

GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL

Board Meeting

July 7, 2011

8:30 a.m.

Kent County Commission Chambers

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Chairman Jim Buck.

Members Present:

Alex Arends	Alpine Township
Dale Bergman	Sparta Township
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Tom Butcher	Grand Valley State University
Dan Carlton	Georgetown Township
Tom Fehsenfeld	At-Large Member
Cindy Fox	Cascade Township
Steve Grimm	Cannon Township
Doyle Hayes	At-Large Member
George Heartwell	City of Grand Rapids
Don Hilton, Sr.	Gaines Township
Denny Hoemke	Algoma Township
George Meek	Plainfield Township
Cy Moore	Treasurer
Jack Poll	City of Wyoming
Milt Rohwer	City of Grand Rapids
Rick Root	City of Kentwood
Martin Super	Village of Sparta
Al Vanderberg	Ottawa County
Rob VerHeulen	City of Walker
Patrick Waterman	City of Hudsonville
Chris Yonker	City of Wayland
Michael Young	City of Rockford

Members Absent:

Jerry Alkema	Allendale Township
Chris Burns	City of Cedar Springs
Daryl Delabbio	Kent County

Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Brian Donovan	City of East Grand Rapids
Jason Eppler	City of Ionia
Rebecca Fleury	Village of Middleville
Brian Harrison	Caledonia Township
John Helmholdt	At-Large
Carol Hennessey	Kent County
Jim Holtrop	Ottawa County
Elias Lumpkins, Jr.	City of Grand Rapids
Robert May	City of Hastings
Mick McGraw	At-large Member
Jim Miedema	Jamestown Township
Audrey Nevins	Byron Township
David Pasquale	City of Lowell
Steven Patrick	City of Coopersville
Chuck Porter	Courtland Township
Jim Saalfeld	Kent County
Ken Snow	City of Greenville
Toby VanEss	Tallmadge Township
Bill VerHulst	City of Wyoming
Roger Wills	City of Belding

Others Present:

Andy Bowman	Grand Valley Metro Council
Leon Branderhorst	Grand Valley Metro Council
David Czurak	Grand Rapids Business Journal
Dennis Kent	MDOT
Eric Kind	MDOT
Abed Itani	Grand Valley Metro Council
Gayle McCrath	Grand Valley Metro Council
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council
Peter Varga	The Rapid / ITP

2. Public Comment

None

3. Swearing in of new Board Member Steve Grimm, Cannon Township Supervisor

Kent County Clerk, Mary Hollinrake, administered the oath of office to Cannon Township Supervisor, Steve Grimm.

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION – To Approve the Minutes of the June 2011 GVMC Board Meeting with Correction. MOVE – Meek. SUPPORT – Fox. MOTION CARRIED.

5. Finance – FY 2011-2012 Transportation-MPO Unified Planning Work Program & Budget

Abed Itani reported they met with Federal Highway, FTA, and MDOT to review the requirements for next year. Based on that direction he created the Unified Planning Work Program. New activities include developing a financial planning process for the long range transportation plan and TIP, planning and environmental linkages, freight planning, climate change and performance measurements. The budget was created with the assumptions that we will have no increase in the number of staff, nor a cost of living adjustment. The calculation of local dues has been adjusted for the new census figures. Salaries increased largely due to the shifting of Land Use hours and also some step increase.

MOTION – To Approve the FY 2011-2012 Transportation-MPO Unified Planning Work Program & Budget. MOVE – Fehsenfeld. SUPPORT – Hilton. MOTION CARRIED.

6. Strategic Initiatives – Progress Report

Don Stypula reviewed his report on the strategic initiatives. GVMC has been trying to create a dedicated portal on the web for members to pose questions, list training, etc. The portal will allow members to post training notices as well as requests.

Don reported on September 12 Mike Finney of the MEDC will hold a two hour conference discussing the state’s new approach to economic development.

7. Legislative Advocacy

Legislative Committee Chair Rick Root stated there are many changes coming out of the new administration including changes to PA 312, specifically that the financial ability of an entity must be taken into consideration. The Michigan business tax is being addressed as is the personal property tax. The question is how the revenue will be replaced. The Governor has pledged it will be revenue neutral, but has also pledged to not go beyond the 6% business tax. GVMC is holding study group meetings with the Chamber of Commerce to come up with alternatives for replacement.

Don Stypula reported the Urban Cooperation Act is being addressed so that union contract provisions may be set aside in combined service agreements.

Public employee health care is being taken up with the latest proposal being an 80/20 employer / employee premium pay OR a hard cap amount.

Al Vanderberg stated a new category of participant is being created, single parent with children. GVMC should try to get this changed as it will be difficult to implement because HR systems are not currently set up to track that category.

Rick Root reported on his activities with One Kent. He has been part of the discussion group along with others. Although he may disagree with the topic, he feels it is important to be part of the dialogue.

George Heartwell stated the original discussion group consisted of six members appointed by Sandy Frost-Parrish and six members appointed by him. Discussion broke off with Kent County and they pulled their participants from the group. Unfortunately, that took many communities out of the dialogue. Hopefully we can start again with a new strategy which will keep the dialogue going for a year to a year and a half, and convince One Kent not to introduce legislation until then. One Kent was introduced without vetting it through the community. By pulling out of the dialogue, it is recreating the same situation. It is very important to continue the dialogue.

Don Hilton reported that shortly 21 townships will have passed a resolution expressing displeasure for having been left out of the talks in the beginning.

Milt Rohwer said he hopes the negative feelings caused by this initiative to consolidate governments do not deter discussions on consolidation of services.

Rick Root stated his concern is with isolation and cautions members on their reactions and wording of resolutions to prevent exclusion.

Steve Grimm questioned if the members of the discussion group are representing themselves, or if they feel bound to work under the parameters of the governments they are from.

Rick Root stated it is not inappropriate to support the position of their governing bodies, but the group is not a governing body of itself and it is important to stay included in the study committee.

George Heartwell said we need to chart a new path. When Kent County pulled out, townships were no longer involved, which crippled the conversation.

Rob VerHeulen said he was concerned with the process and that the Old Kent initiative has given consolidation and cooperation a bad name. We need to go back to the beginning and start with a new process, think it through and touch all the bases in the new discussion to make sure no one is left out.

Don Stypula stated he would like to bring this topic to the Regional Cooperation Committee. He will determine a venue and have a good discussion. Don will coordinate with George Heartwell.

8. **Transportation Department Amendments to the GVMC FY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program for ITP the Rapid, the City of Hudsonville, Kent County Road Commission, MDOT, and Transportation Staff.**

MOTION – To Approve the Amendments to the GVMC FY 2011-2014 TIP. MOVE – Hilton. SUPPORT – VerHeulen. MOTION CARRIED.

9. **Adjournment – 9:50 a.m.**

MOTION – To Adjourn. MOVE – Meek. SUPPORT – Super. MOTION CARRIED.