, how much can be used for local match?

Don Stypula reported these projects funded by the stimulus will be 100% funded federally. We don't have to match.

Abed Itani stated for the stimulus, even the Federal Highway Administration is pushing for 100% federal funding. However, you cannot use stimulus money for local match for other projects. It is not allowed. There should be ½ - 1 billion dollars available per year for 2 years. Congress is demanding accountability. Under the MPO process, everything flows to the MPO level to the final lists which have been submitted. It should be about 15-20 million per year for this area.

Don Stypula stated he did not know if other items will be in the stimulus package such as energy savings to retrofit buildings.

Sharon DeLange asked what if we are in the middle of a large project for which you borrowed from the U.S. Rural Development program.

Don Stypula stated he did not know, but in his mind yes it would qualify. He will check and let everyone know.

Andy Bowman stated Smart Growth principles could be part of the program. Have we heard anything regarding qualifying?

Don Stypula stated he had not heard.

Carol Sheets asked if there was any guarantee what is passed on to the state will be passed through to the locals?

Don Stypula stated he anticipated funds in block grant form with significant authority to determine which programs and communities participate.

Cindy Fox reported the State is also collecting information from schools for the program.

Milt Rohwer stated there was a good article by Peter Lukes printed recently which should be distributed to everyone. We need to do more than just communicate with our legislators. More needs to be done by statewide entities like the MML, MTA, SEMCOG, etc. We also need to work with businesses. We need to work with alliances locally and across the state, including the gas tax which should be seen as a job generating program.

Abed Itani stated he wanted to assure the Council that everything is being done which can be. We are coordinating with all our alliances. Federal committees are also recommending increases in funding. The quality of work on roads also needs to improve. Our roads should last longer than they do.

6. Other

None

7. Adjournment – 11:30 a.m.

MOTION – To adjourn. MOVE – Myer. SUPPORT – Delabbio. MOTION CARRIED.