

**GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL
Board Meeting**

August 4, 2005
8:30 a.m.
Kent County Building

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 a.m. by Chairman Jim Buck.

Members Present:

Cindy Bartman	City of East Grand Rapids
Jim Beelen	Allendale Township
Marta Bretching	Alpine Township
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Pat Capek	City of Cedar Springs
Brian Chodowski	Village of Sparta
Daryl Delabbio	Kent County
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Tom Fehsenfeld	At-Large Member
George Heartwell	City of Grand Rapids
Don Hilton	Gaines Township
Dennis Homeke	Algoma Township
Dennis Holland	Georgetown Township
Kurt Kimball	City of Grand Rapids
Mick McGraw	At-large Member
Robert May	City of Hastings
Jim Miedema	Jamestown Township
David Morren	Kent County
Audrey Nevins	Byron Township
Sandy Frost Parrish	Cascade Township
Steven Patrick	City of Coopersville
Jack Poll	City of Wyoming
Bob Rinck	Ottawa County
Rick Root	Cannon Township
Al Vanderberg	Ottawa County
Bill VerHulst	City of Wyoming
Ted Vonk	Kent County

Members Absent:

Dale Bergman	Sparta Township
Bev Drake	ACSET Council
Brian Harrison	Caledonia Township
Doyle Hayes	At-Large Member
Ron Howell	Village of Middleville
Pauline Lubben	City of Hudsonville
James McIntyre	Courtland Township
George Meek	Plainfield Township
Cy Moore	Treasurer

Deborah Nier	City of Wayland
Bonnie Schupe	Cannon Township
Rob VerHeulen	City of Walker
Tom Wieczorek	City of Ionia
Bill Wiersma	Tallmadge Township
Michael Young	City of Rockford

Others Present:

Leon Branderhorst	Grand Valley Metro Council
David Bulkowski	Grand Rapids Center for Independent Living
David Czurak	Grand Rapids Business Journal
Amy Ensing	Grand Valley Metro Council
Jim Fetzer	ITP
Abed Itani	Grand Valley Metro Council
Marsha Small	MDOT
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council
Keith VanBeek	City of Kentwood
Peter Varga	ITP

2. Minutes

MOTION – To Approve the Minutes of the July 2005, GVMC Board Meeting. MOVE – VerHulst. SUPPORT – Rinck. COMMENTS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Financial Reports

a. Monthly Financial Statement

An updated FY 2005 Budget was distributed to the Council members.

b. Payment of Bill

Stypula noted that the invoice attached as item 3b covers the GVMC's 2005 Community Research Survey. Stypula described what this survey is used for by the Council, noted it is compiled annually, and requested authorization to pay this bill.

**MOTION – To accept the financial report as amended.
MOVE - Heartwell. SUPPORT – Bartman.**

COMMENTS: In commenting on the Monthly Financial Statement, VerHulst noted that the word "monthly" in the "Monthly YTD Budget" column is confusing would suggest rewording this. Branderhorst took note and will make changes accordingly.

MOTION CARRIED.

c. FY 2006 Budget Preliminary Review

Buck began conversations regarding the Preliminary FY 2005-06 budget by stating that there would be no vote on the budget today. The discussions were to be informative so that the Council understands all aspects of the FY 2005-06 Budget.

Stypula agreed and noted that the FY 2005 - 06 Budget is open for discussion for the next 30 days and that a formal vote would be called at the September 2005 GVMC Board Meeting. With that, Stypula began reviewing the budget in detail commenting that this particular budget had been a challenge, but as it stands, the FY 2005 – 06 Budget as currently stated carries a one year surplus of \$51,000. This was accomplished by making a series of expenditure cuts and by refocusing the work of the Land Use Planning Department. A detailed review of the expenditures cut and changes anticipated in the Planning Department were distributed as Attachment 3C of the agenda packet.

Stypula reviewed cuts made to the Budget which include the following:

- Elimination of MIRS state capitol news service.
- Elimination of reimbursement for the Executive Director's cell phone expenses.
- Cancellation of contract with Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber (FTC&H) for services related to the development of a Watershed Council for the Lower Grand River. (Stypula noted that all services anticipated under this contract would be handled "in-house" by the Planning Department with an existing grant from the Urban Cooperative Board and that no services would be sacrificed by eliminating this contract.)
- Elimination of the general fund subsidy for the annual GVMC Legislative Dinner.
- Moving the Legislative Breakfast meetings from the Penn Club to Sundance Grille.
- Reducing costs for routine maintenance on office equipment.
- Eliminating expenditures for refreshments for both the Board and Executive Board meetings. (Refreshments for both meetings for the year were generously donated by Flies and VandenBrink)
- Reducing mileage reimbursement for the Land Use Department.
- Possible elimination of monthly car allowance for the Division Directors and the Executive Director (needs review from Personnel Committee).
- Continued monitoring of the GVMC office space lease and employee parking to keep costs as low as possible.

