

GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL
Board Meeting

December 4, 2003
8:30 a.m.
Kent County Building

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Vice-Chair Heinbeck

Members Present

Jim Beelen	Allendale Township
Cindy Bartman	City of East Grand Rapids
Dale Bergman	Sparta Township
Daryl Delabbio	Kent County
Bev Drake	ACSET Council
Tom Fehsenfeld	At-Large
Judith Frey	City of East Grand Rapids
Cindy Heinbeck	Alpine Township
Dennis Hoemke	Algoma Township
Jim Holtvluwer	Georgetown Township
Kurt Kimball	City of Grand Rapids
Pauline Luben	City of Hudsonville
Mick McGraw	At-Large Member
James McIntyre	Courtland Township
Jim Miedema	Jamestown Township
Cy Moore	Treasurer
David Morren	Kent County
Steven Patrick	City of Coopersville
Bob Rinck	Ottawa County
Rick Root	City of Kentwood
Larry Silvernail	Byron Township
Bonnie Shupe	Cannon Township
Rob VerHeulen	City of Walker
Ted Vonk	Kent County

Members Absent

George Bosanic	City of Greenville
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Evelyn Champney	Village of Sparta
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Dave Groenleer	Plainfield Township
Bryan Gruesbeck	Village of Middleville
Bryan Harrison	Caledonia Township

Doyle Hayes
George Heartwell
Don Hilton
Mark Knudsen
Jeff Mansfield
Sandy Frost Parrish
Frank Sessions
Tom Wiczorek
Michael Young

At-Large
City of Grand Rapids
Gaines Township
Ottawa County
City of Hastings
Cascade Township
Tallmadge Township
City of Ionia
City of Rockford

Others Present:

Priscilla Babcock
Andy Bowman
David Czurak
Jim Fetzer
Abed Itani
Robert May
Tom McWhertor
G.M. Ross
Don Stypula
Don VanDoeselaar
Elaine Veltman

Grand Valley Metro Council
Grand Valley Metro Council
Grand Rapids Business Journal
ITP
Grand Valley Metro Council
City of Hastings
Calvin College
Citizen
Grand Valley Metro Council
City of Hudsonville
Caledonia Township

2. Approval of Changes to Agenda

Heinbeck noted changes in the agenda as follows:

- Add Swear in of Cindy Bartman, Mayor of City of East Grand Rapids
- Change Item # 4 – Transportation Item to reflect “Interim” Approval
- Item #6 – Add Appointment of Sharon Steffens to Blueprint Committee

MOTION to approve the suggested changes to the November agenda. MOVE – Root. SUPPORT - Drake. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Swearing in of Cindy Bartman, City of East Grand Rapids Mayor

Cindy Bartman was sworn in as a Representative of the Metro Council by Sonya Dean, Kent County Chief Deputy Clerk.

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION to approve the October 2003, GVMC Board Meeting Minutes. MOVE – Luben. SUPPORT - Kimball. MOTION CARRIED.

5. Change of Date of January GVMC Board Meeting – January 12, 2004

Heinbeck noted that the regularly scheduled meeting of the GVMC Board in January would fall on Thursday, January 1, 2004. The Executive Committee has proposed moving the meeting to 10:30 AM Monday, January 12, 2004, preceding the Quarterly Luncheon at DeVos Place.

6. Transportation Item – Interim Approval of WESTRAIN Contract with Sharp Marketing

Itani explained that as part of the WESTRAIN coalition the GVMC Transportation staff has taken on the responsibility for the marketing of passenger rail services on the Pere Marquette line. The WESTRAIN board chose the proposal by Sharp Marketing for \$93,778. The amount is budgeted through the agreement with MDOT and does not affect the GVMC budget in any way. Itani noted that the contract is held up at the Commission Audit awaiting approval, so he is asking for interim approval of the contract between WESTRAIN and Sharp Marketing.

Morren questioned whether there would be a return on investment, and if so, what would it be? Itani noted that with last years marketing, revenue was up 6% and ridership was up 30%.

MOTION – for interim approval of the WESTRAIN contract with Sharp Marketing contingent on the approval from the Commission Audit. MOVE – Delabbio. SUPPORT – Kimball. MOTION CARRIED.

7. Letter of Support on Grant Request for PDR Funding from Frey Foundation

Hoekstra announced that the Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board is requesting a letter of support for a grant proposal to the Frey Foundation. The proposal is in the amount of \$300,000 and would be used for the Purchase of Development Rights in Alpine, Sparta, and Tyrone Townships.

The Board has requested \$2 million from the federal farm and ranchlands protection program and will be seeking support from all major local foundations, townships, and landowners themselves.

MOTION – To approve a letter of support on the grant request for PDR funding from the Frey Foundation. MOVE – Delabbio. SUPPORT – Root. MOTION CARRIED.

8. Appointments of Conrad Venema, The Rapid to the REGIS Board, and Sharon Steffens, Alpine Township to the Blueprint Committee

MOTION – To approve appointing Conrad Venema to the REGIS Board and Sharon Steffens to the Blueprint Committee. MOVE – Silvernail. SUPPORT – Fehsenfeld. MOTION CARRIED.

9. Local Government Curriculum Update

Stypula informed members that they were currently looking into video taping a teacher training session for Local Government Curriculum and making the video available to interested school districts in the region. There will be no charge for the making of the video.

It was questioned on whether the full \$5000 that was allocated for this project would be needed? Stypula replied that there were still going to be costs incurred in replicating the video and creating material, so he would prefer to keep the full \$5000 until the project is complete.

10. Blueprint/Land Use Planning Update

Bowman opened by reviewing his handout regarding the GVMC metro planning process. He discussed what we have done, where we are currently, and what needs to be done in the future. GVMC is currently working on a Metropolitan Framework which is the coordination of the regions community plans.