Stypula also discussed the changes anticipated for the Planning Department, refocusing the Department's activities towards the required Transportation Planning activities that must take place under the new HR 3 bill. Stypula assured the Council that although GVMC inter-departmental tension existed in the past, from this point forward all departments within GVMC will be working together as one cohesive group to serve you. He also noted that the Planning Department would still keep watch over regional planning, but on a project-by-project basis. Accordingly, under the proposed FY 2006 Budget, the GVMC Planning Department will be working closely with the GVMC Transportation Department to develop critical components of the GVMC's Long Rand Plan.

Buck noted that a review of the GVMC Planning Department was available in a white paper titled "Evolution of Regional Planning at GVMC". This paper was available for the Board to pick up today at the meeting.

Delabbio expressed appreciation for the work that was done to the FY 06 budget over the last month, but noted concerns over the cancellation of the contract with FTC&H in that this is a Board approved expense and requested a vote to validate the elimination of this expense from the Budget.

MOTION – To eliminate the all expenses from the budget relating to the contract with FTC&H for services related to the development of a Watershed Council for the Lower Grand River.

MOVE – Kimball. SUPPORT – Delabbio.

COMMENTS – Stypula noted that extensive conversations were held with all involved parties prior to the elimination of the contract and all were supportive of the decision.

Heartwell inquired about the “losses” to the planning department that would occur as a result of refocusing the entire Department. For example, the Lower Grand River Watershed is a critical component to the entire Great Lakes Collaborative. Heartwell expressed concern that an initiative like this would “feel out of place” if Planning was now solely rooted in Transportation.

Stypula noted that Planning is not solely focused on Transportation, rather working very closely with Transportation. He noted that this shift “fits” with GVMC Planning.

MOTION CARRIED.

Morren expressed concern that the state of GVMC seems to be shifting dramatically every month from “red” to “black”, back and forth. What is the actual state of the Metro Council?

Stypula noted his concern but reassured Morren and the Council that he is confident in the FY 2006 budget as it stands. One reason for the big “shift” in the state of the budget is the addition of the monies anticipated from the new HR 3 bill. Additionally, Stypula noted that it has been his goal not to “hide” anything from the Board in preparing this Budget and thus the good, the bad, the ugly are all visible in the planning stages.

Fehsenfeld inquired about staffing level in the FY 2006 budget as compared to the existing budget.

Stypula noted that one position had been vacated in Transportation this year and that he was working with Itani to fill this appropriately. As for REGIS, he continued that many of the vacant staff positions would be filled once REGIS worked through the current “transition period”.

Kimball clarified that there have been no changes to the authorized positions for GVMC staff but that the one vacant position in transportation may need to be elevated to fill with more experienced personnel.

Fehsenfeld requested that GVMC go back and review the Strategic Objectives of the Council and review them against current staff to make sure that we are still “making progress”. Stypula agreed and would complete this review assemble a report for the next Board meeting.

DeVries noted that the FY 2006 budget was really a “status quo” budget, with the exception that some of the expenses have been shifted to different areas of the

budget. He continued by stating that many of the Administrative expenses are shifting to Transportation, but that he would appreciate still seeing or separating out these administrative expenses. Kimball agreed.

Itani noted that he felt the itemization on the FY 2006 budget was handled properly and in accordance with Federal standards.

DeVries concurred, but felt it important to still be able to “see” these pure administrative costs in the budget. Kimball agreed.

Itani noted he would compile a separate spreadsheet for this purpose.

Stypula closed conversations regarding the FY 2006 reminding the Council that a formal vote on this budget would take place next month at the Metro Council Board Meeting.

4. Transportation Department

a. Approval of FY 2006 – 2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Itani noted that the TIP is the result of a year-long planning effort that includes modeling, public hearings, and many meeting with transportation experts in the area. Even though the current TIP is fine tuned, Itani expects to return to the Council requesting amendments to the TIP as a result of the HR 3 bill bringing positive financial changes to our area. Even so, Itani requested that the Council approve the FY 2006 – 2008 TIP as presented.

MOTION – Approve the GVMC FY 2006 – 2008 Transportation Improvement Program.

MOVE – DeVries. SUPPORT – Beelen.

COMMENTS – None.

MOTION CARRIED.

b. Amendment to FY 2006 – 2008 TIP to include the M-6 Non-Motorized Trail Project

Stypula noted that the planning for the new M-6 Non-Motorized Trail is a great local accomplishment and asked Hilton, a key player in bringing this to fruition, to discuss. Hilton thanked Stypula and agreed that bringing the M-6 Trail to this point took years of planning and hard work. He continued by thanking Dennis Kent, MDOT, Chris Dingman, GVMC, Roger Sabine, Kent County Parks Department, John Rice, Kent County Road Commission, Peter Varga, ITP, Congressman Vern Ehlers and many, many others. He noted that once the trail is complete, it will link many trails together throughout the State.

Buck also thanked Hilton for all of his hard work and noted that the new M-6 trail is a monumental project.

MOTION – Approve the amendment to the FY 2006 – 2008 Transportation Improvement Program to include the M-6 Trail Project.

MOVE – Hilton. SUPPORT – Poll.

COMMENTS – None.

MOTION CARRIED.

- c. Resolution Authorizing Execution of Transportation Project Agreements

MOTION – Approve the Resolution Authorizing Execution for the Agreements with the Michigan Department of Transportation.

MOVE – VerHulst. **SUPPORT** – Hilton.

COMMENTS – None.

MOTION CARRIED.

5. REGIS

- a. Authorization to Upgrade Ten ArcGIS version 3.3 licenses to ArcGIS 9.0

Stypula noted that over the past month, the number of REGIS users switching from the “older” ArcView 3.0 to the newer Arc9 software is increasing (much as a result of REGIS staff working hard to train users in the new environment). Accordingly, the number of instances where REGIS users have not been able to access the system because we have “maxed” out our available number of authorized licensed users has increased. To remedy this, REGIS is requesting that the Council approve the REGIS Agency upgrading 10 ArcView 3.3 seats to ArcGIS 9.0 seats. Stypula noted that this upgrade was already anticipated and covered in the current REGIS Budget.

MOTION – To Authorize the REGIS Agency to Upgrade 10 licenses from ArcView 3.3 to ArcGIS 9.0.

MOTION – Root. **SUPPORT** – Poll

COMMENTS – Kimball questioned why the GVMC Board was reviewing this budget item if it had already been approved in the current REGIS Budget.

Stypula noted that the Council was reviewing it to make sure that no Council member was caught off guard by this expense. Kimball agreed but noted that he did not feel it was necessary for the Grand Valley Metro Council Board to “micromanage” the REGIS Agency.

MOTION CARRIED.

6. Legislative Update

Stypula informed the Council that there was recent activity in Lansing regarding the Telecommunications Act that would directly impact local government. This is SB 1504. Stypula will continue to monitor the situation and compile a report for the Council’s review when appropriate.

The big news is HR 3 – the bill reauthorizing the TEA-21 federal transportation spending program. Itani noted that the bill is very new and transportation experts in the area need to review what it says in detail before the exact impacts (anticipated positive) are known. Itani did note that Federal spending is anticipated to increase from \$245 Billion to \$286 Billion, some of which will be local monies for the GVMC area. Increased emphasis will be on management, freight mobility, and the preservation of our current transportation network. The GVMC Transportation Department will put together a presentation that will highlight the changes anticipated for our area.

Marsha Small, MDOT, agreed with Itani noting the complexities of the Bill and how it will directly impact the GVMC area. She noted increased funding for “safe routes

to schools”, for high-risk rural roads, for CMAQ, for freight mobility and boarder crossings.

Holland asked if there would be monies available for school crossing guards. Small noted that she was unsure, but could say the monies would apply to a 2-mile radius around the schools.

Varga stated that the news from the Federal HR 3 was positive for mass transit, but that the news was not so positive from the State. He described ways in which funding from the State of Michigan would *decrease* and stressed that it was critical that GVMC and its members apply pressure at the State level to fully match the Federal dollars expected as close as they can. Otherwise, the burden would be transferred to the Locals.

Buck asked that Varga present this funding issue to the Legislative Committee. Varga agreed.

7. Public Comment

David Bulkowski of the Grand Rapids Center for Independent Living announced the Citizens’ Transit Summit 2005 for Kent and Eastern Ottawa Counties. The Summit takes place on October 3 at the St James Community Center on Bridge Street. Cost is \$20. Registration information is available through the Disability Advocates of Kent County (616-949-1100)

8. Adjournment

MOTION – to adjourn the Grand Valley Metro Council Board Meeting at 10:10 a.m. **MOVE** – Hilton. **SUPPORT** – Rinck.

COMMENTS – None.

MOTION CARRIED.