Hoekstra gave a PowerPoint presentation on Subregional Planning and the Metropolitan Framework. Highlighted notes are as follows:

- 1993 Blueprint Primary Visions
 - Promote compact livable communities.
 - Create compact centers of regional activity.
 - Develop and preserve a network of open space and greenways.
 - Link centers and communities with efficient transportation corridors.
- Blueprint II Goals
 - Devise and Adopt “Blueprint Principles”.
 - Build and distribute effective regional decision-making tools.
 - Produce a functional Regional Development Framework for metro area.
 - Set up process for aligning regional investments with regional planning.
 - Promote understanding and use of a region-wide vision and ongoing “Blueprint” effort.
- Kent County is estimated to have 211,000 more people by 2030. Where will they live, in what kind of dwellings, and how will the dwellings be arranged?
- Current zoning in Kent County could accommodate for almost twice as much.
- The population who will reside in the metro area in 2030 will include a much greater proportion of older people and will consist of many more small households.
- Reviewed various development types used throughout Kent County.
 - 10 acre lots – 160 Persons = 1250 sq miles (35 Townships)
 - 2 acre lots - 660 Persons = 303 sq miles (8.5 Townships)
 - Suburban – 2500 Persons = 80 sq miles (2+ Townships)\
 - Neighborhoods – 8500 Persons = 24 sq miles
 - Town Center – 11000 Persons = 18 sq miles
 - Ag Preservation – 0 Persons
 - Cluster Development – 660 Persons
 - Infill = 0 sq miles
 - Neighborhood – 2100 Persons
 - Town Center – 2900 Persons
- The Essential Parts of a Good Town or Neighborhood
 - A Center: with stores, jobs, institutions, and a public square
 - A highly interconnected network of streets with small blocks
 - Concentrated housing gradually decreasing to the edge. Includes a mixture of housing types and costs.
 - A discernable edge
 - Pedestrian friendly

- Schools and recreational facilities to which young children can walk.
- Buildings are close to the street
- Streets that are used for parking
- Prominent sites reserved for civic buildings and monuments
- Good access to public transportation
- Sub-regional Planning
 - Five subregions each separately participated in a series of three meetings.
 - Participants in small groups planned out their subregion using chips representing development types placed on a base map. There were two versions. What they felt would happen if status quo trends would continue; and what they would prefer to see happen. In all cases more population was accommodated than was needed.
 - Each subregion voted on how much regional population growth they wished to hold and how much they thought each of the other subregion should receive.
 - Participants in each planning voted on what proportion of future growth should go into the various forms of development. (End of PowerPoint Presentation)

Bowman briefly discussed issues with the process (included in Metropolitan Framework Draft that was distributed). These include: still working on subregions, low participation from certain communities, new concept for our area, transit was too general, indirect municipal representation, development placement inconsistencies, not a municipal-style land use plan and special collaborations.

Morren asked if the home builders or realtors were involved in this process? Bowman stated that there next step is to take the Metropolitan Framework to the regional entities and individual communities in which they will be looking for changes to the draft based on their input.

McGraw questioned how many people were included in the voting? Hoekstra estimated a total of 60 participants which included Planning Commissioners, Elected Officials and Planning Staff.

Fehsenfeld inquired on the changing demographics relating to the implications of an increasing aging population. Was it taken into account that older people usually move out of the area? Hoekstra remarked that these projections were done by the University of Michigan and he was not sure, but assumed that they did consider this. McGraw commented that he had that the location the older generation will be where there grandchildren are.

McGraw commented that it looked as if we will grow as we always have – at the natural growth rate (births over deaths) of about 1% a year. There is no net immigration for this region.

Bowman noted that Kent County needed a regional plan in order to adopt their PDR plan and the Metropolitan Framework will be used for this. McGraw voiced his concern for the utilization of funds for Purchase of Development Rights. He stated that development rights are being paid more than what they are worth and in the end nobody gets use of the property.

In closing, Stypula stated that a resolution for the Interim Metropolitan Framework will go through the Executive Committee on December 18th before moving on to the Board for approval on January 12th.

11. Legislative Update

a) State Budget Cuts and Revenue Sharing

Stypula informed members that it looks like they will be holding at a 6% cut in total revenue sharing payments – which require a cut of approximately 12% of statutory revenue sharing payments.

b) Michigan Drain Code

Stypula stated that it looks like the drain code will move. He noted that he had a chance to review the code and gave the opinion that it looks good.

c) Solid Waste Tipping Fees

Stypula summarized SB721, a bill that establishes a \$3/ton surcharge on all solid waste sent to Michigan landfills. Supporters say that a portion of the new tipping fee money will go to communities that currently do not operate recycling programs. Stypula noted that it looks like this is packaged and ready to go.

12. Upcoming Events

Heinbeck noted the following upcoming Events

- Legislative Breakfast – December 15, 2003
- Quarterly Luncheon – January 12, 2004
- Legislative Dinner – January 22, 2004.

13. Farewell to Mayor Judy Frey – Representative of East Grand Rapids

Heinbeck thanked Frey for her hard work and dedication to the Metro Council and her community. Everyone is invited to stay after the meeting to wish Judy well and enjoy some cake.

Frey thanked everyone and stated that it has been a wonderful four years serving the City of East Grand Rapids and being a part of the Metro Council.

14. Public Comment

G.M. Ross announced that Geoff Hughes, who regularly attended the GVMC Board meetings, passed away recently. Ross also commented on a lawsuit against SEMCOG by the City of Ferndale and other groups. They contend that SEMCOG is being biased in their distribution of transportation dollars. Ross suggested that the Metro Council keep an eye on this.

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.